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Senate

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Andrew M. Saul, of New York, to be Commissioner of Social Security for the term expiring January 19, 2025. (Reappointment)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The President pro tempore.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 1 minute.

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

HEALTHCARE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I would like to take a minute to explain why Medicare for All is a prescription for Medicare for None. Some folks are pitching this wild, misguided idea that one-size-fits-all government insurance is a cure-all for what ails the patients and the people of the United States of America. This conversation needs a strong dose of reality medicine.

Let's look at what is really being proposed—Medicare for None. Here is what it would do. It would dump 181 million Americans off their private health insurance plans, double your income taxes, and put patients with pre-existing conditions and chronic diseases on long waiting lists for medical care. It would unravel the current health safety net for seniors and people with disabilities, make the government the gatekeeper between Americans and their doctors, and, finally, put every single American who works for private health insurance out of business and out of a job.

The politics behind the proposal is simple: free healthcare. Let me remind my fellow Americans that if it sounds too good to be true, it is too good to be true.

Medicare for All is a catchy slogan. When you hear it on the campaign trail, remember it really boils down to government-run healthcare.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Before the Senate adjourned for Memorial Day, I laid out seven more nominations for our consideration when we returned—four to fill important vacancies in the administration and three to the Federal bench. So this week, the Senate will continue our work to confirm more well-qualified nominees and finally let the American people's President have more of his team on the job.

Yesterday we began by voting to advance the nomination of Andrew Saul, of New York, to be Commissioner of Social Security. Mr. Saul is a graduate of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and has spent decades building a successful career in business and in public administration. In addition to his experience in financial management, Mr. Saul has previously served as vice chairman of the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority and as Chairman of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, where he oversaw programs relied upon by literally millions of Americans.

It is no surprise that our colleagues on the Finance Committee voted unanimously to favorably report Mr. Saul's nomination to the full Senate. I hope Members will reach the same conclusion and support his confirmation.

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

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by the Reverend Pat Conroy, S.J., Chaplain of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Divine Potter, take the misshapen clay that we are and fashion us into vessels of Your honor.

Open the hearts of our Senators to the fullness of life, forgiveness of sins, and the hope of eternity with You.

Remind our lawmakers of Your wisdom in Luke 12:48, which states: "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded, and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be added."

Lord, may our legislators realize how much they have been given and strive to use their gifts for Your glory.

We pray in Your most merciful 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 (Mrs. FISCHER). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

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



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Later, we will turn to the consideration of David Schenker, of New Jersey, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs; Heath Tarbert, of Maryland, to be Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission; Susan Combs, of Texas, to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior; and three nominees to preside in a district court and the Court of Federal Claims.

In each case, the President has put forward impressive and uncontroversial individuals who, I might add, in a previous era, would have been candidates for a voice vote. They are thoroughly qualified for public service. Their nominations should not have been delayed even this long.

In the case of Mr. Schenker, for example, our colleagues have forced the top Middle East job at the State Department to remain open for 1 year. This is the top job at the State Department for the Middle East, and they have kept it open for 1 year—a year that brought no shortage of crises in that region.

So I am glad we are continuing to get things back on track. I hope our colleagues will join me in voting to put each of these public servants to work for the American people.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT

Madam President, on another matter, today, June 4, 2019, marks a historic anniversary for the U.S. Senate. It was 100 years ago today that this body passed the 19th Amendment to the Constitution and sent it on to the States for ratification. It was 100 years ago today that this institution finally recognized that American women deserved the right to vote just the same as men.

Of course, this victory for equality and fairness had been a long time in the making. The very same text that would become the 19th Amendment was first introduced in the Senate more than 40 years before, back in 1878. It was 40 years between the first introduction and the final passage. It was introduced by Senator Aaron Sargent of California, who, with his wife, was a close friend of Susan B. Anthony's. When it finally received a vote nearly a decade later, there were twice as many votes against it as for it. By 1914, there had been progress. When it received another vote that year, it failed by only 11 votes. By February 1919, there was more progress, losing by just one vote. The old justifications were eroding. Our Nation's true principles and clear logic were chipping away at this old mistake.

