

anymore. It was going to be strictly Democrats using the reconciliation process, and that is the only reason that this provision couldn't be addressed because it can't be dealt with under the reconciliation rules.

So now our Democratic colleagues perceive a problem with this legislation, and they would like the Republicans' consent to fix what might have been resolved with some kind of compromise had they pursued the path that we pursued when we were in control.

But let's talk about where we are and what we have done for individuals and families. The unprecedented financial support from the Federal Government has been really amazing. An average family of four has, by now, received stimulus checks of \$9,200 and child tax credit checks of \$6,000. That is \$15,200. By the way, that has gone to people who never lost a penny of income. And if they did lose their job, as in the hypothetical that the Senator from Oregon suggests, then the unemployment benefits, in more than half the cases, paid them more than they made working because of the legislation that we passed. We designed it so they would pay people more not to work than they would make working, in addition to these stimulus checks that they got.

So the result of that is, in the aggregate, personal savings have gone through the roof. It is up by over \$1.6 trillion. Total consumer credit is down. The fact is, we more than replaced lost income through the series of bills that were passed.

Now my colleagues want to come here and block a valid, legal claim from being honored with some of this money. And specifically, they want to block these stimulus checks from being subject to garnishment.

So what is a garnishment? That is just when money is withheld from someone because they owe something. They owe money that they haven't paid to someone else, and that someone else has gone to court, made the case, and it has been adjudicated that, yes, this is money that is owed.

So they want to forbid this windfall—which in many, many cases this is a windfall, let's be honest. They want to prevent it from being available to be used for the conventional way that we collect money that is owed. And whom might this affect?

Under this legislation, if it were to pass, it would forbid garnishment of the alimony payment that a needy former spouse relies on. That is a common expense for which garnishment applies. But in this case, the deadbeat former husband who is not paying his alimony payments, who forced his former wife to go to court to get a court order, he has been so far behind, now he gets this big check from the government, and she doesn't even get to catch up on the money that he owes her?

How about the deadbeat dad who is not paying his child support? That is another situation in which the mom,

trying to struggle to support those kids, had to go to court and get a court order that his future income would be garnished because he just doesn't pay. Well, he gets this check in the mail, compliments of the taxpayer, and he doesn't have to give her any of that? That is so terribly unfair.

And, you know, in addition to all these direct payments, we have also provided massive financial support in all kinds of ways to alleviate expenses like nutrition assistance, \$80 billion; housing assistance, \$65 billion; increase of Medicaid, \$170 billion; not to mention almost \$1 trillion in payroll support so that people could continue to work.

When you pay for all of these things and you still give people money on top of that, I don't think it is unreasonable to ask people to pay their bills, especially their overdue bills to their former wife or to support their kids.

Here is the other thing. At best, this is now a political statement because, as one of many colleagues just alluded to, these payments have already gone out the door—most of them have. The Treasury has already issued probably over \$250 billion in stimulus checks. And to the extent that a person was subject to garnishment, the garnishment happens automatically. So it has already happened.

So what does that mean if this bill passed? The legal chaos—I mean, first of all, it would actually allow the deadbeat dad I am referring to, to go back and claim that money back, to claw it back from the account that is meant to support his kids. How is that even possibly fair or reasonable?

This is a bad idea, and for these reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, just briefly. I think the key kind of question—and the checks are still going out, and we want them to get out as quickly as possible, but the key issue here is the Republicans, back in December, wanted to help that couple that I was talking about, the person laid off, through no fault of their own. They wanted to help those folks to make sure their relief check wouldn't be seized to cover a child's outstanding hospital bills.

So what we heard are discussions about all kinds of, you know, other issues, but the fact is, in December, just a few weeks ago—just a few weeks ago—Republicans were supportive of the families Senator BROWN and I are seeking to help today. That is what the question is all about. Will the Senate today help the folks who are hurting that Senator BROWN and I have been talking about?

In December, Republicans said: You bet we are going to be there. Now it is a question, really, of whom the Senate is for. Senator BROWN and I are for those folks who are hurting, and they have been laid off through no fault of their own, and Republicans, unfortu-

nately, with checks still going out—still going out—have decided they are for the private debt collectors.

