



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 167

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2021

No. 182

## House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 19, 2021, at 2 p.m.

## Senate

MONDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2021

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MAZIE K. HIRONO, a Senator from the State of Hawaii.

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, the center of our joy, give our lawmakers this day the creativity and wisdom to solve problems and facilitate faith. As they seek to keep our Nation strong, provide them with the long view of their work. Lord, remind them that it is better to fail in a cause that will ultimately succeed than to succeed in a cause that will ultimately fail. Bless them with humility, integrity, and compassion for the living of these days.

And, Lord, thank You for the exemplary and courageous life and legacy of former Secretary of State Colin Powell. Bless his family and loved ones and all those who grieve his death.

We pray in Your sovereign 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. LEAHY).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, October 18, 2021.

*To the Senate:*

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MAZIE K. HIRONO, a Senator from the State of Hawaii, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,  
President pro tempore.

Ms. HIRONO thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the 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 and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Christine P. O'Hearn, of New Jersey, to

be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

#### REMEMBERING COLIN POWELL

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, today, we learned that America has lost a trailblazing leader with the passing of Colin Powell.

It is hard to imagine a more quintessentially American story: A son of Jamaican immigrants who learned Yiddish from his boyhood neighbors in the Bronx becomes a four-star general in the U.S. Army and serves four Presidential administrations, including as National Security Advisor, the youngest ever Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the first Black Secretary of State.

As a young officer, General Powell rendered brave and distinguished service on the frontlines. As a senior leader, he helped four Presidents protect our Nation, represent us on the world stage, and chart our course through uncertain and turbulent times that included the dawn of a new century and the beginning of our global war on terrorists, who will not leave America alone even if we leave them alone.

Today, we remember and honor a man who truly dedicated his entire life to serving his country.

#### THE ECONOMY

Madam President, now on an entirely different matter, there is a famous saying: If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is to stop digging. Well, my Democratic colleagues' policy

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S7019

decisions have dug our economy into a deep hole, and American families desperately need them to stop digging.

Families of this country are currently battling the worst inflation in well over a decade. Over the last 12 months, consumer prices have shot up by 5.4 percent. Gasoline prices and food prices each increased by a full 1.2 percent just last month alone. That is just in 1 month. Year on year, groceries are about 4.5 percent more expensive than they were at this time in 2020. Let's look at housing. Rent jumped a full half a percentage point just in September alone. That was the biggest monthly jump in two decades.

On paper, American workers have been getting raises. The average worker's paychecks have gotten bigger over the last year, but the Democrats' inflation has cannibalized all those gains and then some. Any man or woman in the country who hasn't gotten a pay raise of 5.5 percent this year has effectively had their pay cut by the Democrats' inflation.

Let me say it again: Unless you have recently gotten a 5.5-percent raise, you have gotten a pay cut. And even the households that have enjoyed pay raises are contending with major shortages of the things they want to buy and rapid and unpredictable price changes.

Of course, none of the families we represent need to hear these figures from experts on the news; they are living this reality every time they need to swing by the store, fill up their tank, or grab some essentials.

What is especially remarkable and especially sad is that our Nation's inflation nightmare was not unavoidable. These conditions are the product of intentional policy decisions made by Democrats over the objection of experts who warned exactly—exactly—what would happen.

Larry Summers, a leading economist and top adviser to each of the last two Democratic Presidents, said a few days ago—just a few days ago—“We're in more danger than we've been during my career of losing control of inflation in the U.S.” That is Larry Summers, just a couple of days ago. The worst inflation risk he has ever seen? Mr. Summers was one of the many mainstream economists who warned the Biden administration what their policies would unleash. From the start, they tried to persuade Democrats not to ram through their historic glut of borrowing, printing, and spending. Ah, but alas, Democrats didn't listen. Back in the springtime, they used the pandemic as an excuse to pass a massive spending bill that the White House boasted was the most leftwing legislation in American history. Now families are paying the painful price.

