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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we come today seeking a deeper understanding of Your ways. Life often seems like a difficult riddle, but in spite of its challenges, You sustain us with Your majesty and love.

Lord, forgive us when we think too often of ourselves and forget the pain of those around us. Make us willing to pay the price for freedom.

We bring to You the Members of this legislative body. Empower them to bear the weight of responsibility. Give them the desire to honor You. Lord, fill their hearts with gratitude for the unfolding of Your prevailing providence. Evaporate their fears like the morning mist.

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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The 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 legislative clerk read the nomination of Frances Kay Behm, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). The Republican leader is recognized.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, 2 years into the Biden administration, the Democrats' approach to illegal immigration and our Nation's borders has failed the American people.

Last week, one news organization reported that daily crossings along our southern border have remained near record highs. Last fiscal year alone, more than 2.76 million illegal immigrants came across our southern border, absolutely smashing the previous record-high by more than a million. That is almost the equivalent of a full 1 percent of our total national population encountered on our southern border in just 1 year. The problem actually keeps getting worse. Reported estimates say that more than 73,000 new "got-aways" dodged Border Patrol and escaped into our country in just this past November alone.

Absurdly, the response to this crisis from President Biden's team is that everything is fine—everything is fine—and going according to plan. Secretary Mayorkas said last month, "What we are doing is precisely what we announced we would do in April of this year, and we have indeed been executing on the plan."

Now, everybody else in the country calls our functionally open borders an emergency and a crisis, but apparently

the Biden administration calls it mission accomplished. And bear in mind, the terrible and unacceptable status quo has come with some emergency COVID measures still in place. All the crisis-level numbers I just ran through have come with these extra border controls—called title 42—actually still in effect.

Now, one Federal judge is trying to force the Biden administration to do what the far left has wanted for months and actually repeal the policy. So the unacceptable crisis-level status quo may only be the warmup act compared to coming attractions. One immigration expert told a reporter, "It is definitely, at least in the short run, going to result in many, many more people being released into the United States." Congressman GONZALES, who represents Texas's 23rd District, says it would be a "hurricane" for border communities.

Of course, the Biden administration officials who claim they have a plan to cope with the removal of title 42 are the same people who brought us record-breaking illegal immigration even with it in place. So make no mistake, a choice between the current border situation with title 42 and an even worse situation without title 42 is a choice between a disaster and a catastrophe.

Democrats need to stop shuffling deck chairs on the Titanic and start looking to the tough, proven, successful policies that allowed the preceding administration to get a handle on the issue, and they need to drop the forgiving attitude to illegal immigration that draws more and more men, women, and children on the dangerous journey to our border every single day. It is inexcusable that the Biden administration cares more about getting protested by far-left activists than they do about providing a basic level of order and security.

Everyone knows what steps would improve the situation. The playbook from the prior administration is right

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



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there. All the Democrats need to do is pick it up.

CAROL ACT

Mr. President, now on a different matter, 2 years ago Kentucky, mourned the sudden tragic loss of our friend Carol Leavell Barr.

At only 39 years old, Carol suffered a fatal heart attack likely caused by an illness known as valvular heart disease. She left behind two young daughters and our distinguished colleague, Congressman ANDY BARR. Carol Barr led an extraordinary life, devoted to serving others.

Last year, Congressman BARR channeled his grief into action and wrote the Cardiovascular Advances in Research and Opportunities Legacy, or CAROL, Act. I introduced a companion bill in the Senate alongside the senior Senator from Arizona, and last week, the Senate passed the CAROL Act by unanimous consent, moving this legislation one step closer to becoming law.

The legislation embodies Carol Barr's humanitarian spirit. It will encourage new research into valvular heart disease and greater awareness of the illness.

Eight million Americans live with this disease, many without any apparent symptoms. Approximately 25,000 of our fellow citizens lose their lives every year, often suddenly.

The CAROL Act is dedicated to sparing other families the tragedy that hit the Barrs.

It is a fitting tribute to Carol Barr's wonderful life and legacy, and it is an important piece of legislation in its own right.

So I want to thank all my colleagues for their support. I look forward to enacting the CAROL Act into law very soon.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, we have 26 days left in the calendar year, and there is still a lot we have to do.

This week, the House is expected to take up the annual Defense authorization bill, priming the Senate to take action, perhaps as soon as next week.

The Senate's work on funding the government also continues. I just finished a meeting with the Republican leader about finding a constructive path forward to keep the government funded next fiscal year. Leader MCCONNELL and I have both publically affirmed the importance of getting this done, because our troops, our military, and our national security depends on it.

