



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 165

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2019

No. 193

## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable KEVIN CRAMER, a Senator from the State of North Dakota.

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Holy God, You make the clouds Your chariot and walk upon the wind. We see Your works in the rising of the Sun and in its setting. For the beauty of the Earth and the glory of the skies, we give you praise.

Today make our lawmakers heirs of peace, demonstrating that they are Your children as they strive to find common ground. May they take pleasure in doing Your will, knowing that by so doing, they are fulfilling Your purposes in our world. Lord, you are never far from us, but often we are far from You, so show us Your ways and teach us Your paths.

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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, December 4, 2019.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable KEVIN CRAMER, a Senator from the State of North Dakota, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. CRAMER thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 Richard Ernest Myers II, of North Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

#### HONG KONG

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on Sunday, as we Americans savored the holiday weekend and gave thanks for our liberty, the people of Hong Kong took to the streets to demand their own. Many waved American flags.

Hongkongers are continuing to speak up for the freedoms and the autonomy that Beijing has slowly tried to erode. As long as Beijing does not relent, it looks like the people of Hong Kong are

not going to relent either. In local elections last week that were largely symbolic, pro-democracy candidates literally blew away the candidates the Chinese Communist Party would have preferred in a literal landslide. Not even Beijing's propagandists can credibly blame this massive display of popular revulsion at their authoritarianism on the "black hand" of the West. In spite of China's propaganda, the West should not stay silent as Beijing sneaks to snuff out dissent in Hong Kong.

Just a few days prior, the Congress and President Trump had sent our clearest signal yet that, yes, the United States of America stands with Hong Kong. The Senate unanimously passed the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act, and the President signed it into law. It delivered important updates to the original U.S.-Hong Kong Policy Act, which I authored back in 1992. Preserving freedom and promoting democracy has required constant vigilance with Hongkongers since Communist China assumed control of the region.

I have been proud to stand with that effort. With my original legislation, we paved the way for cooperation between Hong Kong and the United States, codifying and strengthening economic ties and facilitating the robust exchange of ideas and support of greater democracy in the autonomous region. We have laid the foundation for a U.S.-Hong Kong relationship that has strengthened both their society and ours and created leverage to hold Beijing accountable.

Back in 1992, I observed that democracy was "finally gaining a tenuous foothold in Hong Kong." Recent months certainly have reminded us just how tenuous that foothold can be when an authoritarian country flexes its muscles. They reminded us just how intent Beijing remains on exporting its oppressive surveillance state not just within mainland China but also into Hong Kong and, frankly, all around the world.

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S6829

The unanimous Senate vote for expanded oversight and firm responses to Beijing was welcomed news on the streets of Hong Kong, not because the U.S. Senate or international nonprofits or anybody else is ginning up these protests, as Beijing wants people to believe, but because those speaking out for freedom recognize a friend of freedom when they see one.

It has been funny to see how invested Beijing is in these conspiracy theories that this organic protest movement is actually the work of shadowy puppeteers. Just a few days ago, the Chinese Communist Party's Foreign Ministry took the panicked and laughable step of "sanctioning" several American nonprofits and NGOs, such as the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute, and the National Endowment for Democracy. Like I said, it is laughable. I admire the heck out of these organizations, but they aren't exactly in the business of commanding millions of people from Hong Kong to Beirut, to Baghdad, to Tehran to take to the streets. They are not that good.

Here is the business they are in: speaking up for the timeless and universal principles of basic human freedom. They help keep the torch lit. It is the brave souls around the world who want better lives for themselves and their children who pick up the ball and run with it for themselves.

The junior varsity tantrum that Beijing is throwing against these U.S.-based organizations is literally comical. It puts the Communist Party's hypersensitivity on full display. It is the same flailing that we see from other regimes from Moscow to Tehran, driven by the same aggressive, authoritarian instincts that push social media propaganda, street corner surveillance, police violence, and the modern-day gulags where China is imprisoning and brutalizing the Uighur people. These are the forces history never judges kindly. I am proud of the people of Hong Kong. I am proud of the Senate's latest action to support them, and I am proud to continue standing alongside them in their journey to true self-determination.

#### APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. President, nearly every day I have come to the floor to talk about the key pieces of legislation that we will only be able to complete with bipartisan cooperation—essential things like funding for the entirety of our Federal Government, something we have to do, including funding for our men and women in uniform; the money for the tools and the training and the weapons that our volunteer servicemembers need to complete their missions; things like the National Defense Authorization Act, which Congress has passed every single year, always on a bipartisan basis, for the last 58 years. This is literally the bill that reauthorizes the U.S. military. It could not be more basic or fundamental.

So it is dismaying that my Democratic colleagues have seen fit to hold

these basic duties hostage for the sake of picking fights with the White House, for advancing a partisan domestic agenda. It is disappointing that Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader have abandoned their own written promises that they would not make our bipartisan appropriations processes conditioned on poison pills, policy riders, or changes to Presidential transfer authorities. All those commitments were made in the summer. Even though they put that in writing, they have chosen to shoehorn partisan demands right back into the process. So we are stalled. We are stalled because the agreement we all reached in the summer has not been honored by the other side.

Today I want to keep this really simple. The Senate's dispensation on that Hong Kong legislation proves that we can still work together when our core principles and our national interest are at stake. Of course, those things are exactly what is at stake with defense funding and the NDAA. So it is way past time—we are in December—to get serious.

Chairman SHELBY and Chairwoman LOWEY have agreed on subcommittee allocations. Chairman INHOFE and Senator REED have made strides on our bipartisan NDAA. I would implore my Democratic friends: Please stop gambling our national security on the roulette wheel of domestic politics. Please stop that. Stop putting political theater ahead of our troops.

We all know this is a heated political moment, but domestic politics do not excuse our men and women in uniform from doing their duties. So they cannot excuse our Democratic colleagues from doing theirs. Our servicemembers need Congress to have their backs. We can only fund the government if it is bipartisan. We can only pass an NDAA if it is bipartisan.

The roadmaps are in hand. We have the same traditions that have yielded 58 bipartisan NDAAs in a row, and we have the bipartisan agreement that everyone signed just a few months ago when Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader promised in writing they wouldn't throw partisan wrenches into appropriations.

Our country can't afford for the Democrats to obsess over impeachment and obstruct everything else. Look, let's use these roadmaps. Let's get these things accomplished for the American people.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. 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.

#### 5G TECHNOLOGY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, 4G technology is pretty amazing. When I talk

about 4G technology, that stands for fourth generation. On your smartphone, it might say LTE, but it is the fourth generation of technology that we have available to us on our wireless devices. We can FaceTime with family members across the country, order dinner or groceries without leaving our couches, watch a football game on the go with our phones, adjust the heat in our houses before we actually get home, carry around an entire library on a tablet the size of one small book, deposit a check without actually visiting the bank, and the list goes on.

As amazing as 4G technology is, it can't hold a candle to 5G, or fifth generation technology. 5G mobile broadband technology will deliver speeds that will be up to 100 times faster than what today's technology can deliver. Think about that—downloads that will be 100 times faster than what we have today. It will be vastly more responsive than 4G technology. It will be able to connect 100 times the number of devices that can be connected with 4G. That is pretty hard to imagine, really. Our phones and computers today seem pretty fast and responsive, but 5G will be much, much faster.

While that will make it even easier to do the things we do today, like check our email or stream our favorite shows, the biggest benefits of 5G will lie in the other technologies it will enable. For example, 5G will have the potential to pave the way for the widespread adoption of precision agriculture, which uses tools like robotics and remote monitoring to help farmers manage their fields and boost their crop yields. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that precision agriculture will reduce farmers' operational costs by up to \$25 per acre and increase farmers' yields by up to 70 percent by the year 2050.

5G will pave the way for automated vehicles, which will have the potential to dramatically reduce traffic injuries and fatalities. There are 37,000 people lost every year on America's highways due to traffic accidents. Over 90 percent of those are as a result of human error—driving while under the influence, driving while distracted. 5G technology and the enablement of automated vehicles will go a long way toward saving lives on America's highways.

It will facilitate surgical innovations and new ways to treat chronic illnesses or heal injuries and so much more.

The technology for 5G is already here. Several cities around the United States, including my hometown of Sioux Falls, have already unveiled limited 5G networks, but there is more work to do before we all can start to see the benefits of 5G on our phones.

The widespread deployment of 5G will require two things: adequate spectrum and adequate infrastructure. While 4G relies on traditional cell phone towers, 5G technology will also require small antennas called small