I think it really shows whose side you are on, and Senator BROWN and I and members of our caucus are on the side of the people who are hurting, through no fault of their own, and we especially care about them at this time when checks are still going out.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BROWN. 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.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF MARTIN JOSEPH WALSH

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to support the nomination of Mayor Marty Walsh to serve as Secretary of Labor.

Across the country, working families are really desperate for help. Even before this pandemic, the deck was stacked against workers and especially against women, workers of color, and workers with disabilities, thanks to an unlivable Federal minimum wage and subminimum wage for tipped workers and workers with disabilities that do leave millions of workers struggling to make ends meet; a pay gap that makes getting by even harder for women, in particular, women of color; a lack of a national paid family, sick, and medical leave policy and quality, affordable childcare for working families; a failure to protect workers from pandemics and workplace accidents and harassment and discrimination and more; and a wave of job loss and economic uncertainty that is upending the lives of workers and retirees across our country.

This pandemic has laid bare the painful fact that while our economy might work for the biggest corporations and wealthiest individuals, it isn't working for working families. And all of these challenges—unsafe workplaces, lost jobs, low wages—are even worse for people of color due to longstanding inequities that are rooted in systemic racism and are widening due to this pandemic.

Our country cannot fully recover from this crisis unless we begin to change that by rebuilding a stronger, fairer economy. And that starts by making sure we have a Secretary of Labor who will actually champion workers and working families.

As a union leader, a State representative, and as a mayor, Mayor Marty Walsh has done just that. He has a clear track record as a collaborative leader who worked across coalitions with labor groups and the business community to build up Boston's middle class. Under his leadership, 135,000 new jobs have been created in Boston.

He fought for a \$15 minimum wage and paid leave policies to help ensure women, workers of color, and workers with disabilities can succeed in the workforce and get the pay they deserve.

During this pandemic, Mayor Walsh has continued to show a deep commitment to his frontline workers who have kept this country running by providing funding for emergency childcare and other resources his essential workers needed to weather the pandemic.

And he would bring an important perspective as the first union leader to head the Department in decades.

His unwavering commitment to put workers first was plain to see during our confirmation hearing. In his testimony Mayor Walsh spoke powerfully about the importance of protecting frontline workers who do so much to keep our communities and our country running and rooting out the inequities that have done so much damage to communities of color. Mayor Walsh made clear he will work with Congress to help ensure every worker has a fair, livable wage; a safe workplace; paid family, sick, and medical leave; access to quality, affordable childcare; a secure retirement; and the right to join a union and collectively organize.

I was impressed by his answers during our hearing, and I wasn't the only one. Mayor Walsh's nomination passed out of our HELP Committee with strong bipartisan support in an 18-to-4 vote, and I hope he will now be confirmed with similar, overwhelming, bipartisan support because even before this pandemic and even before President Trump's 4-year crusade against workers, we had a long road ahead to build a truly fair, inclusive economy that works for working families. But, now, not only is the road longer, the clock is ticking.

Workers who are the backbone of our economy have been pushed to the brink. They need us to confirm Mayor Marty Walsh so we have a Secretary of Labor who will take quick action to address the urgent challenges we face and be a valuable partner in helping our economy come back stronger and fairer for all workers.

While we made important progress in the American Rescue Plan to extend unemployment benefits and provide much needed tax relief for those benefits, provide direct payments for families, and protect the pensions millions of workers and retirees depend on and while President Biden is taking important steps to reverse Trump-era rules that undermined workers' rights, this road to recovery is long, and there are still many steps we need to take, including raising the Federal minimum wage to one fair wage of \$15 an hour, passing the PRO Act into law to strengthen workers' right to join a union, and passing the BE HEARD in the Workplace Act to protect people from harassment, assault, and discrimination.

We have a lot to do and no time to waste. I urge all of my colleagues to

prove to families back home they understand we need a Secretary of Labor we can trust to stand up for workers and not huge corporations. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting to confirm Mayor Walsh.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 842

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, in a moment, I am going to propound a unanimous consent request, but before I do so, I want to make some brief remarks.