And this Wednesday, in fact, the Senate will hold another classified briefing

on the state of play in Ukraine, and I hope that my colleagues recognize how funding the government is inextricably tied supporting Ukraine while protecting American national security here at home. The two are tied together.

So we are going to continue negotiations until we get the job done on funding the government. Both sides recognize the importance, so now both sides must chart a path forward together.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, on judges, the Senate is just a few confirmation votes away from reaching another milestone. Soon, we will confirm our 90th Federal judge under President Biden.

I want to thank my colleague, chair of the Judiciary Committee, Senator DURBIN for his diligence and hard work in this area of getting nominees appointed to the bench.

We vote today on judge No. 88, Doris Pryor, tapped by the President to serve as U.S. circuit judge for the Seventh Circuit. She will be the 26th—the 26th—circuit court judge the Senate confirms in the last 2 years.

These appointments are critical. Even though a conservative majority presides on the Supreme Court, the bulk of all Federal cases are still resolved by circuit court judges.

If confirmed, Judge Pryor will make history as the first woman of color from Indiana ever to sit on the Seventh Circuit. One judge at a time, the Senate continues fulfilling its mission of making sure our courts reflect the diversity and dynamism of America.

A graduate of University of Central Arkansas and Indiana School of Law, Judge Pryor served as a clerk for both the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals and for the Eastern District of Arkansas, before turning to public defense.

She has also more than a decade of experience as a Federal prosecutor, focusing on national security and prosecuting individuals who sought aid to terrorist organizations.

When not involved in donning the black robe of a jurist, Judge Pryor is deeply involved in the Indianapolis community, founding youth programs, mentoring future lawyers, and helping the formerly incarcerated to re-enter civilian life.

In short, Judge Pryor has the brains of a jurist and the heart of a public servant—a perfect combination for someone serving a lifetime appointment on the bench.

I look forward to her confirmation today, and Democrats will continue making judicial nominations a top priority in the new year.

PRESIDENT TRUMP

Mr. President, finally, Donald Trump cannot seem to go a week without doing or saying something disgusting, dishonorable, and, frankly, disqualifying for high office.

Two weeks ago, it was a dinner with a pair of loathsome anti-Semites, which to this day, he has not denounced. He says: Well, I didn't know

that one of these men, Fuentes, was coming. He still hasn't denounced him now that he knows he was there.

On Friday, he took his vile rhetoric to a new and horrible nadir when he called for the "termination" of the Constitution of the United States because he lost the 2022 election.

Aside from the pettiness and the ego of that, it is as if Donald Trump is on a mission to find new ways to sink lower and lower to the detriment of America. How can anyone hope to take the Presidential oath of office to preserve and protect the Constitution while simultaneously calling for the Constitution's termination? It is wholly disqualifying on its face.

And now that Donald Trump is being rightfully criticized for attacking the Constitution, his response is to double down and deny he ever did so in the first place rather than have the decency to own up to it.

I am glad some Republicans seem increasingly willing to condemn Trump's lunacy, but we need more voices filling the silence. We need nothing less than an avalanche of condemnation from Republicans; but, sadly, all we have gotten so far are just a few flurries here and there.

Republicans need to speak up, because if America doesn't extricate itself from Donald Trump and his MAGA ideology, it could undercut our American way of life. This isn't a partisan scuffle. When a former President calls for the termination of the U.S. Constitution, there can be no silence, no equivocation—nothing less than total and fierce condemnation.

So to my Republican colleagues, enough is enough. Reject MAGA, reject Trump, condemn these awful attacks on the U.S. Constitution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

NOMINATION OF DORIS L. PRYOR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, at the outset, I want to join the majority leader in his kind words related to Judge Doris Pryor, who is seeking a seat on the Seventh Circuit of Appeals.

Today, the Senate will vote to confirm Judge Doris Pryor to serve on the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals. Judge Pryor is an outstanding nominee to the appellate bench. She is a graduate of the University of Central Arkansas and the Indiana University Maurer School of Law. Following law school, she clerked for Judge Lavenski R. Smith on the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals and for Judge J. Leon Holmes on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

Judge Pryor then served for a short period of time as a deputy public defender in Texarkana, AR. In 2006, she joined the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Indiana as an Assistant U.S. Attorney. During her time as a Federal prosecutor, Judge Pryor handled all types of criminal matters and argued several Federal appeals. She also served as national security chief and as the office's reentry