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Senate

The Senate met at 10:01 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, the sky clearly reveals Your glory. It sings melodies about what You have done. Today, teach our Senators to do things Your way, embracing Your precepts and walking in Your path. Remind them that the narrow and difficult road leads to life and true freedom.

Lord, as You teach them to live with integrity, replace their anxiety with calm, their confusion with clarity, and their doubts with certainty. May Your heavenly peace, which transcends human understanding, guard their hearts and minds today and always.

We pray in Your loving 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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 19, 2022.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK,

a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNOCK 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 to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Nina Nin-Yuen Wang, of Colorado, to be United States District Judge for the District of Colorado.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today is going to be an exceedingly busy and productive day on the Senate floor.

Later today, after months of hard work and countless rounds of talks, Senators will vote to move forward on legislation that our country desperately needs—a chips bill that will lower costs, boost American manufacturing, and protect American security interests.

Over the past 24 hours, both parties have continued working on the final details to the chips package that we will vote on later today. We will see if Members can come to an agreement on adding other provisions to the bill, but the bottom line is that we must come up with a package that is capable of passing this Chamber without delay. We must act as soon as we can to make sure we bring chip manufacturing back to America because our Nation's security depends on it.

I urge my colleagues, if you want to fight inflation, if you want to create more good-paying jobs right here at home, if you want to keep America strong and competitive and innovative in the 21st century so that we can lead the economy as we did in the 20th, then this chips bill is the way to go. It is a very important bill.

The chips shortage is one of the most damaging trends over the past few years. This technology, which originated, of course, right here in America, is the bedrock for much of modern life. Cars, refrigerators, cell phones, medical devices—they all depend on chips to function. But when chips suddenly become scarce, as is the case today, the consequences are felt across the board by companies but also by average Americans. Americans see higher prices and longer wait times for all sorts of consumer goods because of this chip shortage.

It wasn't always this way, but thanks to the pandemic, this crisis is now being felt across the country.

A quarter century ago, the United States was the undisputed leader in global chip production. In 1990, we produced 40 percent—nearly 40 percent—of the world's semiconductors. Today, that figure is going down to 12 percent and will get even lower if we don't pass this bill. We have a chance of leading the way on chip manufacturing once again if we pass this legislation.

As we speak, the country's most important chip manufacturers—these are

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



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American companies—are waiting on congressional action—mostly American companies, not all. But they are waiting on congressional action before they decide where to invest in chip production. From Asia to Europe, other nations have copied the American playbook and have already invested billions of dollars to incentivize chip manufacturers to come to them. If we do not match the efforts of other countries to boost chip manufacturing, the consequences could be dire and long-lasting. Countless good-paying American jobs are on the line. Costs that Americans are now paying—higher costs—getting them lowered is now on the line. Billions of dollars in economic activity is on the line, and our national security is on the line.

As Secretary Austin and Secretary Raimondo told us last week, our economic and national security depends on our ability to invest in the technologies of today and tomorrow.

If we allow other nations to lead the way on chips, the days of America leading the world in scientific innovation, the days of America being the leading economic and military power in the world may actually be over. Nobody wants that. So vote for this bill. This is a future none of us wants to see.

Again, vote for this bill. I urge my colleagues to move forward later today.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, now on judges, as we move forward on legislation to boost chip manufacturing, there is a lot to do on the nominations front too.

Let me start with a very important number: 73. Let me say that again: 73. That is the total number of judges the Senate will, hopefully, have confirmed by the end of today. A year and a half into President Biden's term, that is nothing short of a towering achievement.

Here is how we reach that figure today: Later this morning, the Senate will vote to confirm Nina Nin-Yuen Wang as U.S. district court judge for the District of Colorado. This afternoon, we will hold a confirmation vote on Nancy Maldonado for the Northern District of Illinois. I expect these well-qualified nominees to move through this Chamber with bipartisan support. And as soon as today, the Senate will also vote on the confirmation of Judge Michelle Childs of South Carolina to serve on the DC Circuit.

Judge Childs will be the fourth—only the fourth—Black woman to ever sit on the DC Circuit, founded nearly 130 years ago. Confirming this remarkable jurist is an important step to reversing generations of underrepresentation and making our courts better reflect the Nation.