Then, precisely one century ago today, the right thing to do became undeniable. Women's suffrage cleared the Senate floor. The rollcall vote was 56 to 25—2 more than two-thirds. Newspaper accounts tell us that several minutes of sustained applause and cheers filled the Gallery. Then the 39 words that would become the 19th Amendment were on their way to the States, on their way to concluding a 42-

year journey and becoming enshrined in our Constitution.

Of course, this chapter of Senate history is just a tiny slice of the incredible uphill battle that the broader women's rights and suffrage movement waged in American politics and in culture. There were the pioneering thinkers of the Seneca Falls Convention, such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, and their famous Declaration of Sentiments. There was the incredible, history-changing intellectual and strategic partnership between Stanton and Susan B. Anthony and the prolific writing, coalition-building, and grassroots activism it produced.

There were devoted organizers, such as Carrie Chapman Catt, Ida B. Wells, and Mary Church Terrell, and so many more—both the dynamic leaders whom history remembers and the millions more women and men who lent their support to the cause and who made quiet contributions of their own.

Some of them lived to see the fruits of their work become part of our Constitution, and many did not, but the progress we celebrate would not have been possible—it would have been literally unimaginable—without them.

So this milestone brought one chapter of hard work to an end, but it really started a new chapter in our history as American women became more and more integrated into our democracy. It was just 6 years after the 19th Amendment was ratified that my own State of Kentucky elected our first female Member of Congress, Katherine Langley, to the House of Representatives.

I could not be more glad that the Senate will spend today commemorating this historic milestone. This afternoon, I know a number of our colleagues plan to come to the floor to describe the history and significance of this day in much more depth. Later, we will vote on a resolution to officially mark the centennial of our predecessors' historic vote.

Several more Senators have been working on additional legislation to help our Nation mark the whole year of commemoration that begins this spring and will continue through the anniversary of final ratification.

I want to thank a number of our colleagues who helped lead the preparation for this. In particular, thanks to Senator COLLINS for her leadership in coordinating today and focusing the Senate's attention on this milestone. Thanks to Senator MURKOWSKI, the lead sponsor for the resolution we will be voting on this afternoon. Thanks to our colleagues Senators BLACKBURN, FEINSTEIN, ERNST, and others for their hard work.

I would also like to thank the members of the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission, led by Chairwoman Kay Coles James and former Senator Barbara Mikulski, the Vice Chair, and their staff, including executive director Rebecca Kleefisch and Anna Laymon.

Madam President, 100 years ago today, American women's right to vote

was up for debate in this Chamber for the last time. As one Member of this body remarked on June 4, 1919, "The advocates of the Susan B. Anthony amendment have won a great victory and are justly entitled to all the praise and honor which comes with the winning of a battle which has been fought for so long a time . . . the right of suffrage [for] those noble, patriotic, and splendid women of our country who have so long fought for this right and who so richly deserve [it]."

Today we reflect on our gratitude for that work, and we rejoice in that victory.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, too much of our conversation about migrants seeking to enter at the southern border has to do with what happens when they get here. Not enough of our conversation concerns how we deal with the problems in the countries from which the migrants are coming. Many of these migrants are fleeing vicious gang violence, corruption, domestic abuse, drug cartels, and economic hardships that are so severe that they would risk a journey of 1,000 miles on foot rather than to stay where they are.

We simply have to do more to help the countries from which these folks are coming to fix the problems that are causing their people to flee. That is getting at the root causes here, not at just putting on a bandaid after they get to the border, and that may be the most effective way to deal with the overall issue. Unfortunately and as usual, the Trump administration has done the opposite. Its policies are exacerbating the vicious conditions in these Central American countries.

President Trump has cut \$450 million in security assistance to Central American countries and has provided no information about why the cuts have taken place and where the money will go. As usual, it seems it is sort of on a whim. He gets this idea in his head and spews it out without checking it and without explaining it even when it has the consequence he doesn't want, which is more people coming to our southern border.

Now what the President has proposed are tariffs on Mexico that would be massively destabilizing to our economy and theirs—a policy that will only lead to more migration. These whimsical and erratic proposals by the President that seem to pop into his head and with which he goes forward without