

The pandemic has fallen especially hard on children and parents. Our legislation includes major funding—more than \$80 billion—for K–12 schools to reopen safely and get kids' educations back on track. There are billions more for childcare providers to reopen safely as well, and new investments in rural broadband will improve both education and telehealth down the road.

Then there are Americans' personal finances, the impossible kitchen table questions that millions of working families have faced this year through no fault of their own.

Back in March, thanks to Chairman RUBIO, Senator COLLINS, and Senator CARDIN, we created a Paycheck Protection Program. It saved small businesses and helped millions of American workers keep receiving paychecks rather than pink slips.

It would be insanity for us to have saved these jobs all this time only to drop the ball with the end in sight, so this bill will send more than \$280 billion to reopen the PPP for a targeted second round, and we made sure churches and faith-based organizations will continue to be eligible.

Of course, millions have already been laid off, so months after Republicans tried to stop benefits from expiring in the first place, this package will resume a temporary Federal supplement to unemployment insurance, and it extends other programs for the self-employed and gig workers that would have expired.

Thanks to the particular leadership and direction of President Trump and Secretary Mnuchin, households will receive a second round of direct relief checks—\$600 per adult and per child. This is just some of the aid that will be heading Americans' way in a matter of hours. No sprawling leftwing wish list, no unconstrained bailouts for State and local government with no connection to COVID needs—just smart, targeted, bipartisan policies, what Senate Republicans have been recommending since the summer.

I cited a figure of \$900 billion, but listen to this. The net new cost—new cost—is less than roughly \$350 billion. We are recovering more than half a trillion dollars in unspent money that Congress had already set aside and channeling it to these urgent needs.

Thanks to our colleague Senator TOOMEY, this legislation winds down some of the temporary emergency powers we lent the Federal Reserve to make sure our financial system survived last spring.

A lot of talented leaders helped make this happen. Leader MCCARTHY has been an invaluable partner. White House Chief of Staff MARK MEADOWS has been central. Colleagues such as Senators COLLINS, MURKOWSKI, ROMNEY, CASSIDY, and PORTMAN helped prod the Senate toward consensus with their bipartisan work. And I just mentioned Senator TOOMEY.

I want to give particular thanks to the Secretary of the Treasury, Sec-

retary Mnuchin. Before the pandemic, Steven was already a crucial partner for the Republican majorities in Congress. We enacted the most consequential tax reform in a generation. We helped create the conditions for explosive job growth, wage growth, and record-low unemployment. Our country had the strongest possible starting point to weather this storm.

This year, the Secretary has been even more essential. He helped Congress develop and pass the historic CARES Act in record time. It prevented a complete economic collapse at the hands of the virus. From drafting CARES to implementing it, to the intervening months, to this latest package, Secretary Mnuchin has been an extremely capable and patient partner. He helped guide our Nation through this dark period toward the daybreak that lies ahead.

On behalf of the Senate and the country, I thank the Secretary for his countless hours of work and his incredible effectiveness in extraordinary times.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on a related matter, while this rescue package will dominate headlines, we are also set to fund the entire Federal Government on a bipartisan basis.

We must not overlook the tireless work from Chairman SHELBY, Senator LEAHY, and our Appropriations Committees in both Chambers. Their hard work goes beyond just avoiding shutdowns. Full-year funding bills give our Armed Forces the certainty to make plans and budgets so we can continue to modernize our capabilities and keep pace with competitors like Russia and China.

This year's bills also tackle important domestic priorities. Everything from agricultural research to the fight against opioid abuse, to border security and law enforcement are provided for. We aren't defunding the police or abolishing ICE around here—not on our watch.

Federal law enforcement from the U.S. Marshals to the Border Patrol will get the resources they need to protect innocent Americans and uphold the rule of law.

And I want to especially thank Chairman SHELBY and Congresswoman GRANGER for beating back a number of far-left poison pills. These bills maintain pro-life guardrails on funding, secure President Trump's approach to title X, and respect our citizens' Second Amendment rights.

The Senate is about to cast some incredibly impactful votes. None of us think any of this legislation is perfect, but a big bipartisan majority of us recognize the incredible amount of good it will do when we send it to the President's desk.

The American people have waited long enough. I am glad for our country that we are now moving ahead together.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WINTER SOLSTICE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, before I say anything else, I want to say happy winter solstice. And 2020 is almost gone. It is an announcement I made to my family this morning, and I hope America shares it. We are turning a corner as a nation and to a new year and a new season, and, I hope, a much better day for all of us across this country.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 9 months ago, in March, we created the relief known as the CARES Act, and it passed the Senate by a vote of 96 to 0. It was a measure intended to address the pandemic and the resultant economic downturn in America. I have heard various estimates of the total cost, but it is somewhere in the range of \$2 trillion to \$3 trillion. It was the largest single investment in our Nation in our history. It was a massive national response to a massive national health crisis, and it worked, at least on the economic front. I believe that it created demand in our economy that otherwise would not have been there, and it gave some businesses a chance to survive. Sadly, all did not, and many are still suffering. But it was necessary. It was done on a bipartisan basis. It was massive, and I believe it achieved its goal.

It started us on the course of dealing with the COVID-19 coronavirus, and one has to look back and say it only had limited success in that regard. As of today, we have lost more than 317,000 American lives, and millions have been infected. Our hospitals are still overrun with patients. But we did the right thing, and we quickly realized what we did could make a difference.

The unemployment compensation, which we provided for millions of Americans, was not only the humane thing to do but, as economists would tell you, it was the best single thing you could do to fight a recession. A

person who is unemployed, without a paycheck, will spend virtually every penny they are given into the economy, not bank it away for another day. That spending created consumer demand and gave some businesses a fighting chance.

The Paycheck Protection Program, through the Small Business Administration, was the work product of many, but I want to single out Senators BEN CARDIN and MARCO RUBIO for their bipartisan effort. I later saw Senator COLLINS and Senator SHAHEEN working to give it another day. But here was a program which extended a lifeline to American businesses—forgivable loans if the money were spent on the necessities: utilities and rent and mortgage and payroll.

I will quickly add that we have a responsibility to taxpayers to make an honest assessment of how that program was implemented. I am sorry to say that I have already heard anecdotal evidence that some of the loans were not carefully made. That is to be expected in something of this magnitude. But, by and large, this program was essential. Money that we put into healthcare made a difference. The CARES Act also protected those who were renting from eviction, delayed the payment of student loans, and a litany of other measures that made a difference.

That bill—the CARES Act of March of 2020—was really written with a notion that this was a short- to medium-term challenge. Many thought that, by the middle of this year, we would be turning the corner. Sadly, that was not the case. As of July, it was apparent that the worst was yet to come.

Speaker PELOSI, of the U.S. House of Representatives, introduced a measure known as the Heroes Act in an attempt to have a follow-on relief bill after the CARES Act. It was passed but was not considered in this Chamber.

The Republican leader, who spoke earlier today, said at the time that there were two things he wanted to make clear. First, he wanted to measure whether it was a needed follow-on bill. Second, he was drawing a redline that said unless we provided immunity from liability for corporations and businesses, he wouldn't consider another relief act. And the matter stalled.

The Speaker went on to pass another bill, a smaller one in size, but nothing happened. She went into conversations with Mr. Mnuchin and Senator SCHUMER on the Democratic side here, but little was produced from that exchange. We were stuck, stalled. As of the election day of November 3, it wasn't clear that there would ever be another relief bill this year.

I want to say a word about what happened next because I know more detail about that than some. It was about 4 weeks ago when a Republican Senator and a Democratic Senator invited six of their colleagues for dinner. It was a bipartisan group. When Senator

McCONNELL mentioned the participants earlier, he only mentioned Republicans. I want to let you know who was in on it on both sides, Democrats and Republicans. Yes, it was Senator COLLINS, Senator MURKOWSKI, Senator CASSIDY, and Senator ROMNEY at the initial meeting; on the Democratic side, Senator MANCHIN, Senator WARNER, myself, and Senator SHAHEEN. Our ranks changed over the several weeks when we were debating to include MAGGIE HASSAN of New Hampshire, ANGUS KING of Maine, and ROB PORTMAN of Ohio.

For 3 or 4 weeks, we tried to write a relief bill. We did it by phone, by Zoom, and through staff work that was endless. Finally, Tuesday of last week, we were able to announce it. Let me get this number right, a \$748 billion consensus bill for relief. We were unable to reach a final agreement when it came to State and local funding, as well as the question of liability. We set those aside, but we produced this \$748 billion bill, much of which is included in this relief package we are going to consider today.

I want to thank my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, for their patience and determination to reach that point. I really believe that we ended up opening the conversation. The leaders, thank goodness, moved in to follow on and make it a reality.

Today, we are going to seriously consider a measure to keep America's economy moving and give us a fighting chance against the coronavirus. I think this bipartisan effort, this grassroots bipartisan effort by the 8 of us—soon to be 10 or 11 before it was all over—will make a significant difference in this Nation. We are going to come through with dramatic offers of relief across the board. It is in the range of \$900 billion, is the total. I don't know the exact amount.

It is going to provide several more weeks of unemployment compensation. The final agreement, I am told, reduced the number of weeks that we proposed, and I am sorry for that, but it did include a cash payment, which, under the right circumstances—I don't know all the details—could be a godsend for many families across the United States who are desperately trying to survive in troubling and difficult times.

It also extends the PPP program I mentioned earlier for small businesses to give them a chance for the kinds of loans and forgivable loans that might give them an opportunity to see another day.

Money is there especially for coronavirus vaccine distribution and logistics—testing, tracing, and the vaccine.

I would say this. In fairness, I agree with the Republican leader, who gave credit to the Trump administration for the Warp Speed program. That has been a dramatic success. To think that we have come up with not just one but two vaccines that work against this

COVID-19 is an amazing achievement, and I am glad that it received the high priority it deserved under this administration and particularly glad that the researchers and scientists who spent countless hours exploring opportunities for this vaccine were ultimately successful. America owes them a great, great debt of gratitude.

What is going to happen next? There are some parts of this measure which, as we study it, we will realize are inadequate. Merely extending unemployment benefits for 10 or 11 weeks may not be long enough. We may have to return to take a look at it. Whether we have enough money for logistical support for vaccines remains to be seen. Whether the businesses of Americans need another helping hand, we also have to consider that as well.

Let us hope that in the new year and the new President's administration, that we will have a more positive, bipartisan approach. This experience this year was disappointing in some respects, but it ended well with the bill we are going to consider this afternoon.

I want to thank all the colleagues, Senators, who joined me in this bipartisan effort, who started the conversation on Capitol Hill last week. We have more work to be done. We are not out of the woods. We have to consider measures that will address the reality of the economy in the future. We want to make sure that Americans have a chance to get back to work and businesses have a chance to survive in this time of COVID-19.

By the middle of next year, it has been estimated—this is not for certain, but I hope it is right—by the middle of next year, all Americans who are seeking a vaccination will be able to receive one, and that will be a day when we can finally hope that we will have reached that magic number of herd immunity and turn the corner on this terrible pandemic.

I want to thank Senator SCHUMER for coming to the floor and asking me to say a word or two more. I want to say this about the Members of the Senate, both Democrats and Republicans. There has been more activity on the floor of the Senate in the last several days than I have ever seen. And it isn't just rollcalls; it is Members standing on the floor to discuss the details of this agreement. There were parts we were never going to agree on, that is for sure, but so many times, I would step into a conversation on the floor where they would be hammering out the final details of an agreement. It was heartening. There has been so little of that activity on the floor in the past year or two. It is perilously close to legislating to have Members of the Senate of both political parties working toward agreeable language that can solve America's problems. Let's hope we have more of that.

Unfortunately, the Senate has drifted away from its traditional role of deliberation and legislation. This year, for

example, we have only considered 29 amendments in the entire year in the Senate, absent the impeachment proceeding. Twenty-nine amendments. The year before, 2019, there were 22 amendments. That is a waste of talent.

The men and women of the Senate should come together, hopefully on a bipartisan basis, but regardless, should come together to debate the issues and offer their best ideas and, having offered them, be given the chance to vote up or down. I think that appetite is strong on both sides of the aisle.

On the Democratic side, Senator MERKLEY of Oregon has been a leader in discussing changes in the Senate rules, and we reached out to Republicans as well to engage in that conversation. I think we are a better Senate for it if we do it and a better Nation for it if the debate becomes relevant to the issues of the day from people across America who are watching closely to see if we understand what they are struggling with economically and politically.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, I heard the remarks of the Senator from Illinois. It is a hope that we can change the way the Senate operates and do more amendments and do more debating on the floor. We haven't seen much give from some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, but hopefully that could and will happen.

Now, about remarks here, every day, it seems, for the past week or so, I have come to the floor ready to talk about the merits of bipartisan legislation we have been drafting, not wanting to be critical at all. Then I listen to the Republican leader. The leader's remarks just about every day this week as he has opened the Senate have been so nastily partisan and in so many ways false that I have no choice but to correct the record as the Democratic leader.

The Republican leader's accusation that the blame for this bill's delay lies totally on one side is just ridiculous. It is "Alice in Wonderland" thinking. It defies all the facts as to what we have seen. Then his comparison—that the agreement we are voting on today and the most recent Republican offer are so similar—is absurd. The two bills are nothing alike, and I had to point that out several times.