The country is deep in this hole that Democrats dug, but they are showing no indication—none—that they want to stop digging. Led by our socialist colleague, the distinguished Senator from Vermont, Chairman SANDERS, Washington Democrats are plowing forward

with yet another reckless taxing-and-spending spree that would make their huge inflationary package from the springtime look like child's play by comparison. They want the government to borrow and print multiple trillions more dollars and dump all that spending onto the heads of families who are already struggling—struggling—to stay afloat.

Meanwhile, Democrats want to saddle a sputtering economy with the biggest peacetime tax hikes on record, obliterating President Biden's promise not to raise taxes for the vast majority of American families and leaving American job creators with tougher tax rates than businesses pay in communist China.

Look at energy prices. Americans are already paying more at the pump than they have in 7 years, but now our colleagues want to go beyond their war on gasoline and slap new taxes and new regulations on other domestic energy sources such as natural gas. But winter is fast approaching. The whole world is steeling for huge price increases in natural gas. Our friends in Europe are frantically trying to secure their gas supply lines, and Russia is threatening to turn the continent's winter heating into a political hostage. But, inexplicably, Democrats' response is essentially to have America stand down as an energy superpower—new taxes and new regulations on top of the inflation that is already wreaking havoc.

Here was one headline last week:

Winter heating bills set to jump as inflation hits home.

The story went on:

With prices surging worldwide for heating oil, natural gas and other fuels, the U.S. government said Wednesday it expects households to see their heating bills jump as much as 54% compared to last winter.

This is the moment that President Biden is choosing to let the farthest-left people in Washington, DC, rewrite America's energy and environmental policy. Reckless liberal policies have dug America into a hole. Americans need Democrats to stop digging deeper, but the response from my colleagues across the aisle is to trade in their shovels for an excavator. Democrats want to keep digging deeper. They want to try to inflate their way out of inflation.

It makes no sense whatsoever. It sounds as crazy as it is. No wonder this expensive socialist experiment is proving so very painful. It is not what American voters elected, and it is not what American families want.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam 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.

#### REMEMBERING COLIN POWELL

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, like so many others in the Senate across America, I was saddened to learn this morning of the passing of Colin Powell.

In his lifetime, he broke down so many barriers, and he held some of the most important titles in this great Nation: General of the U.S. Army, National Security Adviser, America's first Black Joint Chiefs of Staff, and our first Black Secretary of State.

But before he held any of those positions, and after he stepped away from them, Colin Powell was always a patriot and a public servant. He was the son of immigrants—Jamaican immigrants—who raised their children to make the most of every opportunity that America offered and to show their gratitude to this Nation by giving—giving back however they could.

That story of opportunity and obligation is a story told by every immigrant parent to their children. It is the same story my mother taught to me and my brothers.

Much has been said and written about Colin Powell's historic and distinguished career as a soldier and a statesman. He was respected in a way that transcended partisan labels.

He wasn't perfect. His speech in 2003 to the U.N. General Assembly claimed incorrectly that Iraq likely possessed weapons of mass destruction. It was based on information he was given and later learned to be false. It helped make a case for a war about which he had misgivings, and he would come to regret those remarks the rest of his life.

But he never stopped trying to serve, even after leaving public office. In 2010, Colin Powell spoke out publicly about a cause that is deeply personal to many people, including myself. He and other military leaders urged this Senate to pass the Dream Act—legislation that would give young immigrants who grew up in the United States a chance to earn their citizenship.

Who better could speak to that issue than Colin Powell, the son of immigrants who served this Nation with distinction and combat and in public service? Regrettably, at the time, while a majority of Senators supported the Dream Act, it was filibustered and did not pass. Still, tens of thousands of immigrants are risking their lives today defending our Nation in uniform. Among them may very well be another Colin Powell.

It would be a fitting tribute to Secretary Powell for us to pass immigration reform now—this year—and recognize what a great patriot and son of immigrants like Colin Powell brought to this Nation.

One last point. Colin Powell survived one form of cancer nearly 20 years ago. He was being treated for another when he passed away. Multiple myeloma, a form of blood cancer, weakens the immune system. So despite the fact that he was fully vaccinated, General Powell died of complications of COVID.