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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, October 23, 2020, at 11:30 a.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2020

(Legislative day of Monday, October 19, 2020)

The Senate met at 12 noon, on the expiration of the recess, 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, whose love is from everlasting to everlasting, we pray for our Nation during this season of critical decision making. Guide our citizens with Your wisdom and fill them with Your peace.

Lord, in every generation, You continue to provide people who are equal to our challenges and who strive to please You. Provide us with such leaders that Your Name will be glorified as they strive to do Your will.

Today, replace fear with faith, falsehood with truth, hate with love, so that where You are, Your peace may abide with us all.

We pray in Your powerful 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.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Michael Jay New-

man, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Ohio.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senator from Iowa.

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

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

IOWA AGRICULTURE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, Iowa, my State, has a rich legacy in leading the Nation and the world in agriculture production and innovation. Iowa is first in corn production, first in eggs, ethanol, and pork, and second in soybeans. Family farms are the main institution for producing all this. So those family farms are how many Iowans leave their mark on our world, by passing their legacy to their children.

In the Senate, Senator ERNST and I have the great privilege of representing these family farmers. Senator ERNST and I have worked with the Trump administration to make biofuels a priority. We have secured E15 year-round—15 billion gallons of ethanol are blended annually as the law requires—new ethanol infrastructure through the USDA, and secured an extension of the biodiesel tax credit. We have secured and expanded trade agreements with our largest trading partners, which add value to Iowan commodities.

We also helped to put an end to the ridiculous Obama-era waters of the United States rule that would have regulated 97 percent of Iowa's farmland

as navigable waterway. Just as the harvest comes to an end, usually in November, our work will not stop in November. Senator ERNST and I will continue to focus on Iowa farm families and ensuring their success for years to come.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today, the Senate will have an opportunity to advance another COVID-19 relief package for American families. For more than 7 months now, the American people have been facing what one writer described as a "health crisis with an economic crisis strapped to its back."

The Senate has stepped up repeatedly, on a bipartisan basis, to help our Nation through this challenge. Today, we have an opportunity to do it once again.

The legislation before us is neither Republicans' nor Democrats' idea of a perfect bill. I think we are all clear on that. But it would move us past Speaker PELOSI's all-or-nothing obstruction and deliver huge support right now for the most pressing needs of our country.

Republicans want to conquer this disease through testing, treatments, and vaccines. Democrats say they agree with us.

Republicans want to pour money into safe schools and make sure an entire

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



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generation of kids don't fall any further behind, and Democrats say they agree with that.

Republicans want to reopen the Paycheck Protection Program so that Main Streets across America don't turn into COVID-19 ghost towns, so that millions of workers can keep their jobs and keep getting paid. Democrats say they agree with that.

For workers who have been laid off, Republicans want to renew the Federal supplement to unemployment insurance. Democrats say they agree with that.

Republicans want to cement health protections for Americans with pre-existing conditions, including COVID-19 itself. Democrats claim they are all over this issue.

And Republicans want to take our Nation's college presidents, nonprofit leaders, and employers at their word when they say they need commonsense protections so that legal uncertainty does not block their reopening.

The bill on the floor would do every one of those things and much more. The overwhelming bulk of it are programs that Democrats claim they support. It turns out there is a special perk to being a Senator. When you actually support something, you get to vote for it. When you actually support something, you get to vote for it. When you actually want an outcome, you vote for it.

Strangely enough, that is not what seems to be happening. Our Democratic colleagues have been happy to talk about further relief as long as it remained a hypothetical concept. But every time the Senate has had a chance to actually do something, they said no.

In July, Republicans tried to continue the Federal plus-up to unemployment insurance before it expired. Senator SCHUMER blocked it. In August, Senator MCSALLY fought again to restart those benefits for laid-off Americans. Once again, Democrats stopped it cold.

In September, Republicans wrote a sweeping proposal to deliver hundreds of billions of dollars for safe schools, unemployment benefits, paycheck protection, and the healthcare fight. Every single Senate Democrat voted to kill it all, except the junior Senator from California, who didn't vote.

This has been the dynamic for months now: Republicans trying to pass commonsense policies that the Democrats say they support and Democrats replying that working people can't get a dime unless Speaker PELOSI gets everything she wants.

We are talking about silly stuff: massive tax cuts for rich people in blue States, stimulus checks for people in our country illegally, wheelbarrows of cash—out of any proportion to COVID-19 needs—for State and city governments that Democrats have mismanaged for decades, and removing longstanding bipartisan Hyde protections that protect taxpayers from funding abortions.

Now I hear they don't want to renew the PPP unless it sends money to Planned Parenthood and criminals who are, literally, currently in prison. Let me say that again. They don't want to renew PPP unless it sends money to Planned Parenthood and criminals who are, literally, currently in prison.

These are the kinds of far-left fringe demands over which Democrats have blocked kitchen-table assistance for American families and healthcare support to crush the virus.

During this historic crisis, the Democratic leaders have elected to deny struggling people the help they need unless President Trump signs the entire Democratic Party platform into law.

Today, we are providing another chance to right the ship. In a few minutes, Senators will vote to either advance or filibuster a broad package that would deliver on all kinds of urgent needs: testing, treatments, vaccines, safe schools for our kids, a second round of the job-saving PPP, more Federal unemployment benefits, the legal protections that university presidents and charities say they need, protections for preexisting conditions. There is almost nothing in this proposal that Democrats even claim to oppose.

Just last week, the entire country watched our colleagues on the Justice Committee complain over and over about having to fulfill those responsibilities when they supposedly wanted to be working on a coronavirus relief package. We will see who walks the walk.

I am confident the Democratic leader will repeat the same tired attacks he has been recycling since the summertime. He will say we shouldn't do anything unless we do everything. He will argue this multi-hundred-billion-dollar bill is paltry—\$500 billion is paltry or meager or emaciated, a half trillion dollars? I am not kidding. This is seriously their claim—that a half trillion dollars for working people is chump change. It is not worth their time. Hundreds of billions of dollars targeted directly to struggling people doesn't even get Democrats out of bed in the morning.

Well, perhaps, to the blue-State billionaires, who seem to be the Democrats' top priority, these historic sums of money do look like chump change. Maybe coastal elites who can practically find a million dollars in their couch cushions are indifferent about whether we get an outcome here.

Well, believe me, working families like the Kentuckians I represent don't see it that way. Millions of workers have been able to keep their jobs and support their families because of the Paycheck Protection Program. Republicans want to fund a whole second round of that. Today, Democrats will either vote to advance it or vote to kill it.

Students, teachers, and parents need to know their K-12 schools are as safe

as possible. Republicans want to send a historic sum of money to those schools. Today, Democrats will either vote to advance it or vote to kill it.

For the historic numbers of Americans who have been laid off, additional Federal unemployment benefits have been a lifeline. Republicans want to restore them. Today, Democrats will either vote to advance it or vote to kill it.

Colleges, universities, charities, and small business need commonsense legal protections, and with cases spiking, our whole country needs further investment in testing, tracing, and vaccines. Today, the Democrats will either vote to advance all that or vote to kill it.

Struggling people don't need more endless arguments. They don't need to keep waking up and listening to reporters speculate on whether the Speaker of the House is in a good mood that day, because their very livelihood may depend on it. The country needs an outcome. The country needs an outcome.

Let's put aside our differences, agree where we can, and move forward. Why not get the country in a better place while Washington continues to argue over all the rest? If the sun sets today with no progress, if the Senate turns to Judge Barrett's nomination without having advanced another historic rescue package, it will only be because Senate Democrats used the filibuster to kill this aid.

If this relief does not pass, it will be because Senate Democrats chose to do Speaker PELOSI's political dirty work rather than stand up for struggling people. Let's not go there. Let's find our common sense, agree where we can, and advance this legislation while we debate the rest. The American people deserve action.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 178

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion on the motion to concur with amendment No. 2652 be waived.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the closer we get to an election, the sillier it gets here in Leader MCCONNELL's Senate. All week, the Republican majority has scheduled stunt votes on supposed COVID relief bills that are all, in reality, designed to fail.

Yesterday, the leader moved to table his own bill so the Republicans could vote against tabling it. Let me repeat that because that is what is happening here. It is hard to believe that this is supposedly the greatest debate Chamber in the country or in the world. Leader MCCONNELL moved to table his own bill so the Republicans could then vote against tabling it. That is what