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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, September 9, 2022, at 9 a.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2022

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BEN RAY LUJÁN, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

God, You are life, wisdom, truth, and blessedness. You are our hope and the center of our joy. Lord, the Founders of this great Nation walked in Your guidance and rested in Your compassion. Unite us so that we can do Your will. Remove from us all evil desires and empower us to embrace the good. Speak to our Senators so that they may understand Your will for our Nation and world. Illuminate their understanding with beings of celestial grace. Make us thankful for the privilege of prayer. May we never take it for granted.

And Lord, we continue to pray for Ukraine.

We pray in Your merciful 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, September 7, 2022.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BEN RAY LUJÁN, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. LUJÁN 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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of John Z. Lee, of

Illinois, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, our democracy cannot hope to hang together for very long without a trusted, balanced, and fairminded Judiciary. As we have seen in stark and frightful ways in recent months, the men and women who preside from the bench hold immense power over our Nation's destiny and over our people's liberties.

When it comes to nominating people to the bench, it is imperative that we get it right. So, today, the Senate will continue its duty to advance President Biden's highly qualified, highly diverse, and highly accomplished judicial nominees.

We will begin this afternoon by voting on the confirmation of Judge John Lee to serve as circuit judge for the Seventh Circuit. If confirmed, Judge Lee will make history as the first Asian American ever to preside on the Seventh Circuit, joining the proud company of other Biden nominees who are making our courts more reflective of our country.

I expect Judge Lee to receive bipartisan support and his record certainly merits it. He has already been confirmed by this Chamber when appointed to serve as district judge roughly a decade ago. Over the course of his tenure, Judge Lee has authored over 800 opinions, while being reversed only 11 times.

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



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Later today, the Senate will vote to advance the nomination of another outstanding individual, Andre Mathis, to serve as circuit judge for the Sixth Circuit. Mr. Mathis would be the first Black man confirmed to the Sixth Circuit in nearly a quarter of a century and the first to hail from Tennessee.

Growing up, Mr. Mathis knew what it was like to go days without food, water, or heating, and yet, despite immense adversity, he was the first in his family to attend college and graduate from law school with honors. He spent over 15 years in private practice and has an extensive pro bono record. If confirmed, I am confident Mr. Mathis would make an excellent circuit court judge.

Confirming judges will continue to be a very top priority for the Senate in the days and weeks and months to come. Last night, I filed cloture on two additional circuit nominees which Members can expect to begin voting on as soon as Thursday.

Now, I want to take a moment—a moment—to emphasize how far Senate Democrats have come in keeping our promise to bring balance back to the Federal bench, which under President Trump skewed dramatically to the hard right. To date, Senate Democrats have confirmed 76 Federal judges, far more than the number confirmed at this point in President Trump's Presidency. In fact, we have confirmed more judges than either President Trump or President Obama did this far into their administrations.

In a dramatic break from the past, 75 percent of these nominees have been women, half of them women of color. That is a figure, I dare say, that has never been seen before when it comes to judicial nominees.

We are going to continue prioritizing judges moving forward. We cannot let the judiciary succumb to the hard right because, as we have seen, the consequences are devastating to the American people.

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT

Mr. President, on Democratic results, the Inflation Reduction Act was signed into law less than a month ago and already the verdict is in. Our bill is already creating new investments, new jobs, new opportunities for American families—jobs here in America, not overseas.

Let me repeat the good news. The Inflation Reduction Act that every Republican voted against is already delivering for our country.

This morning, the New York Times reported that in the wake of the Inflation Reduction Act, a whole host of companies “have announced a series of big-ticket projects to produce the kind of technology the legislation aims to promote.”

For example, companies like Toyota have announced billions in new investments to start manufacturing batteries for electric and hybrid vehicles right here in America. Elsewhere, the company First Solar announced a \$1 billion

investment to build new solar manufacturing facilities in the Southeast. Their CEO is explicit that their decision hinged in large part on our legislation, saying it provided “a level of clarity” that made investment in the United States the right move.

The examples go on. Honda and LG Energy also recently announced over \$4 billion for EV battery production in the United States. Panasonic, which supplies parts to Tesla's EV production, said they are also considering \$4 billion to build another EV battery plant. And thanks to tax incentives we passed recently that specifically reward domestic battery production, Samsung has decided to accelerate plans to break ground on their own EV battery plant in the next few months in the United States.

These are just a few examples of how the Inflation Reduction Act is already delivering on its promise to create countless new jobs and ignite billions in private sector investment and pave the way for America to lead the future with cheap and reliable clean energy.

Had we not done this, these plants probably would have been built, most of them overseas. As electric vehicles become predominant throughout our country and the world, America would have lost out. We led the world in auto production in the 20th century, and because of this act and what Democrats, without a single Republican vote, have done, we are going to lead in the 21st century as well.

It is exciting and gratifying to know that millions of Americans will be employed in good-paying jobs, in jobs that have a real future.

All of this is the result of Democratic leadership keeping its promise to the American people. Again, I have to say, this kind of thing used to happen when Democrats and Republicans came together. It is shameful that not a single Republican voted with us to pass these investments—not one.

And, of course, I would also be remiss not to highlight all the ways that the CHIPS and Science Act is sparking a new wave of investment as well. Just recently, the CEO of Micron announced a \$15 billion investment in manufacturing last week, saying that the CHIPS and Science Act “made this investment decision possible.”

And Micron has committed to significantly more and even larger investments to come, I am happy to say.

When you pass good legislation, you get good results.

It has been a long time, sadly, since the American people have felt that Washington is capable of doing big things to meet big challenges. After 4 years where President Trump spent all of his time, it seems, just being nasty and negative and calling people names but never making promises and never getting anything concrete done, Democrats are actually delivering with real results.

Senate Democrats have shown that with the right people in office, govern-

ment can work to promote, not hinder, the well-being and security of the American people. It is why we took on Big Pharma and won. It is why we took on entrenched oil interests and won. It is why we took on the NRA and beat them by passing the first gun safety law in decades. And all of this is the result of Democrats following through on our promise.

While the junior Senator from Florida continues to promote tax hikes for working families and putting Medicare on the chopping block, Democrats want to cut costs for families, increase prosperity, continue to strengthen ladders for people to get into the middle class and give them the stability to say that, once they are there, they are going to stay there.

Democrats have given America hope in the future, that in the new industries and new ways of thinking and new sciences, we are going to lead, not follow, not lag behind, not spend time, as President Trump did most of his time, playing petty political games and never getting anything done. We are getting stuff done—big stuff, important stuff, stuff that gives us a brighter future. That is why we work so hard to pass our agenda and, already, it is clear the American people are feeling the benefits.

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, Washington Democrats have spent nearly 2 years—2 years—borrowing, printing, and spending our economy into turmoil. Families and businesses across Middle America are paying the price. I met with many of them in my home State of Kentucky over the past few weeks.

Since President Biden took office, prices in the Commonwealth have spiked by 13 percent. At the same time, we still have 19,000 fewer workers than before the pandemic.

During a meeting with the Kentucky Association of Manufacturers in Louisville, I heard directly from employers who would, under different circumstances, be powering our recovery. Instead, many are struggling to find enough workers to meet consumer demand.

In Hopkinsville, I spoke to farmers who have watched the price of energy skyrocket, raising the cost of everything from fuel to fertilizer. As a result, all Americans are paying higher prices at the grocery store.

While Eastern Kentucky struggles to recover from devastating floods, supply