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Senate

The Senate met at 1 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RICK SCOTT, a Senator from the State of Florida.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

God of endless mercy, You alone hold power over the nations. We humbly ask that You may soften our hearts so that we might see the path away from discord and toward unity. As hundreds of thousands of Federal workers brace for another painful payday, remind our lawmakers that they can ease the pain. Lord, in this hour of need, we cry out to You and ask You to send Your wisdom into this Chamber so that our Senators might comprehend and act in accordance with Your will.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 22, 2019.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RICK SCOTT, a Senator

from the State of Florida, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 268

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 268) making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

Mr. McCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, here is what happened this weekend with respect to the continuing disagreement over funding the government. Two things happened over the weekend.

On Saturday, the Senate was in session, and Members of both parties came to the floor to speak about the urgent need for a bipartisan compromise to reopen the Federal Government for the sake of Federal workers who need certainty, and for the sake of the American people who need their Nation's government fully online.

Also on Saturday, President Trump rolled out a bold, comprehensive offer to do just that. It would break through this stalemate and would reopen government swiftly and deliver on a number of other policy priorities that are seen as important on both sides of the aisle.

That is where we are on day 32 of this partial government shutdown. That is where we are as this new week begins. We have heard Members of Congress on all sides demanding a resolution to the impasse and a plan to quickly restore full funding to the Federal Government. We now have a plan from the President that would do exactly that, and quickly, while incorporating both the bipartisan work of the Appropriations Committee and bipartisan proposals on current immigration issues.

The opportunity to end all of this is staring us right in the face. That is why we will vote on this legislation on the Senate floor this week. All that needs to happen is for our Democratic friends to agree that it is time to put the country ahead of politics, take 'yes' for an answer, and vote to put this standoff behind us.

To be clear, the proposal outlined by President Trump that we will consider in the Senate is the only proposal before us that can be signed by the President and immediately reopen the government.

First and foremost, it is the only proposal that would reopen the government fully and immediately. But it is not merely a continuing resolution. It wouldn't kick the can down the road. Instead, it would fulfill Congress's responsibilities—without footnotes, without caveats, without hitting the snooze button. This measure would wrap up last year's historic progress on appropriations. It would pass all seven remaining regular-order funding bills and deliver supplemental funding for disaster recovery.

Importantly, it is also the only proposal that would deliver a comprehensive investment in our Nation's border

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



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security. To be clear, that is comprehensive by the standards of Border Patrol experts themselves—the men and women actually on the ground.

The bill would provide funding for each of the CBP's top 10 priority investments for border security, including a substantial investment in enhanced surveillance technologies, funding for the recruitment and training of 750 new Border Patrol agents, and \$5.7 billion for the construction of the physical barrier along the highest priority areas of the southern border.

In addition to these measures—similar to the ones that earned strong bipartisan support in the past—the legislation would take significant steps to modify certain areas of immigration policy. For example, it would grant 3-year lawful status for certain currently enrolled DACA recipients and individuals under TPS. These are areas where congressional Democrats have expressed vocal interest. Now they are included in a comprehensive proposal to open the government, fulfill our promise to the Federal employees, and address the humanitarian and security crisis at our southern border.

It is a proposal that the President will support. As I have stated consistently over the past month, that fact will earn it consideration in the Senate. A fully reopened Federal Government. Certainty and stability for Federal employees once again. The bipartisan appropriations legislation this body worked out together. The full investment in border security that the experts on the ground say they need. Changes to our immigration policies that are similar to the ones Democrats themselves have been fighting for in the past.

To reject this proposal, Democrats would have to prioritize political combat with the President ahead of Federal workers, ahead of DACA recipients, ahead of border security, and ahead of stable and predictable funding. Is that really a price Democrats want to pay to prolong this episode, which they say they want to be over and done with?

Is their plan truly to send Federal workers, DACA recipients, Customs and Border Patrol, and all Americans under the bus just to extend this run of political theater so they can look like champions of the so-called resistance? That is what some leading Democrats tried to assert right out of the gate, before they had even studied the President's new proposal. Speaker PELOSI came out right away and tried to rally her troops. She immediately described the President's proposals as "unacceptable." That is not exactly surprising, considering that just a few weeks ago, the Speaker went out on a limb and declared that physical border security is on its face "an immorality."

Not every Democrat seems to see it that way. And how could they? One Democrat from the State of Washington admitted that "the wall is not in itself a bad idea . . . it's been done."

Another from Illinois asserted: "If we have a partial wall, if we have fencing, if we have technology used to keep our border safe, all of that is fine."

One of the Speaker's fellow Members of the California delegation said: "We will support border security . . . all of its elements, including fences."

This is just a small sampling of House Democrats' actual views about the merits of border security.

These quotations don't even begin to touch all of the Democrats' demands that we reopen the government right away and their past calls to bring more certainty to individuals affected by DACA and TPS.

On one side of the scale, we have all of my Democratic colleagues' declarations that we must reopen the rest of the Federal Government and get Federal workers their paychecks. We have their statements and past votes that show they believe securing our border with some physical barriers is a good thing. And we have their stated desire to help out a number of individuals with a more certain immigration status. That is one side of the scale. All that is on the other side is the far-left political animus for the current occupant of the White House.

It seems to me it is about time to get serious. Even the Washington Post's editorial board, which is no fan of the President's and does not support every piece of this compromise proposal, had this to say about Democrats' outright refusal to negotiate. This is the Washington Post:

To refuse even to talk until the government reopens does no favors to sidelined federal workers and contractors. . . . A measure of statesmanship for a member of Congress now is the ability to accept some disappointments, and shrug off the inevitable attacks from purists, if it means rescuing the lives of thousands of deserving people living among us.

The Washington Post.

If even the Post believes my friends the Democratic leaders' total refusal to negotiate has grown very stale, you have to believe many of their own Members must be starting to feel the same way.

The President has made a comprehensive and bipartisan offer that would accomplish everything Democrats have said needs to be accomplished right now, immediately. It is a strong proposal. It is the only thing on the table, and later this week, we will vote on it.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST ACT OF 2019—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the

Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1) to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes.

Mr. McCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the Trump shutdown is now in its 32nd day. Essential government services are straining under the lack of resources—airport security, food safety, our Federal courts, our national parks. The economy is taking a serious hit. It was even revealed today that FBI investigations—law enforcement—are being curtailed, and, of course, 800,000 public servants who are dedicated to their jobs and their country continue to languish without pay.

The personal financial crisis President Trump is inflicting on these patriotic Americans is worsening by the day. He is hurting the 800,000 dedicated public servants, the millions who depend on them, and the entire country. This must stop. The government shutdown must end. President Trump and Leader McCONNELL need to come to their senses and reopen the government. Instead, over the weekend, President Trump made a televised address to outline an immigration proposal that is going nowhere fast.

It is clear that the President has realized he has put himself and the country in an untenable position. Everyone knows the President said he would be proud to shut down the government. Everyone knows that he and Leader McCONNELL are the only obstacles to opening it back up. Across the board, the polling shows it. Even a good chunk of Republicans is getting disillusioned with the President and the Republican Senate because they persist in keeping the government shut down because they demand that they get their way or else. The leader's attempts—that I just heard on the floor—to blame the Democrats for the shutdown are futile. They are so far from reality that no one takes the leader seriously when he says it. The American people know President Trump is responsible for the shutdown, and now they have learned Leader McCONNELL is a coconspirator in the shutdown.