

debt for Federal student loan borrowers administratively using existing legal authorities under such section 432(a), and any other authorities available under the law;

(3) encourages the President of the United States, in taking such executive action, to use the executive's authority under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure no tax liability for Federal student loan borrowers resulting from administrative debt cancellation;

(4) encourages the President of the United States, in taking such executive action, to ensure that administrative debt cancellation helps close racial wealth gaps and avoids the bulk of Federal student loan debt cancellation benefits accruing to the wealthiest borrowers; and

(5) encourages the President of the United States to continue to pause student loan payments and interest accumulation for Federal student loan borrowers for the entire duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I have a request for one committee to meet during today's session of the Senate. It has the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committee is authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Monday, February 8, 2021, at 6 p.m., to conduct a classified hearing.

AMAZON

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, today, Amazon workers in Alabama will begin receiving ballots that will give them, finally, a real voice in their workplace by choosing to join a union.

Amazon would not be the massively successful company that it is and Jeff Bezos wouldn't be a multibillionaire without the hard work and the dedication of its hundreds of thousands of U.S. workers. They have put in long hours and risked their own health during this pandemic to meet the increased demand that we all know.

As of October, 20,000—think of this—20,000 Amazon workers, 20,000 workers at one company, Amazon, had contracted COVID-19. That is as of October. We know those numbers would be much higher today.

Because of their hard work, Amazon's profits have soared by more than 70 percent. The company's workers deserve to share in the success that they made possible.

Amazon claims to recognize the value of its workers. They call their workers "heroes fighting for their communities and helping people get critical items they need." Heroes, they call them.

If the company truly believed and appreciated that they were heroes, Amazon might back up its words with ac-

tion. That means letting these workers organize. It means stopping the corporate union-busting tactics that they have deployed against these workers.

Amazon, one of most powerful corporations in the world, unleashed all of that power to fight their own workers who are just asking for a voice on the job. They have harassed employees with anti-union propaganda, misleading text messages, websites, and fliers.

One Washington Post headline really said it all: "Amazon's anti-union blitz stalks Alabama warehouse workers everywhere, even the bathroom."

Workers have reported they don't get enough time for bathroom breaks in the warehouse. That is how intense the company's pressure is. When they are able to use the restroom, even there, workers are hit with anti-union propaganda fliers on the stall doors.

Amazon has repeatedly tried to block mail-in voting and force workers to hold the union election in person, putting its workers—remember, 20,000 already have been diagnosed back in October—putting its workers' health at even more risk, just to suppress the vote. It is all part of a pattern for Amazon.

In 2019, Amazon fired a Staten Island warehouse worker who called for unionization. They monitor employees' online communications. Last fall, we learned the company planned to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on new software to monitor, their words, "threats" like unions.

It is little wonder Amazon is afraid of workers getting more power. So much of their business model is built on top of exploiting workers, often Black and Brown workers and women.

Instead of employing many drivers directly, they use what they call Amazon Flex drivers. Just like with other gig economy jobs, "Flex" is corporate PR speak for denying workers their rights as full employees.

They have failed to provide complete data on COVID-19 spread in the workplace, so we really can't find out whether the company is protecting its workers' health.

Amazon rolled back its tiny \$2-per-hour pandemic raise in June. It announced a \$2-an-hour bonus pandemic raise with great fanfare many months ago. Then they rolled it back in June, and then they announced a one-time bonus of \$300 per worker, not \$3,000 per worker, \$300 a worker from a company that brought in \$200 billion in revenue the previous year. I am sorry, \$280 billion—280,000 million—\$280 billion in revenue; they gave workers a bonus of \$300.

And Amazon is not alone. The Washington Post looked at the 50 biggest corporations and found that between April and September, these companies handed out more than \$240 billion to their stockholders through stock buybacks and dividends.

Companies like that are making more and more and more money. They

are giving it back to executives and stockholders in huge dividends and stock buybacks. Yet their workers are exposed to these health hazards at work, exposed to this virus. They come home always anxious and scared about infecting their families.

The workers risk their own health, often at rockbottom wages, to make those companies so profitable.

If even a global pandemic, where America's workers have been on the frontline, if even that will not get corporations to rethink their business model that treats workers as expendable, then we have to give workers more power on the job.

A grocery store worker said: You know, they say—told me, they say I am essential, but, really, I feel expendable because they don't pay me much, and they don't protect me on the job.

PRO ACT

Mr. President, so what do we do?

It should mean collective bargaining. It should mean unions. It is why I joined Senator MURRAY and many of my colleagues last week to reintroduce the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, the PRO Act.

It is a comprehensive overhaul of our labor laws to protect workers' right to stand together and bargain for fair wages, fair benefits, safer workplaces.

We know corporations have attacked and undermined worker protections for decades, made it harder and harder for workers even to stand a chance in organizing a union when they choose to.

And look what has happened to our economy, as corporations take away workers' power: Productivity goes up, corporate profits soar, executive compensation explodes through the roof, but wages stay flat, and the middle class shrinks.

Just go over that again. Corporate profits, workers' productivity goes up. Workers are working harder and more efficiently. Productivity goes up, corporate profits soar, executive compensation explodes, but wages stay flat, and the middle class shrinks.

Our bill would work to level the playing field, finally give workers a fighting chance against corporate union-busting tactics like we see right now today, last week, the week before, and today at Amazon.

It would strengthen the punishment against companies that violate workers' rights to organize and the companies that retaliate against union organizers.

It would restore to an economy rigged against workers by closing loopholes that allow employers to misclassify their employees as supervisors and independent contractors so they don't have to live under labor law.

