



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 118<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 169

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, JULY 10, 2023

No. 117

## Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TAMMY DUCKWORTH, a Senator from the State of Illinois.

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Father of love, as we live this day, give us wisdom, strength, and commitment to serve You in all we do. We acknowledge You, Lord, as the Creator and Sustainer of our destinies. So show us how to do Your will.

Lord, guide our Senators. Lead them by Your wisdom as they seek to know and obey Your precepts. