



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2020

No. 90

Senate

The Senate met at 10 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, the author of unity, remind our lawmakers that people accomplish laudable goals more through unity than division. May our Senators remember that all of us are more effective than any one of us.

As our legislators pursue effectiveness in their work, give them the wisdom to forge alliances that make the difficult become easy and the impossible become probable. In their search for common purposes, inspire them with the conviction that nothing is impossible for those who believe.

We pray in Your omnipotent 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. LOEFFLER). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

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

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, people often think of prisons as places only to send criminals and then forget

about them. But as I have noted here before, most inmates will one day be released.

Helping former criminals become productive citizens is very much an important function of our prison system. In recent weeks, inmates in the Iowa prison system have acquired what you might consider strange skills—but they are new skills—and even monetary allowances. They have done this by producing personal protective equipment, like face shields and masks. During this time of the virus pandemic, we all know what those are used for.

I commend these efforts by our prisoners and our prison system promoting this sort of training. They will help to protect the health and safety of the prisons and our State in the short term, but they will also help inmates in the long term.

These inmates are providing an essential public service, and for that they deserve our appreciation. It is an important contribution that I hope they will long remember and that will help them to be productive members of society when they finish their sentences.

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 majority leader is recognized.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, normally during National Police Week, thousands of officers from across the country come here to our Nation's Cap-

ital to honor their comrades who have fallen in the line of duty. Obviously, the coronavirus has changed the logistics around these kinds of gatherings, but it has not made it any less important that we honor these brave men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice for their neighbors.

Tonight's candlelight vigil for fallen officers will go on, as a virtual event. Our hearts will be united in remembering these heroes as their names are added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial.

I am thinking especially of two of my fellow Kentuckians, who will be among those memorialized.

Meade County sheriff's deputy Chris Hulsey answered the call of public service with a distinguished career that also included time as a firefighter and a paramedic. He was attacked while investigating a suspect and was pronounced dead hours later.

Chief Deputy Bobby Wayne Jacobs, of the Knott County Sheriff's Office, suffered a fatal heart attack following a tense call for service. Bobby's colleagues remember the lasting positive impact he made on so many.

Both of these deputies left behind children, loving friends, and a Commonwealth made safer by their service.

We also cannot let this year's National Police Week pass us by without reaffirming our gratitude for our very own U.S. Capitol Police. These men and women protect this institution with the greatest professionalism, no matter the challenge.

To all police officers—in Kentucky, here in the Capitol, and all across the country—your country thanks you.

FISA

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, speaking of keeping our Nation safe, the Senate has work of our own to do this week to ensure the safety and security of our Nation. In addition to fighting this historic pandemic, it is

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



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also our job to keep sight of the other threats to national security that are still evolving, independent of COVID-19.

Far from any frontline hospital, the PRC's domineering approach to contested territories in the South China Sea is keeping the men and women of the U.S. Seventh Fleet on high alert.

From dark corners of cyber space, Russia busies our national security and intelligence experts with a steady flow of infectious propaganda and disinformation.

From the Mediterranean to the Gulf of Aden, Iran continues to expand its regional influence, sow division, promote terror, and threaten America and its partners.

And across Afghanistan, the Taliban, al-Qaida, and ISIS continue to undermine the work of an international coalition and a representative government.

These are just a few of the global threats that were with us long before the COVID-19 crisis, and they have only gotten worse during the pandemic.

History reminds us that when great nations confront profound challenges at home, their enemies and competitors do not pause their own efforts until the situation becomes more stable. Rather, from Beijing to Moscow, to caves in the Middle East, our adversaries would be tickled pink if the coronavirus caused the United States to lose our ability to multitask.

Some of our Democratic colleagues have implied recently that it is beneath the Senate—beneath the Senate—to spend time on any business that does not exclusively pertain to the pandemic. I could not disagree more strongly. Common sense tells us that this crisis demands more vigilance on the other fronts of national security, not less. When we take our oaths of office as U.S. Senators, we swear to defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. This coronavirus may have shoved its way to the top of that list, but the list is still a long one, indeed.

Unfortunately, for several weeks now, our Nation has been less prepared than normal to defend ourselves against those who wish us harm, and it is not because of the coronavirus. It is because House Democrats have failed to act.

Back in March, the Senate passed a clean short-term extension of key authorities under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, while a broader renegotiation was under way. After the shameful abuses of the FISA process that marred the 2016 Presidential campaign, there was a clear need for meaningful reforms to bring more daylight and accountability into the process. But at the same time, many of us on both sides of the aisle were absolutely intent on preserving these critical national security tools that have helped keep America safe.

While discussions were under way on how to strike the right balance, the

Senate passed a bipartisan short-term extension so these important tools could remain in our national security professionals' hands while Congress got our act together. Unfortunately, Speaker PELOSI let that extension sit on her desk and gather dust. So, for more than 8 weeks—8 weeks—these important tools have gone dark.

Fortunately, the Attorney General and Members of Congress have worked together to craft a compromise solution that will implement needed reforms while preserving the core national security tools. These intense discussions produced a strong bill that balances the need for accountability with our solemn obligation to protect our citizens and defend our homeland.

I understand several of our colleagues believe this compromise bill is not perfect. Sadly, imperfection is a fact of life when it comes to compromise legislation. While I respect my distinguished colleagues whose amendments we will be voting on later today, I urge Senators to vote against them. The current bill in its current form already strikes the correct and delicate balance, and there is certainly no guarantee that another, new version of this legislation would necessarily pass the House or earn the President's support. This version has already done both. We cannot let the perfect become the enemy of the good when key authorities are currently sitting expired and unusable.

In sum, while the Senate continues overseeing the national response to the coronavirus crisis, we are also making sure the pandemic does not inflict even greater harm by distracting us from other threats and challenges that preceded it.

Off the floor, our committees are working through a number of pressing national security nominations, from the Director of National Intelligence to the Secretary of the Navy, to other high-level openings at the Pentagon. When the time comes, I hope we will be able to fill these crucial openings promptly through bipartisan cooperation on the floor. I hope our Democratic colleagues think carefully before applying reflexive partisan delays even to vital security positions during a global emergency.

We cannot put Homeland Security on autopilot because another crisis has our attention. The Senate can, will, and must continue to pay attention to both.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

USA FREEDOM REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2020

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 6172, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6172) to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to prohibit the production of certain business records, and for other purposes.

Mr. McCONNELL. 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 Democratic leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO HICKEY FREEMAN

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first, as you know, when I speak on the floor, I remove my mask, but there is a special reason to keep this mask on today. This mask was made by Hickey Freeman, in Rochester, NY—by American labor, union labor, by a grand and proud and generous company that has been in Rochester for the last three centuries—the 1800s, 1900s, and now the 2000s. It is a wonderful company, and it has kept good-paying jobs in America to make fine clothing. It started making the masks, and it has given them to a local hospital at cost.

So I salute Hickey Freeman. I salute the great trades men and women who work there. May they continue for hundreds of more years to provide jobs in Rochester and help when we need help.

CORONAVIRUS

Madam President, yesterday, the House Democrats unveiled new legislation to combat the coronavirus pandemic. The American people need their government to act strongly, decisively, wisely, and this new legislation is the urgent and necessary response to what this crisis demands.

As any one of us could have guessed, the Republican leader is rather predictably responding against the House Democratic bill to address the COVID crisis. His response is predictable because, for weeks, Leader McCONNELL has been preemptively slandering any legislation that has come out of the House as being “a partisan wish list”—long before he even saw the bill. It was a paint-by-numbers response from the Republican leader. It continues to be. It didn’t matter what was in the bill. In his eyes, not in the eyes of almost every American, it was going to be a far-left, partisan wish list.

To fit the preordained narrative, last night, Senate Republicans were latching onto provisions that account for 0.0003 percent of the total bill—0.0003 percent. Talk about grasping at straws. It is so predictable that the Republican leader would oppose the bill before he would see what was in it, and now that it is so necessary for so many Americans, it is predictable that the Republicans are just saying no.