I have a chart here.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have this chart printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

BIPARTISAN EMERGENCY COVID RELIEF LEGISLATION SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVES ON MCCONNELL'S INADEQUATE PROPOSAL

Item	New Bipartisan Relief Agreement	December 1 GOP Proposal
Unemployment Insurance ..	\$300 per week enhanced UI and other program extensions through March 14, 2021	\$0 enhanced UI and program extensions end on January 31, 2021
Direct Payments	Additional round of payments—\$600 individual, \$1,200/married couple, and \$600/child dependent	\$0
Corporate Immunity	Excluded	McConnell/Cornyn Corporate Immunity "Red Line"
SNAP	\$13 billion	\$0
Rental Assistance	\$25 billion	\$0
Transportation	\$45 billion	\$0
Support for Small Businesses (PPP)	\$284.5 billion	\$257.7 billion
Support for Community Development Financial Institutions and Minority Depository Institutions ..	\$12 billion	\$0
SBA Grants	\$20 billion	\$0
Debt Relief Payments and Enhancements for SBA Lending Programs	\$5.5 billion	\$0
SAMHSA Funding for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder	\$4.25 billion	\$0
NIH COVID Research	\$1.25 billion	\$0
Broadband	\$7 billion	\$0

Mr. SCHUMER. I am just going to read from it, comparing the new, bipartisan relief agreement to the December 1 GOP proposal of Leader MCCONNELL.

How about direct payments? This bill has \$600 per individual, \$1,200 per married couple, \$600 child dependent. Many of us didn't think that was enough, but it is in the bill. Do you know how much was in the Republican leader's proposal? Zero.

Unemployment insurance. This bill that we are voting on has \$300 per week of enhanced UI and other program extensions through March 14. What does the Republican leader's bill have? Zero enhanced UI. Program extensions end January 31.

This bill has \$13 billion in SNAP; the Republican leader's bill, zero.

This bill has \$25 billion in rental assistance; the Republican leader's bill, zero.

This bill has \$45 billion in transportation for airlines and mass transit and buses and airports and highways. What does the Republican leader's bill have? Zero.

This bill has, very importantly, money for community development financial institutions and minority institutions, \$12 billion. What does the Republican leader's bill have? Zero.

SBA grants, \$20 billion this year; Republican leader's bill, zero.

Debt payments and enhancements for SBA. This bill, \$5.5 billion; Republican bill, zero.

SAMHSA funding for mental health and substance use disorder. This bill, \$4.25 billion; Republican leader's bill, zero.

NIH COVID research, \$1.25 billion; Republican bill, zero.

Broadband so homes can get broadband. This bill, \$7 billion; Republican leader's bill, zero.

The list could go on. There is a complete difference between the two bills.

We all know as well that the Republican leader, who blames Democrats for

delay, said for several months that the Senate should be on pause. As Democrats were demanding more action, the Republican leader was unmoved. The Republican leader's answer was that 20 Republican Senators wanted to do nothing more at all. When he finally proposed legislation, it was completely partisan, insufficient, and littered with poison pills.

I forgot to add one thing that was in the leader's bill but not in this bill—the broad corporate liability immunity provision, which the Senator from Illinois tried to straighten out. Another huge difference—a poison pill.

So when the leader finally proposed legislation because of public pressure to do something, it was partisan—no Democratic input, zero—insufficient, much too little in so many areas, as I mentioned, and littered with poison pills designed to ensure the bill would fail. Most notably was a provision to give corporations, no matter how egregious their behavior, sweeping immunity from legal accountability. Leader MCCONNELL said on the floor that for Republicans, corporate immunity was a red line.

And he blames the Democrats, as he did again today, for why this bill is being debated now? It is just turning truth on its head. It is like "Alice in Wonderland."

Even in the recent negotiations, the Republican majority made an eleventh hour demand that had nothing to do with helping people during this pandemic but, rather, sabotaged the incoming Biden administration's recovery effort and restricted the Federal Reserve's ability to save jobs and right the economy in a time of crisis.

Thankfully, the agreement we reached contains neither the leader's corporate immunity provision nor Senator TOOMEY's last-minute provision to handicap the Fed's authority to stabilize the economy in a crisis. And it will do a whole lot of good, besides, some of the programs I mentioned.

Look, after months of tense and difficult negotiations, we have this agreement. It is not as large as Democrats want. It is certainly larger than what many Republicans want. That is the nature of compromise. It does us no good to end the year with the kind of bitter, partisan fighting that has defined too much of the year. In a new session and under a new administration, we can and should do better because our job is far from over.

The bill today is a good bill. Today is a good day, but it is certainly not the end of the story. It cannot be the end of the story. Anyone who thinks this bill is enough doesn't know what is going on in America. Anyone who thinks this bill is enough hasn't heard the desperation in the voices of their constituents, has not looked into the eyes of a small business owner on the brink of ruin.

By all rights, there should be direct assistance in this bill for State and local governments. The checks should