



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2017

No. 198

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we praise You for Your goodness; Your faithful love endures forever. You are the protector of Your people.

Today, recapture the minds of our lawmakers and galvanize their wills. May they live blameless lives, doing what is right and speaking the truth from sincere hearts. Lord, infuse them with the spirit of humility so that they will seek to be guided by Your wisdom. May they keep their priorities straight, remembering that You are the only constituent they absolutely must please. Help them to make it their primary goal to please You in what they think, say, and accomplish.

We praise You and pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

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

DACA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we are facing a deadline of March 5, 2018. It

was a deadline created by President Trump on September 5. That was the day he announced, through the Attorney General, that he was ending the DACA Program.

The DACA Program was created by President Obama to give young people who were brought to this country as infants and toddlers and young children and who grew up in America and are currently undocumented a chance to earn their way to legalization and citizenship. That was the original Dream Act. When President Obama passed his Executive order, he protected them from deportation until Congress responded with a law. I asked for that designation and was thankful President Obama did it.

As a result of his Executive order, 780,000 young people came forward, paid a filing fee of over \$500, went through an extensive criminal background check, and were cleared to be given temporary protection from deportation and temporary opportunities to work in America, renewable every 2 years.

President Trump came into office and ended it. He challenged Congress and said: Now pass a law to take care of this issue. It is a legitimate challenge for the President to issue. I wish he had done it differently, but it is certainly worthy of him to call on us to do our job.

Well, here we are 3 months after that challenge from President Trump and what has the Republican majority done in the Senate or the House to respond to that challenge? Absolutely nothing—nothing, not one thing—to provide these 780,000, as well as others who are eligible for this protection, an opportunity under law, not one thing.

Is it because we have been overwhelmed with business? Well, I defy those who have followed the business of the U.S. Senate over the course of the last year to say that. It is seldom that we have ever come to the floor and debated anything of substance. Most of the time we are an empty Chamber

lurching from one cloture vote to another cloture vote, to a motion to proceed to this nomination and that nomination. The exceptions, of course, were on healthcare and the Trump tax reform bill, and those were done by reconciliation; in other words, strictly partisan efforts.

So we have not done much this year. We certainly haven't done much since September 5 of this year, and now what we hear from the other side of the aisle, from the senior Senator from Texas is, What is the hurry? We have plenty of time here. We will take care of these young people perhaps in January, perhaps in February. The deadline is March 5.

It is pretty easy for any Member of the U.S. Senate to say: What is the hurry, let's go slow, until they sit down and talk to the young people who are affected. I have done that many times, and I did it over this weekend.

I went to Benito Juarez High School in the city of Chicago. A group of about 20 young people came forward, all of them protected by DACA. These young people started telling their stories of being brought to the United States at the age of 1 or 2, watching as some of their relatives have been deported, trying to grow up in America, uncertain of their future—really uncertain today as to what they are going to be doing—and many of them are extraordinarily talented young people. It is not uncommon for them to break down in tears as they tell their story.

One was a 24-year-old graduate of college who received no Federal assistance because she is one of the Dreamers and undocumented. She finished college. She is now teaching in the Chicago Public School System. If she loses DACA protection, she loses her job as a teacher. There are tens of thousands just like her across America.

The senior Senator from Texas asks: What is the hurry? Why do we need to address this issue?

I wish that Senator could have been there and watched her and spoken to

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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her, as I did, and realized she is living in fear, in terror; that her life as she knows it could end tomorrow—and it could—because of the decision by President Trump to end this protection.

All we have asked for—and many of us on a bipartisan basis—is to call up the Dream Act for a vote in the U.S. Senate, to give these young people a chance of the protection of law so they can continue in this country.

Some Republicans have said we need to sit down and talk about border security. I said I would be happy to do that. When I was part of the Gang of 8, we came up with comprehensive immigration reform, and we had an extensive border security plan. Some of the Republican Senators who offered it told me later: We went overboard and you accepted it. We did. We are serious about border security. That is not an issue, but for the senior Senator from Texas, that is not good enough.

I handed him a sheet of paper last week, and I have a copy of it right here, showing him the proposals we are making on border security. I pointed out to him that 12 of the proposals I handed to him were proposals from his own bill for border security. We are serious about this. This is a genuine effort to give border security provisions the enactment of law along with the Dream Act.

So what we hear is that the senior Senator from Texas came to the floor and said: Well, they are just not negotiating in good faith. Well, I have handed him this provision, this proposal. It was a good-faith gesture and a good-faith effort to move us forward, and the only response we had yesterday from the senior Senator from Texas is: What is the hurry? Why should we get it done this year? Why don't we wait until next year?

Well, next year, as we know, means waiting 2 months when it comes to this issue, and that, to me, is the real fear I have—that we will put this off. The uncertainty, the worry, the stress for these young people will continue while we do nothing—nothing.