Let's not forget, after the Supreme Court, the DC Court of Appeals is the most important Federal court in the country, regularly taking up cases that the Supreme Court is unable to consider. Oftentimes, the DC Circuit makes the final decision on some of the

most important cases in the country, particularly those involving Congress and the executive branch. It is a really important court. Remember, the Supreme Court only hears about 75 cases a year. So lots of very vital cases are decided by this circuit court of appeals.

The judges who preside on the DC Circuit must be individuals of high character and unassailable qualification, and that is precisely what we have in Judge Childs. She is a native of Detroit, a graduate of the Universities of South Florida, South Carolina, and Duke. Judge Childs built a reputation as both a trailblazing jurist and a staunch defender of the Constitution. She already commands strong bipartisan support from both sides of the aisle, and I thank my Democratic and Republican colleagues for their support of the judge.

As the Senate continues to fulfill its duty of confirming well-qualified judges, we hope the trailblazers of today can be closer to the norm of tomorrow. We want our courts to include more women, more diverse candidates, both demographically and professionally, and more judges who come from unique backgrounds. Our courts, our democracy, and the American people will be better off through these efforts. There is not a doubt in my mind Judge Childs will help advance this noble goal. I look forward to her final confirmation.

MARRIAGE EQUALITY

Mr. President, finally, on marriage equality, this week, the House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on two pieces of legislation that will enshrine some of the most fundamental rights that every American should enjoy: the right to marriage equality and the access to contraceptives.

These votes come at a disturbing and dangerous moment for our country. A few weeks ago, the Supreme Court concluded one of its worst and most destructive terms in history.

Casting aside a half century of precedent, a conservative majority on the Court shamefully and disgustingly eliminated the fundamental right of women to make their own decisions regarding their bodies. It is a decision that will live in infamy, an indelible stain on the legacy of the highest Court in the land that will not be erased.

Alarming, the nightmare is very likely far from over. The MAGA Republicans on the Court and the MAGA radicals who are taking over the Republican Party have made it abundantly clear they are not satisfied with repealing Roe. As I said, it is an indelible stain, and the attempts by some to talk it away and erase it will not happen because it is such a bad stain.

Anyway, the MAGA Republicans who are taking over the Republican Party have made it abundantly clear they are not satisfied with repealing Roe. As many have openly said, they have turned their attention now to the Obergefell decision and marriage equality.

A few days ago, the junior Senator from Texas said the Supreme Court's decision protecting marriage equality was "clearly wrong" and argued that partisan State legislatures should determine who can and cannot get married. Other MAGA Republicans have echoed the same thing. We need to think—we need to pause and think about how unhinged—unhinged—this idea is.

Fresh off repealing the rights of every single woman in this country, MAGA Republicans now want to reopen the doors for discrimination and hatred targeted against same-sex couples. Even one of the Justices on the Supreme Court indicated in his opinion that gay marriage should be reconsidered by the courts.

This is the future that MAGA Republicans clamor for: one where women and same-sex couples are branded as second-class citizens. If they succeed, they will take our country down a dark path from which there may be no return, although we will fight it tooth and nail. Every single American should stand in opposition against these MAGA Republican views.

I yield the floor.

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. McCONNELL. 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

INFLATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, a year ago today, with prices already rising, President Biden said that high inflation was "expected to be temporary." One year later, after 9 straight months of inflation over 6 percent, the prices are now rising at their fastest rate in over 40 years.

Last week's inflation report confirmed on paper what working families have been feeling for a year: President Biden's prediction was dead wrong. Instead, prices are skyrocketing, and paychecks aren't keeping up. Real hourly wages are declining at breakneck speeds, dropping a full 1 percent last month alone. The average American worker got a full 1-percent pay cut just last month alone due to inflation.

The Biden administration has tried to claim that we are "stronger economically than we have been in history." That is what the White House Press Secretary told reporters earlier this month. Kentuckians know that is utterly absurd. They know the opposite is true. In my home State, the average household now spends over \$600 more—\$600 more—every month compared to the day President Biden took his oath of office. That comes out to more than \$7,300 a year.

Inflation is pushing Kentucky families to the brink. As a result, food bank