We can't in this country, whether it is in Las Cruces or in Dayton—we can't have a strong, growing middle class without strong unions.

Union members earn 19 percent more, on the average, than similar workers in nonunion jobs. They have better healthcare. They are better able to

save for retirement. They have more predictable hours—talk to the Amazon workers about their hours—and they have more control over their schedules and more economic security.

At a time when this pandemic reveals so much about inequality in our society, it is more vital than ever that we empower all workers.

It is not a coincidence that so many of the workers, at corporations like Amazon, whom they exploit are workers of color. It is true at the Amazon Alabama facility. The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, organizing in Alabama, has made respect and dignity central to its campaign.

It comes back to the dignity of work. Remember what Dr. King said. He said:

No labor is really menial unless you're not getting adequate wages.

The president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, Stuart Appelbaum, said:

We see this as much as a civil rights struggle as a labor struggle.

We know where Dr. King was assassinated and what he was doing. He was fighting for civil rights. He was fighting for worker rights, fighting for sanitation workers in Memphis, some of the most exploited workers in America.

A union card is a ticket to the middle class, and we fight for economic justice by making it available to all workers. We just need corporations just to get out of the way, let workers organize, let workers take control over their careers and their futures.

When you love this country, you fight for the people who make it work, whether it is in New Mexico or Ohio or all over this country.

That is what the Amazon workers in Alabama are doing. It is what unions have done throughout our history in this country. It is what we can do in the Senate by passing the PRO Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

HONORING THE MEMORIES OF THE VICTIMS OF THE SENSELESS ATTACK AT MARJORY STONEMAN DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL ON FEBRUARY 14, 2018

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 42, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 42) honoring the memories of the victims of the senseless attack at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on February 14, 2018.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to re-

consider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 42) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I would like to thank my colleague Senator RUBIO for joining me to introduce this resolution today honoring the 17 victims of the senseless attack at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on February 14, 2018: Alyssa Alhadeff, Scott Beigel, Martin Duque Anguiano, Nicholas Dworet, Aaron Feis, Jaime Guttenberg, Chris Hixon, Luke Hoyer, Cara Loughran, Gina Montalto, Joaquin Oliver, Alaina Petty, Meadow Pollack, Helena Ramsay, Alex Schachter, Carmen Schentrup, Peter Wang.

I think of those innocent lives almost every day, lost too early in the tragic shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL.

These individuals were sons, daughters, parents, and partners. They were educators, athletes, musicians. Many of them just kids, with a life full of promise ahead of them.

My heart breaks knowing they will never get to pursue their dreams and that their families will always have a piece of their heart missing.

Since that horrible day, I have worked closely with many of the victims' families to ensure no child, educator, or family has to experience that again.

We passed the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act while I was Governor of Florida to make sure our State does everything in its power to prevent further tragedies.

Now, as a U.S. Senator, I am fighting for improvements on the Federal level, including the Luke and Alex School Safety Act, named after Luke Hoyer and Alex Schachter, which builds on our work to keep schools safe.

And while we can't bring back these lives lost that tragic day nearly 3 years ago, I will always work to honor those lost and do everything in my power to protect our students and educators and ensure they have a safe environment to learn and succeed.

Now, I yield the floor to my colleague Senator RUBIO.

Mr. RUBIO. I thank my colleague from Florida.

I recall so vividly that day on February 14, 2018. It started like it does most days with people across the country. They take their children to school, drop them off, and, in this case, maybe some of them drove themselves.

And within hours, the lives of 17 families had been changed forever. It was a horrible tragedy: 17 students and faculty members who lost their lives; another 17 that were wounded in the attack. And it shocked the country.

It was shocking because they went to do what so many people do on a regular basis in a place where you never think that something like that could happen.

And as my colleague pointed out, there is no resolution in the Senate or words that we can say that will restore the lives that were lost, erase the pain still felt by those victims, the families, the friends, those who loved them.

But even as we continue to grieve, we must also work to prevent something like this from happening anywhere at any time.

I was proud that in the early days after this tragedy, within just a few weeks, together, working across the aisle, we passed the STOP School Violence Act, which provided Federal grant money for school safety. And that has been ongoing now for 3 years.

We passed the Fix NICS Act, which helped patch some of the holes that existed in our background check system.

Since that day, I have had the honor of getting to know and working with the parents of many of those who lost their lives at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

And I will say that their grace in the face of the most traumatic loss that any parent, any sibling, any cousin, any grandparent, anyone can imagine—working with them has been humbling in the face of the grace that they have shown. The commitment to ensuring that no one else has to go through what they did is inspiring.

There are so many I can point to who have made a difference in their own way. They have all sort of focused on different aspects of what we should be doing, and I just want to take a moment today to recognize one individual, Max Schachter.

I know many of you have gotten to know him here. This man works tirelessly. He lost his son Alex on that day.

But his commitment has actually produced significant progress, thanks to his leadership, and I must say his leadership—and I spoke to him again last Friday, and he continues to work on these issues.

And thanks to that, last year, the Federal Government created a Federal clearinghouse on school safety best practices—a place that any district, any school can go to and something that is constantly being updated, that puts an essential location for best practices and offers access to an array of resources for schools across our Nation that are looking to protect their students.

And this is important because in the aftermath of this, everyone was trying to figure out, well, what should we do? And there was no central place where you could go to and find that out.

And recently, as my colleague from Florida has pointed out, I, along with my colleague from Florida and Senator RON JOHNSON, we reintroduced the Luke and Alex School Safety Act, named after—partially after his son Alex, which would make this clearinghouse permanent. It was put in place