

U.S. Rep. Grothman: House coronavirus vote was rushed, calls on Senate to do their homework

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(Washington, D.C.) – Congressman Glenn Grothman (R-Glenbeulah) released the following statement after his vote on [H.R. 6201](#), the second bill in as many weeks to address the Coronavirus pandemic:

“Last Saturday morning, I witnessed the most rushed vote I’ve ever seen in all my time in public office.

We were told that at some point on Friday, March 13, Congress would vote on a second bill to address the Coronavirus pandemic. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin met several times Thursday and Friday to negotiate the contents of the bill. I, along with the rest of Congress, waited two full days to find out what would be in the bill. Hour after hour we waited, and as Friday afternoon turned into night, and Friday night crept closer to Saturday morning, it seemed unbelievable that we would still have time to vote. Through all of this, I still expected an opportunity to read the contents of the bill on which I was expected to vote.

Finally, Saturday at midnight, we received the 110-page bill. Less than 30 minutes later, we were called to the Floor to vote on it.

Under normal circumstances, Members of Congress get information from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) describing how much the bill would cost. No statement was provided to us and we did not know the cost of the bill on which we were expected to vote.

The paid family leave policy is an important issue that Congress has discussed in recent years, and I think we owe it to the American people to get it right. This bill, unfortunately, pushed through a version of the policy that was not well-thought-out and puts many small businesses at risk of closure.

When the dust settled, the bill passed 363-40. I don't see how any responsible Member of Congress could vote for a bill whose content was withheld from us until, literally, the clock struck midnight.

I should point out that I voted for the \$7.8 billion bill addressing the Coronavirus pandemic that passed the House on March 4 and was signed into law on March 6. Most of these funds went to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the bulk of which is being put toward the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and National Institute of Health (NIH). An important provision in this bill is that it gave the CDC the funds needed to make testing kits widely available and open hundreds of testing labs to expedite the results. It is critically important for the federal government to know how many people are affected by the virus as we weigh the next steps in addressing it. Additionally, \$1 billion has been reserved by this bill for disaster loans for small businesses affected by the pandemic. This is all in addition to the \$50 billion in national emergency funding provided by President Trump.

I strongly encourage the U.S. Senate to clean up this mess. They will have plenty of time to review the bill and should pay careful attention to the paid family leave provisions of the bill. I am disappointed with the bill overall, but particularly the fact that it did not do more to accelerate production of vital drugs and medical supplies in the United States. Hopefully a more responsible bill will emerge from the Senate."