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Senate

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.

Almighty God, Lord of hosts, we praise You for choosing to make Yourself known to us in the unfolding of Your loving providence. Our hearts expand with joy because of Your presence. Empower us to keep our minds steadfastly on You.

Lord, use our Senators to make a better Nation and world. Give them an openness of mind and heart that they may receive the fullness of Your grace. Consecrate them to the laudable task of permitting Your kingdom to flourish in this generation and beyond.

Lord, make our lawmakers instruments of Your peace.

We pray in Your strong 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 14, 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 Nevada, 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 Lara E. Montecalvo, of Rhode Island, to be United States Circuit Judge for the First Circuit.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

ABORTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday, was truly a tale of two parties. While one party—the Democrats—gathered at the White House to celebrate the passage of our job-creating agenda, the other party—the MAGA Republicans—spent their day introducing a nationwide ban on abortions.

If the American people want to know what the difference is between the two parties, look no further. One party is

focused on jobs—that is us; the other is focused on nationwide abortion bans—that is the extreme MAGA Republicans.

One party wants to lower inflation and help families make ends meet, to tackle the generational challenges we face and has passed major legislation to that effect, now law. The other party, apparently, wants to eliminate women's autonomy over their own bodies.

Here is how you know Republicans are dangerously out of touch. Months after women had their freedom of choice taken away by the MAGA Supreme Court, a nationwide abortion ban was actually their attempt to seem more mainstream. Can you believe it? To seem more mainstream? Heaven help us. Heaven help us. It shows just how extreme they are.

The core problem is that far from being mainstream, a large portion of the Republican Party harbors truly extreme views on a woman's right to choose. In the few months since the Dobbs decision, Republican State legislatures in places like Indiana, South Carolina, and others have either introduced or enacted new abortion restrictions, with alarmingly few exceptions of rape or incest.

In this Chamber, Senate Republicans spent years confirming judges hostile to freedom of choice, including three sitting Supreme Court Justices who joined with the majority in overturning Roe. And the then-majority leader, now minority leader, Leader McCONNELL, has repeatedly said his greatest accomplishment is putting these judges on the Court. His greatest accomplishment is putting judges on the Court who overturned Roe v. Wade. Do the American people want that? I don't think so.

And for all the hemming and hawing we heard yesterday from Republicans about where they really stand on the issue, they cannot run away from their

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



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record. Setting aside yesterday's proposal, the fact is that 45 Senate Republicans—including Leader MCCONNELL—remain cosponsors of another nationwide abortion ban previously introduced by the Senator from South Carolina.

Leader MCCONNELL himself told USA Today earlier this year that without Roe, proposals for a nationwide ban on abortions were now "possible,"—his words—"possible" if Republicans controlled the Senate. Do the American people want that? Do they want MCCONNELL, Leader MITCH MCCONNELL, to be majority leader and work to impose a nationwide ban on abortions? I don't think so.

Now, they are sort of running away from what their real beliefs are, but they are like the dog who caught the bus. For years they pushed to make this happen, unfortunately, to the detriment of over 100 million American women. It happened, and now they don't know quite what to do.

They are not backing off their horrible MAGA principles, but they want to hide from it at the same time because they know how unpopular it is.

And to show you just where the party is at, almost immediately after the Court overturned Roe, Mike Pence, former Republican Vice President, now running for President possibly in 2024 said Republicans "must not rest" until abortion is illegal everywhere. That means a nationwide ban. That doesn't leave it up to the States.

In fact, he doubled down on just this last night, saying a national abortion ban "is profoundly more important" than Republicans' short-term interests. That is one of the leaders of the Republican Party, which has moved so far to the right that even someone like Pence, who doesn't always go along with Trump, feels compelled to take that extreme position.

And lest we forget, folks, nearly every Senate Republican—nearly every Senate Republican—already voted to push national abortion bans in 2020, in 2018, and 2015. During one of these votes, the Senator from South Carolina, who introduced the nationwide ban again yesterday, said:

These pieces of legislation will continue to be advanced until they pass.

How do we know that Republicans will put a national abortion ban on the floor if they control the Senate? Not only has Senator GRAHAM committed to doing it, they have done it before, three times. And they will do it again if they get the majority. America, beware. America, beware.

So the truth is not hard to grasp. Republicans do not care about leaving abortion in the hands of the States. No way. They do not care that a majority of Americans supported Roe and support abortion rights.

