U.S. Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC) and nine of his Republican colleagues issued the following statement after their more than two-hour meeting with President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris to discuss their COVID-19 relief proposal: "It was an excellent meeting, and we are very appreciative that in his first official meeting in the Oval Office, President Biden chose to spend so much time with us discussing the response to the COVID crisis. We presented our proposal to the president, and we had a very productive exchange of views," said the Senators. "On five previous occasions, Congress has demonstrated that we can come together to deliver COVID-19 relief for the American people. In the coming days, talks among our group, the Biden administration, and other senators will continue as we work in good faith on a sixth bipartisan package to help struggling families, get students back to school, assist our small businesses and their employees, provide relief for health care providers, and accelerate testing and vaccine programs."

Since March 2020, Congress has passed five bipartisan COVID-19 relief bills and provided more than $4 trillion in COVID-19 relief. The latest COVID-19 relief packaged provided $900 billion in additional resources and was signed into law on December 27, 2020. Much of that assistance is only now being disbursed.

Statement by White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki on President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris' Meeting with Republican Senators

The President and the Vice President had a substantive and productive discussion with Republican senators this evening at the White House. The group shared a desire to get help to the American people, who are suffering through the worst health and economic crisis in a generation.

While there were areas of agreement, the President also reiterated his view that Congress must respond boldly and urgently, and noted many areas which the Republican senators' proposal does not address. He reiterated that while he is hopeful that the Rescue Plan can pass with bipartisan support, a reconciliation package is a path to achieve that end. The President also made clear that the American Rescue Plan was carefully designed to meet the stakes of this moment, and any changes in it cannot leave the nation short of its pressing needs.

The President expressed his hope that the group could continue to discuss ways to

strengthen the American Rescue Plan as it moves forward, and find areas of common ground — including work on small business support and nutrition programs. He reiterated, however, that he will not slow down work on this urgent crisis response, and will not settle for a package that fails to meet the moment.

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