

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the titles of the bills for the second time en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S.J. Res. 58) expressing support for freedom of conscience.

A resolution (H.J. Res. 77) opposing the decision to end certain United States efforts to prevent Turkish military operations against Syrian Kurdish forces in Northeast Syria.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bills on the calendar under the provision of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will be placed on the calendar.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

REMEMBERING ELIJAH CUMMINGS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, we woke up this morning to learn with profound sadness that our friend and colleague Congressman ELIJAH CUMMINGS, the son of sharecroppers who became the chair of the House Oversight Committee, passed away last night at the age of 68.

It was the first thing I saw when I read the paper this morning, and it hit me like a punch in the stomach.

In his 23 years in Congress, ELIJAH amassed a legacy that will live on long after his sudden passing. He served the people of his Maryland district with selflessness, passion, and grace.

Since it only happened this morning, I can't do justice to the legacy of ELIJAH CUMMINGS, but I would like to share a few reflections, and I know that my dear friend Senator CARDIN was close like this—like brothers—with ELIJAH CUMMINGS, and they had worked together on so many things for Maryland and the country. I know he is here sharing our deep sadness.

Now, truly, ELIJAH CUMMINGS was not just a great Congressman. He was a great man. He had a presence—a commanding presence—when he entered the room, and he could be strong when he had to be, and he had to be strong quite often. But he also was always kind and decent and caring and honorable.

It is a rare combination, that inner strength and that decency and that kindness. ELIJAH had it. If we had lived in happier times, maybe the public would have seen this kind side more

often, but ELIJAH was never one to shrink from the moment.

I talked to him frequently. We would talk about the goings-on in the House or the Senate or the political trivia of the day. Sometimes we would talk about Maryland politics. He was an expert.

ELIJAH was revered by his constituents and indeed by the entire State of Maryland. Liberal or conservative, Democrat or Republican, Black or White, you went to ELIJAH CUMMINGS for advice. His loss is an enormous one for his constituents, for his staff and, above all, his family. I pray for them this morning, as I pray for our country when people like ELIJAH CUMMINGS of the world are no longer with us.

TURKEY AND SYRIA

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on Syria, yesterday, the U.S. military carried out airstrikes to destroy what only a few weeks ago had been the headquarters of the American campaign to destroy ISIS in Syria. Nothing encapsulates the failure of President Trump's decision to stand aside for Erdogan more than the fact that we are now bombing our own bases rather than allow them to fall into the hands of Assad, Erdogan, or Putin.

If Erdogan, Putin, and Assad are such great allies or no problem, as President Trump told us yesterday at the White House, then why do we have to bomb our own headquarters after American troops evacuated so it doesn't fall into Syrian or Turkish or even Russian hands? That one thing encapsulates the absurdity, the awfulness of President Trump's lack of policy and erratic, impulsive, and whimsical movements on the Syrian front.

Yesterday the President said this withdrawal was a "strategic move." It certainly is not that because this is not the action of a military that carried out a deliberate withdrawal. It is the action of a military that was given a fly-by-the-seat-of-his-pants decision of the President contrary to the recommendations of the commanders on the ground.

Donald Trump has the nerve, the gall, to think he knows more about the military than these generals who have served our country for decades. It is appalling. How does America put up with this? How do our Republican colleagues put up with this? He doesn't consult the generals. What a blunder, and it seems to be the result of the President's inability to say no to dictators. He seems to like a Putin and an Erdogan and even a Kim more than our allies. This is also a clear demonstration of the President's fecklessness and recklessness, both, or as my colleague Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, and one of the President's staunchest allies in Congress, said, "I fear that this is a complete and utter national security disaster in the making."

Yesterday afternoon, congressional leaders went to the White House, at its

request, to meet with the President about the rapid disintegration of the situation in northern Syria. Speaker PELOSI and I talked about it ahead of time, and we talked about it with Senators REED and MENENDEZ as well. We had a serious purpose: to find out if the President actually had a plan to contain ISIS and fix the mess precipitated by his decision to green-light Erdogan's military incursion into Syria.

Alarming—alarming—President Trump had no plan. The greatest insult that occurred in that room was not any of the name-calling that Trump did. A far greater insult to America, to all of us, was the lack of any policy guidance, any policy decisions, any direction from the President and his top national security advisers on how to contain ISIS.

I reminded the President that as two New Yorkers, we probably knew better than most the damage a small band of terrorists can do, even from a half a world away. I asked: What is your plan to prevent ISIS from regrouping and resurging? He didn't have one. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper didn't have a plan.

After we pushed them and pushed them, I said: Who is going to take care of all these prisoners? The President said there were 70,000 ISIS prisoners and their families. Who is going to take care of them, make sure they don't escape, as some have already?

They finally said: Well, the Syrians and the Turks will do that. So I asked the group if they had any intelligence or assurances that the Turks and Syrians would do a decent job. Secretary Esper himself said there was no evidence of that.

This is amazing. Terrorists whom we have spent a decade fighting—we have spent billions of dollars and lost lives to fight them—are finally in prison. The Kurds are guarding them. The Kurds are leaving, understandably, because they have to fight the Turks now. What is the plan? There isn't any, except to rely on Syrians, Turks, who have not even close to the interest we have in curbing ISIS.

Assad is much more interested in gaining back his Syrian homeland. Erdogan is focused on hurting the Kurds, whom he is fanatically against. So they are not going to pay much attention to ISIS.

It was appalling, just appalling. President Trump has stepped aside for Putin, Assad, and Erdogan. Our allies, the Kurds, are being slaughtered as a result of our betrayal. Most importantly, as Secretary Mattis said, "if we don't keep the pressure on [in Syria], ISIS will resurge. It's absolutely a given that they will come back."