What MAGA Republicans care about deep down is eliminating freedom of choice across America, period. And they are already at work right now on legislation, as we heard yesterday, that

will take us down that terrible, terrible path.

Well, it is my view that the American people aren't going to be fooled by Republicans' desperate attempts to seem mainstream. You can't fake your way through an issue so personal and so important as a woman's right to make her own healthcare choices. They are not going to be able to run and duck and bob and weave and tie themselves in pretzel knots. Everyone knows where they are at. LINDSEY GRAHAM made it clear again yesterday. And people will know the Republican view: abolish abortion everywhere. That is not going to change no matter what some on the other side might think.

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT OF 2022

Mr. President, now, on the positive impacts of the Democratic agenda, a much happier note. As I said a moment ago, while MAGA Republicans spent yesterday touting their extreme agenda, Democrats focused on the things that matter most right now to the American people: lowering costs, creating good-paying jobs, and protecting our planet for future generations.

The Inflation Reduction Act has not been law for even a month—not just a month—and already it is spurring new investments that will generate years, if not decades, of robust economic activity, in industries that will stay here in America—here in America, not in China, not anywhere else—for a very long time.

A remarkable number of companies in the energy, automotive, and clean tech sectors have announced that they are either approving or accelerating new plans to grow their businesses.

One of the most significant areas of activity is happening in EVs and battery manufacturing, so crucial to meeting our country's growing demand for electric vehicles. China has dominated battery manufacturing for too long, and we are bringing these jobs back to America—not just talking about it, doing it.

Honda and LG, for instance, have teamed up to invest \$4 billion for a new battery plant with an annual production of 40 GWh.

Hyundai, meanwhile, has announced they might actually accelerate their timetable for building new state-of-the-art EV and battery plants in Savannah, GA. Plans called for getting started early next year, and now they are saying it could happen sooner. And it is the votes of people and the activity of people like RAPHAEL WARNOCK and JON OSSOFF that have made that happen.

Of course, the benefits of our bill extend well beyond EVs and batteries. Solar Energy Industries Association projects that by 2027, the U.S. solar market will grow 40 percent more than expected thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act. And numerous companies focused on renewables, carbon capture, and heat pumps are announcing a flurry of investments, very often citing our bill—now law—the IRA.

All of these examples share something important: These are the jobs of tomorrow. These industries are going to stick around for decades as our country makes the transition away from fossil fuels and towards cleaner forms of energy. The impacts will be felt everywhere. It is going to take millions of workers to build these vehicles, reshape our infrastructure, and install these technologies in our homes and offices.

And because so much of this will be done by union labor, these will be good-paying jobs, at good wages, with good benefits, lifting up the middle class, keeping those who are in the middle class there and allowing many others who are climbing that ladder to get into the middle class and stay there. It is a wonderful and beautiful thing. In a certain sense we did the right thing making sure our planet doesn't burn up, but it had so many other effects, like good-paying jobs and strengthening the middle class.

And had we not taken action to encourage these investments, it is likely many of these jobs would end up going overseas to Asia, to Europe. America would have lost out. Instead, we have a real chance to lead the way again.

This is the result of Democrats leading the way here in Congress. We are proud, every one of us is proud of the steps we have taken to lower energy costs, to create jobs that have a real future in this country, and to give working families a chance to climb up those ladders and get into that middle class.

It is all about restoring that sunny American optimism that has been at the core of our economic prosperity for so long, that some felt had passed us by; but, no, we Democrats said it hasn't passed us by. The best of our future is yet to come.

RESPECT FOR MARRIAGE ACT

Mr. President, on marriage equality, over the past few months, both sides have engaged in good-faith conversations about how to pass marriage equality into law. I truly hope, for the sake of tens of millions of Americans, that there will be at least 10 Republicans who will vote with us to pass this important bill soon.

Democrats are ready to make it happen and willing to debate reasonable compromises on the specifics, so I urge my colleagues on the other side to join us. Around the country, the feeling is sinking in that this is a dark time for individual rights, so codifying marriage equality is one of the best things we can do to provide peace of mind to millions of Americans who are gay Americans, LGBTQ Americans who are married, and to their families, to their friends. It extends way beyond the individual couple who is married. It is an issue that hits home for many of us in this Chamber, including me.

If we ever find ourselves in the awful situation of having marriage equality overturned by the Supreme Court, I dare say the vast majority of us would