

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, and that upon the conclusion of my remarks, the Senate resume executive session, as under the previous order.

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

EVICTION MORATORIUM

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, almost exactly a year ago today, I stood here and called for Congress to take action to protect renters before the expiration of the eviction moratorium enacted during the early weeks of the pandemic.

Today, like a year ago, we are only hours away from a fully preventable housing crisis.

The CDC's eviction moratorium expires tonight at midnight, putting millions of families still recovering from the economic fallout of COVID-19 at risk for losing their homes, from losing the bedrock of their safety and stability.

Right now, more than 11 million renters report being behind on rent. That is one out of every seven renters. And people of color, who have been hit hardest by this pandemic, are disproportionately at risk. Nearly one-quarter of Black renters report being behind on rental payments.

Last year, Congress worked together to account for that staggering reality. We provided more than \$45 billion in emergency rental assistance. That money is now finally getting into the hands of landlords around the country. It is helping families who lost jobs get caught up on the missed payments.

But the money is getting out too slowly. Some States and local governments opened their assistance programs only last month. Some hadn't spent a single dollar by the beginning of June.

Now that is starting to change. In June, States delivered more than \$1.5 billion in emergency rental assistance. That money went to help nearly 300,000 households, but there are still billions of dollars to distribute and millions of families in need.

We have the tools, and we have the funding. What we need is the time.

Look, I agree that the eviction moratorium is not a long-term solution, but let me be very clear: it is the right short-term action. It is how we keep families safely in their homes while States deliver emergency aid. It is how we keep families who are starting to recover from the worst economic crisis of their lifetimes get back on their feet.

Millions of jobs have been lost, businesses are still shuttered, and childcare for too many families is still a patchwork of uncertainty. The recovery un-

derway in this country is historic, and it will continue, but it has not yet reached every family.

But the need is not just economic. We are still in the throes of a public health emergency that is trending in the wrong direction. Cases of COVID-19 are rising. Hospitalizations and deaths are rising. The Delta variant is more contagious, threatening to spread faster among the half of the country that remains unvaccinated.

Needlessly evicting families would risk escalating our public health crisis. The CDC understood that reality when it issued an eviction moratorium in September. The Agency was clear, and I want to quote the language they used: "Housing stability helps protect health."

That's right. Research shows that moratoriums aid in reducing infections and deaths due to COVID-19. And research also shows that when eviction moratoriums expire, there is an associated increase in COVID-19 and mortality.

Yesterday, Congresswoman CORI BUSH sent Members of Congress a letter. Congresswoman BUSH has lived through eviction. She has been unhousted. And I want to quote her letter. She said:

I know firsthand the trauma and devastation that comes with the violence of being evicted, and we have a responsibility to do everything we can to prevent this trauma from being inflicted on our neighbors and communities.

CORI BUSH is exactly right.

My office has heard from so many people in Massachusetts who are terrified about the possibility of losing their homes. I know that each of my colleagues here must be hearing these stories. In every State in this country there are families sitting around their kitchen table right now trying to figure out how to survive a devastating, disruptive, and unnecessary eviction.

Congress has a choice to make. It is a privilege for us to represent people, and we have a duty to exercise our power on their behalf. Every Senator in this Chamber should be grateful that they have the power right now to keep families safe.

My colleagues understood the stakes in March of 2020, when Congress passed the CARES Act eviction moratorium into law. They understood the stakes when we provided historic funding for emergency rental assistance. I urge them to join me now in continuing this lifesaving protection as States distribute assistance to keep renters housed; to keep landlords paid; and, most of all, to keep families safe.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume executive session.

Ms. WARREN. 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. WARNER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

H.R. 3684

Mr. WARNER. First of all, Madam President, let me thank you and all of the floor staff and others who are here. I think on a beautiful Saturday at the end of July, we all wish, perhaps, we were somewhere else other than on the floor of the Senate.

For the 30 years that I have been involved in political discussions in Virginia and some on an international level, we have had President after President and Congress after Congress talk about the generational unmet needs in infrastructure. We have seen our roads and bridges start to crumble. The estimates are that close to, depending on the survey, 14,000 bridges are in a decaying state, and in my State, over 700 bridges. We know the potholes in many of our roads and highways. We know our airports resemble third world nations, not the United States of America. We know our ports have not kept up with modern technology. We know that many of our shorelines are dealing with the unprecedented effects of sea level rise. We know after COVID that high-speed internet connectivity is not a nice-to-have but essential. It is something the Presiding Officer has taken a legislative lead on.