We don't enact laws here. We do nothing. We give speeches to an empty Chamber and say: Gosh, I wish we had a little more time here to really do some substantive work. We have all the time we need.

I would commend to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, for goodness' sake, when 76 percent of the American people agree with the Dream Act, when 61 percent of Trump voters agree with the Dream Act, there is no excuse. We need to make it the law of the land.

NATIONAL MONUMENTS DESIGNATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it was 20 years ago when I was first elected to the Senate. I was asked to consider a bill called the Red Rocks Wilderness Act. I didn't know anything about it. It was a bill that had been offered by Sen-

ator Bill Bradley of New Jersey. He was retiring. I was asked to consider sponsoring this wilderness proposal in the State of Utah. Of course, I said, I am from Illinois, not Utah, and I have never seen this. Well, they asked me to come out and take a look, and I did.

My wife and I went out to take a look at what was known as the Red Rocks Wilderness Area. It is in the southeastern corner of Utah. I had never been there, nor had I ever heard of it before I visited. What an eye-opener, to go there and see this magnificent vista, this incredible landscape that was being proposed for wilderness protection and status.

So over the years, I have reintroduced the bill, the conversation continued, and it wasn't until President Obama took a major share of this area, which is in San Juan County in the southeastern corner of Utah, and designated it in the name of the Bears Ears Monument that we finally achieved protection for this beautiful piece of real estate.

I have been there. It is breathtaking. There are incredible cultural sites there by Native Americans, and it is a great place to visit, to hike, and to enjoy a special piece of America. It is filled with magnificent red rock formations, deep, carved canyons, long mesas, and rock arches. Some of the photos just don't do it justice. We can take a look at some of these, and we can get an idea of the vastness of the area that is affected here.

Then you might take a look at some of the others and realize it includes a lot of cultural and prehistoric settings that were utilized by the Native American people when they called these caves their homes. It has special meaning to the Native American Tribes that are there. Many of them trace their origins to the very people who dwelled in these caves and the structures they built with the loose rocks that we can still see today.

We look at it and think, Well, if you didn't use this, if you didn't preserve it, if you didn't protect it, what would you do with it?

I have spoken with some of the Senators from Utah, and they have readily conceded there is no oil or gas there to be drilled. There may be some uranium processing but very little. I asked them: Why wouldn't you want this area protected? It doesn't have economic value other than the fact that people will come, tourists will come to Utah to see this beautiful place.

I was troubled when President Trump announced he was going to follow Secretary Zinke's recommendation and shrink the proposed Bears Ears Monument as well as another nearby called the Grand Staircase-Escalante. They would reduce the size of the Bears Ears Monument by 85 percent and Grand Staircase-Escalante by 50 percent.

In April, President Trump issued an Executive order requiring the Department of the Interior to preview and review the previous national monument

designations of President Obama. Although Bears Ears and Grand Staircase are the first two targets to be hit by President Trump, this attack on what is known as the Antiquities Act and our national monuments goes far beyond these two sites.

As part of the review, the President and Secretary of the Interior Zinke considered changing every national monument that had been created since 1996, which is more than 50 nationwide. These are areas that have been protected by Presidents of both political parties. It goes back, in fact, to a Republican President, Teddy Roosevelt, who realized it was worth fighting off some of the parochial and economic interests to preserve pieces of America for future generations.

The list that was subject to the Trump order spans the country. It includes the Cascade-Siskiyou in Oregon, Gold Butte in Nevada, Katahdin Woods and Waters in Maine, Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and Rio Grande in New Mexico, and several marine monuments.

The administration's decisions to shrink Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante goes against continued support for these sites. The Bears Ears Monument was the first monument to be proposed and advocated by the five sovereign Tribal nations: The Hopi, Navajo Nation, Ute Mountain Ute, Pueblo of Zuni, and Ute Indians.

The Tribes sought protection because of the important place Bears Ears has in their cultures. The artifacts within Bears Ears range from 700 to 12,000 years old, providing Tribes with an incredible insight into the sacred history of their ancestral homeland and bolstering their deep spiritual connection to the landscape itself. In total, 30 Native-American Tribes with ancestral, historical, and contemporary ties to the Bears Ears region supported the designation—30.

I might recall, for those who are not students of history—and I am learning—treatment of Native Americans in this region has again raised some serious questions about America's past. It wasn't until 1920 that Native Americans were recognized as citizens of the United States in many of these areas. It wasn't until 1957 that Native Americans were given the right to vote in the State of Utah even though Native Americans had served our country in World War II, such as the Code Talkers, who were honored by President Trump last week. It wasn't until the 1970s that the State of Utah built its first public school on a Tribal area reservation—and only did that after being ordered by the Federal court. The history of our relationship with these Native-American Tribes is one that raises questions about our respect for what they meant to the earliest founding of America and what they mean to us today.

Mr. President, I see the majority leader has taken the floor. I know that under the rules he has priority when it