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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray. Eternal God, our help and strength, we bow in awe and reverence before You. You are the mighty fortress in whom we find refuge. You do for us more than we can ask or imagine.

Lord, strengthen our Senators for today's journey and all the changing scenes of their lives. Help them to bear in mind that You will empower them to meet every challenge. Give to them the abiding awareness that nothing can disturb their peace if they put their trust in You. May our Senators live in the sure faith that You can enable them to live worthy of Your grace.

We pray in Your loving 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 pro-

ceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Nancy G. Abudu, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). The majority leader is recognized.

### ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, so, on AI, yesterday, I met with a bipartisan group of Senators—two Democrats, including myself, and two Republicans—to talk about spearheading our bipartisan efforts to focus on comprehensive AI legislation.

Our group agreed that because AI technology is developing so quickly, Congress has to move fast. Over the past several weeks, my staff and I have met with close to 100 CEOs of companies who do AI—scientists, AI academics, leaders in the industry of many different viewpoints, and critics of AI. And I plan to continue to do this.

If harnessed responsibly, AI has the power to do tremendous things for the public good. It can unlock unimaginable marvels in medicine, business, national security, science, and so many other areas of life; but if left unchecked, AI has the power to do tremendous, tremendous harm.

It can accelerate misinformation, breed new forms of racial prejudice, create severe economic disruptions, and hinder human agency in the most severe of ways.

So let me make a few observations in light of my conversation and our meeting.

First, as I said a month ago, Congress must move quickly. Many AI experts have pointed out that the government must have a role in how this technology enters our lives; even leaders of the industry say they welcome regulation. So if we were to fulfill our role properly, our approach to AI must be

fast-moving. We can't move so fast that we do flawed legislation, but there is no time for waste or delay or sitting back. We have to move fast.

Second, our group also agreed that any approach must be bipartisan. AI technology already touches virtually every industry, field, and facet in our society, so our process must be collaborative and must draw from a broad and bipartisan range of views and issues.

And, third, we think we have a good case study for how the bipartisan process can work: CHIPS and Science. When the Senate passed CHIPS and Science, both sides came together on an issue that impacted the Nation and involved a lot of committees, inputs, and views—much like AI will. And because there was so much bipartisan overlap in CHIPS and Science, as there is in AI, it makes it a lot easier to do this in a way that brings bipartisan groups together from the very beginning.

So I hope CHIPS and Science can be a model for how we approach AI. I thank my colleagues—so many of my colleagues—not just the four of us who met, for their attention on this pressing issue, and I look forward to continuing to work with a wide range of Senators for many committees and from both sides of the aisle as we move forward.

### DEBT CEILING

Mr. President, default, all week long, both sides have kept talking about the future of our Nation's budget, while at the same time moved closer to fulfilling our responsibility to preserve the full faith and credit of the United States.

Avoiding default is non-negotiable. It must be our north star, and that cannot change. I am pleased that over the course of this week, everyone has acknowledged that allowing the country to default would be a catastrophe. I am also pleased that the other side has recognized that the best way forward is a bipartisan piece of legislation that

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



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can secure enough votes to get through both the House and the Senate.

Partisan legislation just won't produce the result we need. I am hopeful that soon, both sides will find an agreement that keeps default completely off the table. We have made good progress this week, but the work continues. No one will get everything they want.

From the beginning, Democrats have said—I have said—that this process demands bipartisanship. It is how we avoided default under President Trump. It is how we avoided default under President Biden, and it is how we should avoid default this time too.

Brinksmanship, hiding plans, hostage-taking, none of that will move us any closer to a solution, but working together and accepting that nobody will get everything they want is the way to go.

Since the founding of our country, one thing has remained constant: When it is time to pay the bills, America has followed through. It is one of the cornerstones of our Nation's success.

If America would ever fail to pay its bills, the consequences would be horrific. Default would bring recession. Default would kill 8 million jobs. Default would send soaring costs on credit card payments, mortgages, small businesses, loans, and erode people's 401(k)s. Nobody—nobody—wants that. Americans certainly can't afford it; so we in Congress must avoid it at all costs.

I hope that negotiations continue in the right direction.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

ISSUES FACING AMERICA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Last week's inflation report reinforced what working families across America already know: Washington Democrats' inflation is still packing a punch. Prices climbed 4.9 percent from this time last year. Just in the last month, they accelerated nearly half a percentage point. The Biden administration called the news "welcome breathing room for families."

