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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.

Almighty God, thank You for Your great and precious promises. You have promised to keep a record of our pain. You have promised that no weapon formed against us will prosper. You have promised to supply our needs and to surround us with the shield of Your blessings. You have promised to keep us from stumbling or slipping.

Lord, You have promised that nothing can separate us from Your love. You have promised to do for us more than we can ask or imagine. Great and precious are Your promises.

Give our lawmakers confidence in Your promises as they face these tumultuous times. Sustain them with Your unfailing love and keep them on the right path.

We pray in Your matchless 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 (Mr. ROMNEY). The Senator from Iowa.

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

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

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICING REDUCTION ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. The miracles of scientific innovation have cleared ill-

nesses that a generation ago delivered a death sentence to many Americans. Dr. Jonas Salk's polio vaccine in 1953 eradicated the fatal effects of the virus that killed thousands of children in the first half of the 20th century.

I have every confidence that our scientific community will unlock a vaccine to stop the coronavirus pandemic. Testing, developing, and reviewing vaccines take time, but all of that is well underway.

However, there is no time to lose for Congress to pass my bipartisan Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act. We have the responsibility to ensure that pharmaceutical treatments, therapies, and vaccines are affordable for all Americans facing this pandemic or any of the future ones.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. McCONNELL. Over the last several weeks, major challenges have dominated the headlines on a daily basis. Following the sacrifices Americans have made to fight the coronavirus, our Nation is gradually beginning to reopen. Our economy has started adding back jobs. But as some States are seeing their numbers increase, the fallout for American workers remains historic, and schools, universities, and employers are still looking for smart and safe ways to step back toward normal.

The Senate is working to ensure that our efforts to treat, contain, and re-

cover from the pandemic can succeed. We have confirmed a Special Inspector General for Pandemic Recovery. Committees are overseeing the CARES Act, and Senator CORNYN is crafting measures to make sure a second epidemic of frivolous lawsuits does not block schools and colleges from reopening or employers from rehiring workers.

At the same time, the killings of Black Americans like George Floyd and Breonna Taylor have accelerated important conversations. With the leadership of Senator SCOTT of South Carolina, the Senate is preparing to add to the conversations surrounding law enforcement with our own serious proposal—policies that would take smart steps without attacking the vast majority of police officers who bravely do their jobs the right way.

Of course there is also a long list of legislative priorities which the Senate was going to tackle before these new issues materialized. This week, Chairman INHOFE and the Armed Services Committee have been marking up the 60th consecutive National Defense Authorization Act, which I hope the full Senate will be voting on later this month.

Here on the floor, we have also been considering a landmark bill to protect and preserve our Nation's public lands for future generations.

In my home State of Kentucky, we know all about the important role that public lands play in preserving our physical heritage, providing access for outdoor recreation, and sustaining jobs and prosperity in the process. Across the Commonwealth, outdoor recreation supports 120,000 jobs and drives nearly \$13 billion in consumer spending. From natural wonders like Red River Gorge and Mammoth Cave National Park to historic sites like Mill Springs Battlefield and Camp Nelson, Kentuckians have grown up enjoying our public lands, and we intend to protect them for future generations.

Let me give just one example. As I mentioned yesterday, when I came to

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the Senate, Kentucky was the only State without its own national wildlife refuge. We had plenty of history and heritage. We just needed a little help to preserve it.

With the support of hunters, boaters, and outdoorsmen in the Jackson Purchase region, I led the establishment of the Clarks River National Wildlife Refuge. It was a huge step to protect local species and our treasured Kentucky pastimes. This refuge has continued to grow over the years. Thanks to the Land and Water Conservation Fund and many willing sellers, it now makes thousands of acres available for appreciation, recreation, and tourism.

Like many public lands, these wildlife areas make great neighbors. In a single year, more than 50 million visitors come to America's wildlife refuges nationwide and spend billions in nearby communities.

Decades later, another Kentucky community was looking to safeguard its own natural treasure. The Green River, which flows through Kentucky and meets the Ohio River near Henderson County, is one of the most biodiverse waterways on the entire continent. I was proud to take the lead once again, and alongside strong local supporters and a broad coalition of groups, we sent a bill to President Trump, and he signed it into law. We welcomed the Interior Secretary to Western Kentucky last year to cut the ribbon on the Green River National Wildlife Refuge.

But Kentuckians know that ribbon cuttings are just the beginning. Our State has newly designated public lands that need attention to get off the ground. We have well-established public lands that have opportunities to grow and improve, and we have places like the Daniel Boone National Forest, established more than 80 years ago, that need our careful attention and upkeep.

This legislation before the Senate will help all of them. It will help us repair levees at the Clarks River National Wildlife Refuge. It will also help our two wildlife refuges continue to grow. It will help Mill Springs Battlefield and Camp Nelson continue to teach the history of emancipation and the Civil War to new generations. It will help us make infrastructure upgrades at Mammoth Cave National Park for the safety of 2 million annual visitors. It will help enhance the Land Between the Lakes and its \$600 million economic impact. It will fund transportation and structural maintenance in the Daniel Boone National Forest, which supports more than 900 jobs. It will help us rehabilitate the Cumberland Gap and give future Americans the opportunity to literally follow in the footsteps of our early explorers.

Kentucky is proud of our public lands. We are proud of the role our natural inheritance plays in our vibrant present and our promising future. Of course, we are only just one State. Every one of my Senate colleagues has

parks, forests, refuges, and historic sites they are equally proud of that are equally central in their communities. That is why we voted to advance this legislation earlier this week by an overwhelming bipartisan margin.

President Teddy Roosevelt once said this about our Nation's national treasures: "We have fallen heirs to the most glorious heritage people ever received, and each one must do his part if we wish to show that the Nation is worthy of its good fortune."

I want to thank Senator DAINES and Senator GARDNER for their leadership in making sure that we keep up our end of the bargain with the generations of Americans who came before us and those yet to come. I am also grateful for Senator ALEXANDER, Senator PORTMAN, and our Democratic colleagues, Senators MANCHIN and WARNER, for helping to assemble this bipartisan bill. I will be proud to speak for Kentucky and to vote for it.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

JUSTICE IN POLICING ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery catapulted the issues of racial justice, police violence, and systemic racism to the forefront of this Nation's conscience. These issues are not new. Some are even older than the Nation itself. The anger felt by hundreds of thousands of protestors is about that historical and pervasive injustice. It is rooted in our decades-long failure to reform police departments and the yawning gap between our ideal of equal justice under law and the reality of equal justice for only some.

America is an experiment. The Founding Fathers said that. We know it deep in our bones. An experiment means you can change, and some of the best observers of the difference—I think de Tocqueville was one of these—of America and the difference between us and other countries—we are willing to change.

I am touched and moved—I was with the demonstrators on Saturday in New York, in Brooklyn—by how many people were there—great diversity—and how many were young and idealistic and doing things for just the right reasons—not selfish reasons but for the betterment of the country, to make us a more perfect union.

We must seize this moment. We cannot let it pass. This isn't about simply

renewing a national dialogue, although dialogue is always important. It is about action. It is about making real and meaningful progress. And the way to do that is with comprehensive police reform legislation in Congress.

House and Senate Democrats have already drafted legislation that would ban the use of choke holds and other tactics that have taken the lives of Black Americans like George Floyd and Eric Garner; that would also ban the use of no-knock warrants in drug cases, which is one of the reasons for the death of Breonna Taylor; that would limit the transfer of military equipment to police departments; and, crucially, that would make it easier to hold police accountable for misconduct, as well as institute several reforms to prevent that misconduct in the first place.

The moment does not call for cherry-picking one or two things to do; it calls for bold, broad change—whole-scale reform, not piecemeal reform. I know the inclination of some of my Senate colleagues would be to cherry-pick a few small improvements and say the job is done. It will not be. We need to start—start—with the Justice in Policing Act, a strong, comprehensive bill that people, particularly Senators BOOKER and HARRIS, the CBC, spent a lot of time with experts who have studied this issue for many, many months and years.

For too long, when major issues wash over the country, the waves of change and progress crash against the rocks of a disinterested Republican Senate majority.

When Americans watched in horror as another spate of mass shootings rocked the Nation, they rose up and demanded change. President Trump and Senate Republicans initially tried to make the right noises. Leader MCCONNELL promised that a debate on expanding background checks would be "front and center" in the Senate after shootings in Dayton and El Paso, but, predictably, that debate never came to pass.

That seems to be the M.O. of our Republican friends. When there is a national crisis, major issues, people in the streets worried and concerned and wanting change, we hear words, and then the strategy is delay and, at the end, do nothing. We cannot go through these same motions again.

This is about the original sin of America that we must try to deal with head-on. There are Americans in the streets, shouting at the top of their lungs for change, young people, idealistic people—the best of America. The Senate must pursue comprehensive reform, not the lowest common denominator and certainly not more empty rhetorical resolutions.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Of course, there is another crisis in the country crying out for action and leadership.