As my colleagues know and as several fact checkers have confirmed over the past week, the Democrats' partisan reconciliation bill that became law last week will provide many illegal aliens with \$1,400 rebate checks paid for by the American taxpayer. By several estimates, millions of illegal immigrants will get these rebates.

I offered an amendment 2 weeks ago to the Democrats' bill to close this loophole. During debate on my amendment, one Democratic Senator spoke against my amendment, saying that no illegal aliens have Social Security numbers, and therefore the premise of my amendment and my speech was, he said, "not true." In fact, here are the Senator's full remarks from the floor 2 weeks ago:

Mr. President, the statement from the Senator from Texas is just plain false. Let me be clear. Undocumented immigrants do not have Social Security numbers, and they do not qualify for stimulus relief checks, period.

And just in case you didn't notice, they didn't qualify in December when 92 of us voted for that measure, and they don't qualify under the American Rescue Plan. Nothing has changed.

And for you to stand up there and say the opposite is just to rile people up over something that is not true.

It is not true, and we know what is going on [here]. They want to be able to give speeches and say the checks go to undocumented people. In the circumstance where there is a parent receiving—

At that point, the Senator's time expired.

Following that debate, the Senator in question took to Twitter to double down. So it was not, after an all-night of no sleep, a moment of erroneous comment, but, rather, on Twitter that same Senator tweeted:

Sen. Cruz's claim is only meant to rile people up over something that's not true. You cannot receive a stimulus check without a Social Security #. That's a fact. Instead of discriminating against mixed-status families, let's prioritize getting more relief to those families.

A second tweet from the same Senator:

We simply cannot stand by and allow outright falsehoods to be propagated on the Sen-

ate floor. It's time for GOP Senators like TED CRUZ to stop trying to rile people up over misinformation.

Well, as John Adams famously said, facts are stubborn things, and it turns out the comments from the Democratic Senator were categorically false and my comments that this bill would send checks to millions of illegal aliens were categorically true.

Numerous fact checkers began looking at the claims. Newsweek initially fact-checked it, and, as is the wont with a fair number of media fact checkers, took the word of the Democrats for it, concluded my statement was mostly false.

Following that, my staff got on the phone with Newsweek and presented them with incontrovertible facts—incontrovertible facts that of the roughly 12 million estimated illegal aliens who are here, roughly 60 percent of them are visa overstays, people who came legally and then overstayed their visa, and a significant percentage of visa overstays have Social Security numbers and will receive checks.

Indeed, that is why my amendment was scored at saving the Federal Government over \$600 million, because of the checks that would not go to illegal immigrants if my amendment had been passed.

When Newsweek heard these facts, they did something really quite impressive, admirable. They admitted they were wrong. They revised their fact check, and they changed their fact check from mostly false to true. True, period. No caveats. True. I want to commend Newsweek for demonstrating journalistic integrity. Correcting that fact-check, I am sure, was not an easy decision for them to make, but it was the right decision for them to make.

So, Mr. President, I would ask unanimous consent that we enter this fact-check into the RECORD.

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

[From Newsweek, Mar. 8, 2021]

FACT CHECK: WILL MILLIONS OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS GET STIMULUS CHECKS, AS TED CRUZ SAYS?

(By Graham McNally)

Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) proposed an amendment to the American Rescue Plan that would bar illegal immigrants from access to the \$1,400 stimulus checks.

His amendment was voted down after Senator Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) criticized Cruz for trying to "rile people up over something that is not true."

THE CLAIM

Cruz claimed on Twitter that illegal immigrants would be eligible for the \$1,400 stimulus checks included in the American Rescue Plan.

On March 6, Cruz tweeted, "When the checks go out, millions of illegal immigrants WILL GET \$1400 checks."

He wrote that many people considered illegal immigrants are those who have overstayed their visas, and therefore have Social Security numbers.

Cruz argued that the possession of Social Security numbers will allow unlawfully present individuals to obtain the stimulus money.