Welcome breathing room for families? According to the latest data, families have paid thousands of dollars more just to put food on the table on his watch. In Colorado, your average family has paid over \$2,000 in additional food costs since 2021. In Arizona, those same groceries have cost households \$1,800; in Montana, over \$1,700; in my home State of Kentucky, families have paid \$1,600 more, on average, since President Biden took office. It doesn't sound like breathing room to me, especially at a time when workers' wages are failing to keep pace with out-of-control prices.

Meanwhile, confidence with President Biden to do the right thing with the economy is at its lowest point since the great recession. That is hardly surprising when his top economic

advisers refuse to even admit there is a problem. The President's latest pick to lead his Council of Economic Advisers has repeatedly said this administration didn't miss a thing on inflation.

So, while the Biden administration pats itself on the back for a job well done, let's remember where we were just 2 years ago. Since the President took office, prices have climbed a staggering—listen to this—16 percent—16 percent since the President took office. Gasoline is up 54 percent, electricity is up 22 percent, groceries are up 20 percent, and higher interest rates are making it harder for working families to borrow and save for the future. Washington Democrats' reckless spending and green energy fantasies are sending our economy deep into the red.

For 2 straight years, Americans have had to tighten their belt just to get by. It is time for this administration to wake up and do more of the same.

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Mr. President, on another matter, as our Nation observes Police Week, cities across America continue to grapple with the rising tide of violent crime, and our Nation's Capital is certainly no exception. This year, Washington has already endured the deadliest first 4 months of any year in the last decade. Motor vehicle theft in the District is up 115 percent from this time last year. And now, the leftwing DC Council wants to make the tough job facing the brave men and women of the Metropolitan Police even tougher.

With violent crime spiraling out of control, the council proposed a new law that strips police officers of collective bargaining rights, makes more of their information available for public harassment, and adds new hurdles for the use of force in defending themselves and the public. Remember, Congress already had to step in when the council tried to go even softer on felony sentencing with another bill earlier this year. Even President Biden balked at such a radical measure.

The latest law, which is already in effect on an emergency basis, has had a devastating impact on local law enforcement. The local police union reports 1,200 officers have chosen to leave the force since it took effect—1,200 officers left the force since this took effect. In a city that is facing its worst bout of violent crime in at least a decade, the police chief estimates he has fewer officers to fight it than at any time since the 1970s.

To make matters worse, the Department is fighting a losing battle against the city's soft-on-crime prosecutions. Last year, Washington's U.S. Attorney's Office declined to press charges on—listen to this—on two-thirds of the arrests made by the police department. In other words, two of every three times an MPD officer risks their safety to take a suspect into custody, the suspect walks free.

No wonder, as Chief Contee reports, the average homicide suspect the department encounters already has a rap

sheet of 11 previous arrests. Leftwing officials in our Nation's Capital are taking a cue from the Democrats' approach to border security: catch-and-release—catch-and-release. It is simply unacceptable.

This Police Week, the junior Senator from Ohio brought forward a resolution to say enough is enough. After a bipartisan vote in the House, our colleagues on both sides of the aisle voted yesterday to reject—to reject—the DC Council's new law. I am grateful to Senator VANCE for his leadership, and I am proud to join colleagues in continuing to back the blue.

UKRAINE

Mr. President, on another matter, this week, some of America's closest European allies have continued preparations to equip Ukraine with new weapons ahead of a planned counter-offensive, including long-range cruise missiles and American-made fighter aircraft that would require authorization from the United States.

As President Biden meets in Japan with our strongest economic partners, I hope he will build on the West's support for Ukraine by clearing the way for the transfer of F-16s, long-range fires, and cluster munitions that will help Ukraine win.

As Ukraine prepares to liberate territory from Russian occupation, its friends must move at the speed of relevance to approve the transfer of critical weapons and munitions to help those efforts succeed.

TRIBUTE TO PAUL CASASCO

Mr. President, on one final matter, today, the Senate will bid farewell to a longtime member of our institutional staff. After 37 years of service, the senior audio operator for the Senate Chamber, Paul Casasco, is embarking on a well-deserved retirement.

Paul arrived in the Senate in the spring of 1986, just in time to help stand up the audiovisual production that would broadcast all proceedings to the American public. In the years since, I understand he has had a hand in just about every facet of the Senate's multimedia recording operation, from committee hearing rooms to the affectionately named "crow's nest" in the Gallery of this very Chamber.

Paul has had a front-row seat to decades of Senate history. He has captured consequential debates and preserved crucial records.

So I know my colleagues will join me in thanking Paul for his devoted service to our institution and in wishing him much happiness in his retirement.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEBT CEILING

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it may have taken a while, but it looks like