We know that it is time to get past talking about infrastructure and finally doing something. That is why I have been proud to be part of this bipartisan effort, working with the White House, to produce a historic piece of legislation, \$550 billion of new spending over 5 years that in every category I just mentioned will make historic investments.

I have been a little surprised, to tell you the truth, that some of our colleagues on the other side who were not part of the bipartisan group have suddenly said: No, we can't do infrastructure now. They were all for it when President Trump was in; now they find excuses why not.

I have to also say I have been a little bit surprised even with some of my colleagues on my side of the aisle, when the deal that we have structured is literally twice as much as where the earlier negotiations were between President Biden and some of the Republican committee chairs—committee leaders.

There has been some sense of, well, you know, infrastructure—that shouldn't be that hard to do. If it wasn't hard to do, why has it taken us 30 years to get to this moment?

I hope—and I know we are finalizing the last couple pieces of legislative language—I hope that we will get that finished as soon as possible so we can get this bill on the floor, have amendments, have a debate, but at the end of the day, pass this historic legislation

and finally put our money where our mouths have been in terms of talking about the needs of infrastructure in this country.

Now, I know, Madam President, that we do not have probably a lot of people rushing to the floor today, so I am going to take an extra minute or two. It doesn't mean you have to stay riveted to each moment. But I want to talk about this for a few moments in terms of what this will do for my State, for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In the Commonwealth of Virginia, investment in infrastructure has been something that has eluded us for years. I have to acknowledge that when I was Governor, I tried to find funding, the funding needs, particularly in Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads, and put forward bipartisan-supported tax referendums in Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads. I was horribly unsuccessful at getting that done.

A number of years later, a subsequent Governor, Governor McDonnell, managed to make a downpayment on some of the infrastructure needs in Virginia but not really address in a more comprehensive way the Commonwealth's needs.

So I am going to take a couple of moments now and talk about, section by section, in Virginia, what this bipartisan, White House-supported, record infrastructure investment will mean to the people of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Let me start with Hampton Roads. Hampton Roads, in a southeast Virginia peninsula, is most at risk from concerns about sea level rise and questions about resiliency, more than any other region in the whole country, with the exception of New Orleans. In Hampton Roads, local leaders, our Navy, nonprofits, and businesses have all come together and said: We need to make sure that we grapple with sea level rise. It is ranked, by most in those communities, as the No. 1 issue.

Well, if we pass this legislation, \$47 billion will go into sea level rise prevention and resiliency. That will mean that a whole host of projects in Norfolk, in Portsmouth, in Virginia Beach, and in Chesapeake will all be finally addressed. We have to make sure that Hampton Roads is not subject to this kind of devastating effect of sea level rise.

We also know that Hampton Roads needs more rail. We have opened recently some rail down to the peninsula, but not enough. We have to make sure that the rail that goes from Richmond doesn't leave off, as a cul-de-sac, the peninsula in South Hampton Roads. With a \$66 billion investment in rail, we may soon be able to see that become a reality.

Hampton Roads is home to the Port of Virginia. The Port of Virginia is one of the biggest ports on the whole east coast. But if we don't continue to upgrade that port, if we don't continue to deepen the channel, if we don't make

the investments in the Craney Island expansion, and if we don't stay competitive, that port, which is the economic engine driver not just of Hampton Roads but, in many ways, of most of the Commonwealth, will not stay competitive. This legislation will provide \$17 billion, a record amount of investment, in our ports, and I can promise you the Port of Virginia will get a share of those resources.

And, finally, on just the plain old issue of roads, Hampton Roads is disconnected from what we call the Peninsula in Virginia, and we have gotten two crosslinks, which oftentimes, during the summer months, can lead to multiple-hour backups to our bridge-tunnels. If we make this \$110 billion investment in roads and bridges, we can potentially see that third crossing come into reality. But what we could also make sure is that we could finally finish the widening of Interstate 64 between Norfolk and Richmond.

I talked about this when I ran for Governor, and as Governor I said: Wouldn't it be great if in our lifetime we could actually finish this project? Well, if we pass this bipartisan piece of legislation, the I-64 project widening from Norfolk to Richmond will be finished. This is incredibly important for the people of Hampton Roads, the Eastern Shore peninsula, and the Northern Neck to make these investments.

Let's move up the road to our capital, Richmond, and the Richmond area. Last week, as I was looking at the Mayo Bridge—one of the historic bridges, over 100 years old—I saw how decaying it was. I saw the water damage that was taking place. That bridge, without remediation, could be forced to close if we don't make the needed investments. Well, this bipartisan legislation will commit \$110 billion for highway and bridge improvements. Mayo Bridge, and a host of the other 700 bridges in Virginia that are decaying, will get fixed. We need to make that happen.

Richmond, as well, has got one of the most impressive bus transit systems not only in Virginia but in the whole country. We have made huge investments, close to \$40 billion, in transit in this legislation, and some of the Richmond bus transit needs will be addressed.

We also know, in the Richmond area and across the Commonwealth, that we have a lot of airports. One of the things we need to continue to do is invest in our airports. The Richmond airport is always in need of additional expansion. There is \$25 billion to improve our airports across the country. The Richmond airport, the Norfolk airport, the Newport News airport, and, obviously, the Roanoke airport and others—Dulles, National—will be improved, as well as a host of smaller regional airports across the Commonwealth, if we make this investment.

We come up to our region here, where I live, in Northern Virginia. I am very proud of working with TIM KAINE and

the Senators from Maryland. We made sure this legislation included a full 8-year reauthorization of our Metro system. We made sure that we are making record investments in transit so that we can get Metro back up operating again on a full schedule and we can make the needed safety improvements that have been plaguing Metro for a number of years.

We also know that we have to continue to build out additional Metro stations in Northern Virginia. The one at Potomac Yard will be extraordinarily important to the Innovation Center and the Amazon 2 headquarters.

We have to make sure, as well, because Metro is moving to zero-emission buses—that is good news for our climate and for our community. The question is where are those zero-emission buses going to be built? This legislation, as well, makes record investment in electric and other low-carbon and no-carbon buses, so they can be built here, not in China.

Our record investment in transit will also make dramatic improvements to the VRE for the Manassas Line. Let's get more people out of their cars and into VRE, whether it is the Manassas or Fredericksburg Line. Needed investments will be made if we pass this legislation.

Another project, if we are going to open up rail in Virginia, we have to make sure that we have another rail bridge across the Potomac. So for the Long Bridge Project, which I have been working with Governor Northam and Senator KAINE on, this kind of investment will make that happen.

And as anybody who lives in Northern Virginia knows—where I live, and somebody who lives in Alexandria—traffic is the bane of our existence. There will be a host of improvements that will get done if we pass this legislation. Let me talk about one in particular.

Route 1, from Alexandria through Fairfax and into Prince William County, we know how clogged and congested it has been. We have been looking for additional funding, literally, for decades on Route 1. If we pass this legislation, it will get done.

Let me move a little bit further west in our State, out toward the Shenandoah Valley and Roanoke and Southwest. For years, we have been talking about the danger on I-81. Literally, there have been prayer groups formed to pray for people who would travel on I-81 because there was so much truck traffic there that it has, frankly, impeded the safety of the traveling public. We have been talking about making improvements and expansions to 81 capacity for 20 years. We have been talking about how do we get the trucks off of I-81, and how do we bring more rail down to Southwest and Southside. Well, if we pass this legislation, we will see those 81 corridor improvements that we have all been waiting for. We will see rail not only going from Lynchburg and Roanoke but extend on

down to Blacksburg and Christiansburg and, hopefully, all the way down to Bristol. This is terribly important to make sure that those communities have a multimodal form of transportation opportunities and making sure we get those trucks off of I-81, something we have been talking about for a long time. If we increase the rail capacity, both freight and passenger, we will be able to do that.

We also know in Southside and Southwest, post-COVID, that high-speed internet connectivity is not a "nice to have" but an absolute necessity. A top priority of mine, as somebody who has spent more years in the telecommunications industry than I have in politics, is to make sure that we make those connections. This legislation—historic legislation—has \$65 billion for broadband. That investment, building on Governor Northam's \$700 million investment from Virginia and American Rescue Plan funds, will make sure that every household across the Commonwealth has access to high-speed internet connectivity, not 5 years from now or 10 years from now but in the next couple of years.

And, finally, across Southwest Virginia—and for that matter, across all of Virginia—we still have families in far Southwest that don't have access to clean drinking water on a regular basis, that still have to sometimes haul their water in the back of a pickup truck up to some cistern, and they don't have access to clean drinking water in 2021. Well, \$55 billion will go to water projects in this legislation. And whether they be access to clean drinking water on a regular basis or whether it be taking out the lead pipes that haunt too many of our urban communities, or the storm and sewer systems that are, frankly, in some cases, 60, 70, 80 years old and simply wearing out, we can make that investment as well.

Now, there are a series of other areas in this legislation that are equally important, but at the end of the day, I can't think of a bill that I have worked on that will have more direct effect on the lives of every Virginian over the next 5 years in terms of how you get to work, how you get to school, how you manage to take the kids out on the weekends, how our commerce moves, how we get our water, and how we get our internet than this record-setting \$550 billion bipartisan investment in infrastructure.

It is time for the Senate to take this bill up. I again commend all of my colleagues who have been working on this legislation, not just the so-called G-10 but the G-22. I thank Leader SCHUMER for his good work, continuing to push this legislation forward. I want to thank the White House for its constant involvement. I even want to commend Leader MCCONNELL for voting with this bipartisan group to move this legislation along. We have talked about this for 30 years. We are literally days away from this passing the U.S. Senate. We

have got to finish the job and get it done.

With that, I hope I have kept you riveted and now you are fully familiar with all the needs of Virginia. I am sure you can address similar needs in Minnesota. But I thank the Presiding Officer and all of the staffs who are here working on this Saturday, the last day in July, in the summer, to get this job done.

With that, I note the absence—I don't yield the floor.

I would have been surprised if the Presiding Officer had asked me to speak for another 30 minutes, but I will choose not to do that because I have great respect for the floor staff.

So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess subject to the call of the chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 2:43 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 5:16 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

EXECUTIVE SESSION—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

H.R. 3684

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I just want to give a quick update.

As everyone knows, we are waiting for the bipartisan group of Senators to finalize the text of their agreement. I have been informed the group is working hard to bring this negotiation to a conclusion, but they believe they need a little bit more time. I am prepared to give it to them because—because, as I have always said from the beginning, I am fully committed to passing a bipartisan infrastructure bill, and so the Senate will remain in session today so that they can bring this to a conclusion.

Again, this is an important bill. I know all the parties want to get this right. As soon as their legislative text is finalized, we will review it, and then I will offer it as the substitute amendment. After that, we can begin voting for amendments.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess subject to the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:18 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 9:51 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BENNET).

EXECUTIVE SESSION—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

H.R. 3684

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the bipartisan group of Senators has still not finalized the legislative text of their substitute amendment. The staffs are still working and say they will have the final legislative text ready tomorrow. Therefore, the Senate will reconvene tomorrow at 12 noon.

As I have said, when the legislative text is ready, I will offer it as the substitute amendment, and, after that, we can begin voting on amendments.

As a reminder, upon completion of the bipartisan infrastructure bill, the Senate will turn to the budget resolution with reconciliation instructions.

I want to thank the Capitol Police, the clerks, and the Senate staff for working these past 2 late nights.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1597. A communication from the Deputy Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "American Rescue Plan Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Plan" (RIN1810-AB64) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 26, 2021; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1598. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fraud and Abuse; Removal of Safe Harbor Protection for Rebates Involving Prescription Pharmaceuticals and Creation of New Safe Harbor Protection for Certain Point-of-Sale Reductions in Price on Prescription Pharmaceuticals and Certain Pharmacy Benefit Manager Service Fees; Additional Delayed Effective Date" (RIN0936-AA08) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 26, 2021; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1599. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of General Counsel, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Adjustment of Civil Monetary Penalties for Inflation" ((RIN1801-AA21) (34 CFR Parts 36 and 668)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 26, 2021; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1600. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "2020 Report to Congress State Pilot Grant Program for Treatment for Pregnant and Postpartum Women"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1601. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Public Health Data System Modernization Strategy and Implementation Plan"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1602. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled