



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 165

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2019

No. 145

Senate

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, You are our defender and hope. On this 18th anniversary of September 11, we thank You that You never give us burdens too great to bear. Continue to remind us that eternal vigilance is the price for freedom. Comfort the families of those who died on 9/11, surrounding them with Your mercy and grace.

Lord, incline Your ears to our intercession. Teach us how to embrace the things that lead to peace, as You instruct us on how to fulfill Your purposes on Earth. Today, use our lawmakers as instruments of reconciliation.

We pray in Your 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.

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

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.

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11TH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, the Chaplain opened our Senate in prayer reminding everybody of what happened 18 years ago today: a disastrous attack on the United States. So referring to that same 18 years, I say

our Nation changed forever following an act of cowardice from the enemies of freedom. The events of September 11 have left an indelible mark on American and world history and certainly on the lives of the victims' families. We pray now, as we did then, that God may heal the wounds of those injured and the wounds left by those lost that day, that they may find peace on this solemn day.

Let us recall the sacrifices made that day to preserve our way of life and honor each day the pledge "Never forget."

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

E-CIGARETTES

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, this week there was a significant development when it came to public health and our children in America. By way of preface to what I am about to say, I want to make clear that I have, during the course of my service in the House and the Senate, focused a great deal of my efforts on tobacco, the addiction that people have to tobacco cigarettes, and the deadly consequences of that addiction. My family has been touched by it, as most have in America. I lost my father when I was in high school. He smoked two packs a day and was a lung cancer victim. We buried him at the age of 53. I remember it to this day.

I am not alone. Literally, thousands of Americans—millions, perhaps—have a similar story to tell. So from the beginning of my service in the House of Representatives, I started looking for ways to deal with this scourge of to-

bacco cigarette addiction. Many years ago—over 25 years ago—I introduced a measure that banned smoking on airplanes, and to my great surprise it managed to pass the House of Representatives. Senator Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey was on the Appropriations subcommittee with the responsibility. He took it on in the Senate, passed it, and we made it the law of the land, banning smoking in airplanes.

I didn't realize—and I am sure Senator Lautenberg didn't—that we had triggered a tipping point or reaction that led to banning smoking in so many other venues. Ultimately, we have now reached a point where no one would consider walking into my office and lighting up a cigarette or even asking for permission to light a cigarette. It is just unthinkable. But 25 years ago it was common. So things have changed.

But what has happened is that Big Tobacco, having lost its marketplace position and lost its profitability, has moved to a new product—e-cigarettes and vaping. This company, JUUL, which is the largest provider of e-cigarette devices in the United States, has a huge stock ownership in tobacco companies. This is their new venue, their new approach. But much as with tobacco cigarettes, the vaping industry is counting on addicting children so that they can build their ranks, addicting teenagers. Tobacco cigarettes did the same with Joe Camel and the Marlboro cowboy, and now we see the same thing occurring when it comes to e-cigarettes and vaping.

The previous Food and Drug Administration Commissioner, Dr. Gottlieb, characterized it properly when he called it an epidemic. We now have 3 percent of American adults who are using vaping devices, 20 percent of America's teenagers and children using vaping devices. It is a new school year, and many of these students are heading off to middle schools and high schools

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



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with new backpacks and maybe new laptops and new lockers and new teachers and new classrooms and new friends and a new addiction—the addiction of vaping.

Vaping targets kids. They are introducing flavors that can be mixed with this vaping experience that appeal directly to children and teenagers in this country. How in the world can you imagine that someone who is a 50-year-old chain smoker trying to quit is going to choose a flavor pod called “Unicorn Milk” or “Bubble Gum” or “Gummy Bears”? They are all out there. They are designed to lure children, and, sadly, they are effective.

For months now I have been begging this administration and the Food and Drug Administration to do something about this epidemic, and until this week they did little or nothing. But this week was a breakthrough. The Food and Drug Administration announced early this week that they were going to stop JUUL from advertising that their vaping products were a safe alternative to tobacco cigarettes.

The reason is obvious. We have hundreds and hundreds of vaping victims now showing up in hospitals. As of last night, the sixth victim in America died from a vaping experience. Why? Because they are ingesting into their lungs, in these huge clouds of vapor and smoke, chemicals that are killing them, chemicals that are stopping their lungs from functioning. They don't realize it at the time; it is just another wild experience. They are told, by the way, by JUUL and others that it is safer than tobacco cigarettes. It is not safe. It is deadly, and it is an epidemic in this country.

This week the American Medical Association stepped up its role, and I want to commend them. Dr. Patrice Harris, the President of the American Medical Association, released the following this week:

In light of increasing reports of e-cigarette-associated lung illnesses across the country, the [American Medical Association] urges the public to avoid the use of e-cigarette products until health officials further investigate and understand the cause of these illnesses.

She goes on to say:

The e-cigarette-related lung illnesses currently sweeping across the country reaffirm our belief that the use of e-cigarettes and vaping is an urgent public health epidemic that must be addressed. We must not stand by while e-cigarettes continue to go unregulated. We urge the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to speed up the regulation of e-cigarettes and remove all unregulated products from the market. We also call on the FDA to immediately ban flavors, as well as marketing practices, that enhance the appeal of e-cigarette products to youth.

The Food and Drug Administration Commissioner has the authority today—before the sun sets on this 9/11 anniversary—to ban these flavor pods that are attracting children and adding to this epidemic in our high schools and middle schools across the United States. This Food and Drug Adminis-

tration Administrator, Dr. Ned Sharpless, has the authority to take off the market scores, if not hundreds, of vaping devices that have been introduced to the public after the official date of deeming last year. He can do it today. It would have a dramatic effect starting tomorrow. He could start enforcing it with the retailers across America if he cared and if he were serious.

Now we have an opportunity to test him and to test this administration. Will they go the next step in warning America's schools, teachers, families, and children about this epidemic and the deadly consequences of ignoring it? Will they take these products off the market this week?

That is my challenge to them and to every American parent who dearly loves their child and cares about their health. I hope they will join me in this effort to urge this administration to take decisive action for children across America.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, with only a few weeks to go until the end of September, we have no time to waste when it comes to appropriations. We had planned for the Senate to consider bipartisan bills from the Appropriations Committee as soon as next week and make significant headway before a partial interim continuing resolution becomes necessary at the end of the month.

To this end, Democrats and Republicans in both the House and the Senate, plus President Trump, formalized an agreement 1 month ago. It set up funding levels to inform the appropriations process, and everyone on both sides agreed there would be no poison pills, no partisan wrenches thrown into the gears.

Unfortunately, yesterday brought some disturbing signals that Democrats may be rethinking that commitment. New poison pills are apparently being discussed. But everyone knows what we agreed to last month. In fact, back on August 1, I asked consent to print the entire terms sheet that everyone agreed to in the RECORD.

So I maintain hope that Chairman SHELBY and Ranking Member LEAHY can oversee a smooth process and that we can move all 12 appropriations bills in a bipartisan fashion. Both sides have every reason to want a smooth appropriations process to proceed as we had planned. I hope that is exactly what happens in committee this week and on the floor soon thereafter.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN BOLTON

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on another matter, as he departs the

position of National Security Advisor, I want to thank Ambassador John Bolton for his many years of valuable service to our country. Personally, I have always appreciated John's candor and clear advice. He possesses something crucial—the ability to understand the world the way it is. He knows that there are many threats to American interests and that those threats will not recede if we retreat. He understands that American leadership is essential to keeping these threats and enemies at bay and that our partners and allies rarely act without us.

John appreciates the need to stand up to adversaries like Putin's Russia, to approach them from a position of strength, and to hold them accountable for their lies and their misdeeds.

I wish him well wherever his career next takes him.

Of course, the President deserves to choose his own team, and he has assembled a strong one. He and our Nation are well served by leaders such as Secretary Pompeo, Secretary Esper, and Director Haspel.

I hope the President selects a National Security Advisor who will work well with these seasoned national security leaders who have been chosen by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11TH

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on another entirely different matter, for 18 years today's date has held a tragic meaning. September 11 is a day of mourning, a date stained by the terrorist murderers of so many innocent people in New York, Arlington, and Pennsylvania. With each passing day, the reality is still shocking, and the wounds are still painful.

Each year we remember the innocent men, women, and children who lost their lives: workers rushing to meetings, vacationers headed home, emergency personnel whose quick response immortalized them as heroes. Each year we honor the memories of the heroes who sacrificed their lives to bring the perpetrators of this evil to justice and to prevent similar attacks.

Our way of life was changed by 9/11. It changed our approach to security. It awakened us to determined new enemies.

The dangers of radical Islamic terrorists remain real. Al-Qaida, its enablers, and its allies still plot against America from Afghanistan and Pakistan to Yemen, Somalia, Libya, Mali, and beyond. ISIS persists in Iraq and Syria through an underground network of terrorists who have not yet given up the fight. We cannot walk away from these dangers. We must not leave our work undone.

Many nations have a stake in defeating the terrorists. NATO allies have been with the United States since the early hours of this fight. Eighteen years ago, this critical alliance invoked article V for the first time.