



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 165

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 2019

No. 130

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, August 2, 2019, at 11 a.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 2019

The Senate met at 9:30 a.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.

Eternal God, who laid the foundation of the Earth, the Heavens are the works of Your hands. You are the same yesterday, today, and forever, and Your years have no end.

Today, use our Senators as they serve You with gladness and awe. May they make pleasing You their first priority. Lord, give them Your guidance so that they will behave wisely, striving to have a conscience void of offense toward You and humanity. May they never forget all Your blessings and benefits.

We pray in Your loving 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The Senator from Iowa.

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

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

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, there is too much secrecy in drug pricing, particularly in who benefits from rebates. Not all rebates are created equal in the Medicaid Drug Rebate Program.

Rebate obligations for brand-name drugs are currently based on both brand-name and authorized generic drug sales. That means brand-name drug manufacturers pay less in rebate obligations.

The bipartisan legislation I introduced with Senator WYDEN fixes this. It ensures that brand-name drug manufacturers pay—like common sense ought to dictate—brand-name rebates. This reduces gaming in the system to make sure authorized generics come to market for a purpose related to patient access, not just to lower brand-name rebate obligations.

Transparency brings accountability, and with transparency and accountability, the market works better, competition works better, and in the end, gets the price of drugs down.

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. 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.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, yesterday the Senate took a number of steps forward on our considerable to-do list for the week. We confirmed four well-qualified jurists who are now our country's newest district court judges and voted to advance the nominations of 10 more—10. That is what you call big progress for the Federal Judiciary. Today, we are going to continue moving these nominations forward.

For too long, thoroughly uncontroversial judicial nominees just like these have been held up and delayed by our Democratic colleagues, even when the vacancy qualifies as a judicial emergency.

Uncontroversial district judges used to be confirmed promptly in big groups by voice vote. These days, in a kind of protest theater, our colleagues across the aisle usually insist that we hold a cloture vote and then a rollcall confirmation vote on each one. But we are getting the President's impressive nominees on the job one way or another, and we will continue doing just that.

Our work doesn't stop there. The administration remains in need of a full complement of leaders at the Pentagon and in the diplomatic corps. Last night, we voted to confirm David Norquist, the President's pick to serve as No. 2 at the Pentagon under our new

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



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Secretary of Defense, Mark Esper. We also voted to advance the nomination of Ambassador Kelly Craft, a very impressive individual, to serve in the critical role of U.N. Ambassador.

Ms. Craft is a fellow product of the Bluegrass State. She has already made Kentucky and the Nation proud through significant public service, including as an alternate delegate to the United Nations and, most recently, as Ambassador to Canada.

In each of these cases, this impressive nominee earned an unopposed confirmation, and, in each case, she repaid the Senate's confidence by skillfully and effectively advocating for the interests of the United States on the international stage. During her tenure as Ambassador to Canada, America's relationship with our northern neighbor was tested. A number of challenging policy hurdles threatened to trip up progress on several important issues, including trade negotiations, but, by all accounts, Ambassador Craft's involvement led to greater cooperation.

She worked on finalizing the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, encouraged cross-border participation in joint sanctions efforts, and helped more Americans do business in Canada. As she stands in this new role, she brings the ringing endorsements of peers and counterparts she engaged all along the way.

The Premier of Ontario and a former Canadian Ambassador to the United States has said: "She's done the job very well."

And another quote: "Every Premier I know thinks the world of her. . . . She really proved herself over some tough times."

Our partners to the north have a healthy respect for the hard work and qualifications of Ambassador Kelly Craft, and so does the Senate. Last week, even in this contentious moment, a wide bipartisan majority of our colleagues on the Foreign Relations Committee voted to recommend her nomination to be U.N. Ambassador favorably here to the floor, and before we adjourn this week, we will confirm her.

BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2019

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, the Senate needs to pass the bipartisan budget agreement secured by the administration with Speaker PELOSI. The deal we have in front of us is a product of extensive negotiations between President Trump's team and the Democratic House. I am confident it is not exactly the legislation that either side of the aisle would have written if one party held the White House, the House, and had 60 votes in the Senate. That is what we call divided government, but I am equally confident that this is a deal that every one of my colleagues should support when we vote on it in the near future.

This government funding agreement is the right deal for our national de-

fense. It is the right deal because it ensures the United States maintains its full faith and credit. It is the right deal because it brings predictability and stability through 2020 and moves toward restoring regular appropriations. It is the right deal because it secures these priorities without partisan poison pill riders that would take us backward on the issue of protecting human life and curtail central Presidential authorities.

The Republicans' No. 1 priority was investing in our national defense. After 8 years of neglect and atrophy under the Obama administration, Congress has worked hand-in-hand with the Trump administration to begin writing a new chapter. More of the resources our Armed Forces need, more flexibility for commanders, more cutting-edge tools for U.S. servicemembers, and more investments in modernization will not only rebuild the military that we need today but set us on the trajectory we need to be on to secure our future.

All in all, I don't think any Senators are actually rooting for a destabilizing continuing resolution. I certainly don't think any Senators are rooting for a debt limit crisis that could put our full faith and credit at risk. I believe that every one of our colleagues wants this agreement to pass. That means every one of our colleagues should actually vote for it.

The House has passed this deal. The President is ready and eager to sign it. It is our turn to do our job.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2019

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, over 2 weeks ago, the four congressional leaders in the White House reached an agreement to raise the budget caps and extend the debt ceiling. The House has already passed the legislation that codifies the agreement into law. The President supports it. He is even making calls—evidently, from press reports—asking Republican colleagues to support it. So the last piece of the puzzle here is the Senate.

Speaking for the minority, Democrats have no objection to voting on the budget caps deal as soon as possible. I say to my friend the majority leader: Why don't we vote on the caps deal this morning and send it to the

President's desk? There is no need to wait until later in the afternoon today, tonight, or tomorrow to get this done. Democrats are ready to pass it right now if the majority leader would call it up for a vote.

CHINA

Mr. SCHUMER. As trade negotiations with China continue this week, I want to press the President again to stay tough and hold out for the best possible deal. If China is unwilling to make significant reforms to its economic model, President Trump must be prepared to walk away.

I believe the President's instincts on China are right. I have not been afraid to say so, despite our vast political and moral disagreements. But if we are going to be successful in these negotiations, it will be up to President Trump—no one else—to keep the pressure on Chinese leaders this week.

There are a few things he can do. The most significant point of emphasis for the President should be Huawei, the Chinese telecom giant. China has responded to the administration's justified restrictions on Huawei, unlike any other action the President has taken. It is our greatest source of leverage.

President Trump, hold tough on Huawei. Don't let there be giant loopholes.

I am told that under the purported proposal being talked about, 80 percent of Huawei's products could still be sold to us. If we have a total boycott of Huawei, then China will beg us to come to the table and make real concessions. It is the best leverage we have—even better than the tariffs. China wants Huawei to dominate the world. They will find a way to do it unless we are tough as can be.

I say to President Trump: I know these multinational corporations are pressuring you to cut a quick deal. The President should not listen to these big corporations who want him to cut a deal quickly. Many of these same corporations are the ones that have shipped jobs overseas through the last decades. They are the ones that took jobs away from American workers and moved them to China. I understand those corporate executives. They are supposed to be totally subservient to their shareholders. Their shareholders say: Whatever you have to do to bring the price up, do it.

That hurts American workers. It hurts American security. It hurts the American economy, especially when it comes to Huawei.

President Trump, don't listen to the siren call of those same corporations that have created part of the problem with China to now get you to back off. Yes, they will have a little pain. They have made billions at large from dealing with China and letting China get away with stuff like taking jobs away from the United States into much lower paid, lower standard jobs in China.