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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Spirit of God, who brought creation out of the void, light from darkness, and order from chaos, everything under Heaven belongs to You. Lord, use our lawmakers for Your glory. May their daily experiences of joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, victory and defeat, bring honor to Your Name. Remind our Senators that no evil can stop the unfolding of Your purposes and providence. Lead them this day with Your merciful hands, providing for their needs. Bless all who labor for liberty, protecting them with the shield of Your love.

We 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. ROMNEY). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will pro-

ceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Paul B. Matey, of New Jersey, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute.

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

SECRET HOLDS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, it is Sunshine Week, and I support transparency throughout government. The public's business ought to be public. That includes right here in the U.S. Senate.

My newer colleagues might be unaware that the Senate has banned what are referred to as secret holds. Since January 2011, a standing order has been in effect, requiring that Senators make public any hold they place on bills or nominations.

A Senator, of course, has a right to withhold consent when unanimous consent is needed to move to a measure. However, there is absolutely no right to do so in secret. The public's business ought to be done in public.

That is why Senator WYDEN and I sent a letter to all Senators reminding them of this standing order that we authored requiring disclosure of holds.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 1 more minute.

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. When Senators spend most of their time on the Senate floor, as they used to before the Senate was on television, it was easy for any Senator to stand up and say "I object," if consent were asked for any motion or any nomination. Now we spend most of our time in committee hearings and meeting with those we represent. We rely on our party leadership to protect

our rights, and we sometimes tell them if we need someone to object on our behalf to moving a bill or a nominee. That happens to be called a hold. A hold should not be secret, I want everybody to know that sometimes I put holds on nominations or bills.

Whoever heard of shouting "I object" in secret? A hold, in other words, ought to be public, as the standing order requires. The Senate affirmed that in the year 2011 by adopting a permanent standing order that Senator WYDEN and I wrote. I remind my colleagues, that standing order is still in place.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, in the last couple of weeks, I have come to the floor for a few short comments on the Green New Deal. I have compared it to the New Deal of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt administration and its attempt to get us out of the Depression with the New Deal then.

In his 1932 campaign for President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt called for what he called a "bold persistent experimentation." That is a pretty good description of the New Deal. It wasn't a very cohesive plan, but it was a collection of disconnected policies. In that sense, the Green New Deal emulates its namesake. It, too, is kind of a collection of disconnected policies.

The New Deal of the 1930s failed to pull the economy out of the Depression that actually ended at the beginning of World War II. It is not surprising, however, that it didn't pull us out of the Depression because it didn't create economic growth. Economic growth needs

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



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predictable and sensible tax and regulatory policies. We have seen the fruits of this approach under the Trump administration. So let's not, through the Green Deal, kill the goose that laid the golden egg.

The Green New Deal is both breathtaking in its professed ambitions and, quite frankly, laughably weak. It is just a resolution calling on the government to enact a whole range of policies.

Then, why not introduce a bill that actually does something rather than a resolution calling for future implausible actions?

It is supposed to be about protecting the environment. As someone with a track record of real bipartisan achievements that have resulted in a cleaner environment, I don't get it. If you want to know my credentials there, I am the father of the wind energy tax credit, just as an example. We get 38 percent of our electricity from wind in Iowa.

What do universal healthcare—an other item of the Green New Deal—or free college tuition or a Federal jobs guarantee program have to do with the environment anyway? All of those things are in the Green New Deal.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

DECLARATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY

Mr. SCHUMER. By the end of this week, the Senate will vote on a resolution to terminate the President's emergency declaration. I have laid out the number of reasons why the Senate must vote to terminate. The President has not demonstrated that an emergency exists. During the announcement of the declaration, the President said he "didn't need to do this." A few weeks later, 58 former national security officials, including former Secretaries of State and Defense, said there was "no factual basis" for an emergency declaration. For the sake of the facts, the Senate must vote to terminate.

We also have no idea which military construction projects might be on the chopping block. Republican Senators who vote against this declaration do so at their own peril. They may be voting to deprive necessary funds from military installations in their States. For the sake of the brave men and women of our Armed Forces, the Senate must vote to terminate.

Of course, the constitutional questions loom largest. The President failed to convince Congress, the American people, and, perhaps most glaringly, Mexico to pay for his border

wall. Now he is attempting to use emergency powers to subvert the will of Congress. If allowed to stand, this emergency declaration would be a defacement of our constitutional order and one of the largest power grabs for the executive branch in the more than 200 years this Nation has been in existence.

My colleagues must contemplate the possibility that if President Trump were to succeed with his phony emergency declaration, future Presidents would have a precedent to claim emergencies whenever Congress failed to endorse their policies. In effect, Congress would no longer be a coequal branch of government. It would change the balance of power rather dramatically in ways the Founding Fathers would never have contemplated. In fact, it would horrify many of the Founding Fathers, who were so worried about an overweening Executive in the personage of King George.

I know many of my Republican friends are afraid to cross the President. We know he can be vindictive. I know that several support the idea of building a wall but want to oppose the emergency declaration. I would say to my colleagues respectfully: You have been able to express your support for a border wall numerous times in the past Congress and in this one. Another amendment vote will accomplishment nothing new; it will only poison Congress's ability to pass this resolution.

This is not about policy at our southern border; this is about one thing and one thing alone—Presidential overreach.

Later this week, the Senate ought to vote a clean resolution to terminate the emergency. The bottom line is very simple: If we were upholding the Constitution, it would be 100 to nothing against the emergency. If there were no politics, no fear, no worry about crossing a President, the vote would be 100 to nothing. If people read the Federalist Papers and the Constitution and what the Founding Fathers intended, the vote would be 100 to nothing. I hope it is as close to that as is possible.

BUDGET PROPOSAL

Mr. President, earlier today, the Trump administration released its annual request. In recent years, these budget requests have become statements of principles and priorities rather than working documents. Purely as a statement of principle, the latest budget proposal from the Trump administration is not only extremely disturbing, but it is totally against what the President talks about when he talks to his supporters.

The budget request we received today would be a gut punch to the middle class and a handout to powerful special interests and the wealthiest few. It would dismantle America's healthcare system as we know it, and it would dramatically widen the gap in income and wealth between our Nation's richest citizens and the rest.

Now listen to this: The President talks about how he wants to get better healthcare for Americans. Certainly our Republican colleagues do. By cutting healthcare coverage and increasing healthcare costs for millions of Americans, this budget belies those promises. President Trump's budget would repeal the entire Affordable Care Act, taking away insurance from 32 million Americans and eliminating protections for Americans with pre-existing conditions. How many Republicans are for that?

How about this: \$1.5 trillion in cuts to Medicaid, \$845 billion in cuts to Medicare, \$506 billion in cuts to tax credits that help lower income Americans afford insurance. Not only is this cruel, it is hypocritical. It is against everything our Republican friends talk about. It is against what the President says. He is going to preserve Medicare and Medicaid, and then he slashes them. It still befuddles me how he can get away with this even in these times.

Second, the budget slashes domestic programs, including investments in infrastructure, housing, education, and the environment—a third of the EPA budget and one-fifth of the Department of Transportation budget.

My Republican friends, when your commissioners and Governors come to you and say they need more highway funds, are you going to support a budget that cuts them by 20 percent?

On top of all this, it gives more tax breaks to the wealthiest few. It would permanently extend the Trump tax cuts, costing \$1.9 trillion over 10 years. Seventy percent of the benefits go to the top one-fifth of America. The staggering costs of these tax cuts are the reason for all the proposed cuts to healthcare and infrastructure. The Trump budget proposes the blind theft of the middle class to line America's deepest pockets.

It is really a disgraceful budget. My guess is that Mr. Mulvaney at OMB put it together. He was one of the five most rightwing people in the Congress. He wanted to slash everything. The President just green-stamped it so he can tip his hat to those on the very far right.

The vast majority of the President's supporters—they are a dwindling number; they are now less than a third of America—don't support this. They don't support this at all. How many people who count themselves as supporters of President Trump support cutting Medicare by close to \$1 trillion? How many of those who consider themselves supporters of Trump support cutting Medicaid by \$1.5 trillion? How many of the President's closest supporters think we should eliminate protections for preexisting conditions when people have them? How many of the President's supporters want to cut infrastructure by one-fifth or cut the clean water and clean air budget by one-third? Hardly any. This budget is just sort of an "Alice in Wonderland" document.