The President didn't like hearing Mattis's words, but all of America should. He is one of the most respected military minds, one of the most respected leaders on both sides of the aisle—liberals, Independents, conservatives. Here is what he said, again repeating:

[If we don't keep the pressure on [in Syria], ISIS will resurge. It's absolutely a given that they will come back.

So make no mistake, the President's incompetence, his impulsiveness, his erraticness has made Americans less safe—Americans here in our homeland. Congress, today, must make the fact clear to the President in a bipartisan fashion.

We have the opportunity, my colleagues. The House passed a resolution condemning the President's decision by an overwhelming vote of 354 to 60. That means the vast majority of House Republicans—129 to be exact—condemned the President's decision in Syria. Leader MCCARTHY, Whip SCALISE, and No. 3 CHENEY all voted for it. They are as loyal to President Trump as anybody, but they saw the danger, the real danger. Today the Senate should, and I hope will, follow suit. We can quibble about the language, but I have no doubt we can agree on the basic message, and there is no reason we can't vote on a Senate resolution today.

Time is of the essence. To say, well, I would like to add this word or add this sentence, as Kurds are being slaughtered, as ISIS terrorists are escaping—no, no, no. No, no, no. We should move to the House bill immediately because we all know there is only one person who can reverse this, and that is the President. The greatest ability to make him reverse is an overwhelming message from the Republican side—House and Senate—that this is wrong. He doesn't hear that publicly too often from our Republican friends. He has heard it from the House, correctly and courageously.

Please, my friends, my Republican friends in the Senate, let's put politics aside. Today let's vote the House bill passed yesterday by them. There is no time to waste. Time is of the essence because the President still doesn't get it. Our meeting at the White House demonstrated that to all who were present. Hopefully, an overwhelming bipartisan vote in the Senate will break through to him. I strongly, strongly—in the strongest of terms—urge my friend Leader MCCONNELL and our Republican colleagues to allow a vote on the Syrian resolution today. Security, justice, fairness demand no less.

S.J. RES. 53

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on climate, as Senator CARDIN well knows, later the Senate will vote on his resolution of disapproval to repeal the Trump administration's so-called affordable clean energy rule. This is one of the few opportunities where the minority can force a vote on the Senate floor, and there may be no more worthy an issue than protecting our environment.

Four years ago, the Obama administration put in place new standards and safeguards for CO₂ and fossil fuel emissions from powerplants—the first of

their kind intended to meet the threat of climate change. Earlier in July, by employing shady science, the Trump administration so violently obliterated these safeguards protecting our globe, our world, and frankly a lot of the forests in my home State of New York. In its place, the Trump administration enacted a new rule that will allow big polluters to wreck our air, dirty our water, and poison our Earth with little or no accountability.

Thanks to this new rule, common-sense limits on carbon emissions have been blurred, and deadlines for implementing the reductions have now been tripled or even quadrupled, but time is running out for the United States to meet the existential threat posed by climate change. That is why this rule is such a grave mistake.

Thankfully, in this case, the minority can do something under the Congressional Review Act. We are allowed to overturn some of the rules this administration unilaterally put in place. Later this morning, we will vote on Senator CARDIN's resolution of disapproval, which, if passed, will repeal the Trump's administration's destructive rule and reinstitute the safeguards that were originally in place.

Our Republican colleagues have a choice. They can either stop the rollback of lifesaving environmental protections or they can side with energy companies that put their fortunes ahead of our future. The choice is theirs.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, one final note. Today marks 1,000 days of President Trump's time in office. If we were to summarize his administration over the last 2½ years in a single phrase, it would be this: broken promises to working people.

When Candidate Trump ran for office, he promised to drain the swamp, but after 1,000 days as President, this place is the swampiest it has ever been, with conflicts of interest crippling this administration and inexperienced billionaires running our government.

Candidate Trump promised health insurance for everybody, but after 1,000 days as President, costs are higher, coverage is skimpier, and his administration is suing to repeal the healthcare we have in place and send prices skyrocketing for millions.

President Trump promised a tax bill that would be a middle-class miracle, but the only miracle this has been has been to corporatize America, which uses it for stock buybacks instead of increasing salaries for their workers, increasing their investments in plant and equipment. So much of these tax breaks went to buybacks. Shame.

One thousand days in, President Trump has failed to follow through on promise after promise to working Americans, but he isn't the only one at fault. Democrats have fought to do the work of the American people, but as

the House passes things, Leader MCCONNELL and my Senate Republican colleagues have simply turned this Chamber into a legislative graveyard, where good ideas that would help the middle class and those trying to get to the middle class just come to die.

We could be reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act; we could be voting on election security; we could be voting on background checks, but Leader MCCONNELL has buried hundreds of House bills in his legislative graveyard.

After 1,000 days since President Trump took office, he and his Republican colleagues have made clear whose side they are on. If you are ultrarich, you are very powerful, you have great connections, it has been a great few years, but for everyone else, it has been a string of disappointing, broken, and heartbreaking promises. Come next year, the American people will have a chance to vote for real change.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

MEASURE DISCHARGED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, S.J. Res. 53 is discharged from committee.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY RELATING TO "REPEAL OF THE CLEAN POWER PLAN; EMISSION GUIDELINES FOR GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM EXISTING ELECTRIC UTILITY GENERATING UNITS; REVISIONS TO EMISSION GUIDELINES IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS"

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I move to proceed to S.J. Res. 53.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 53) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to "Repeal of the Clean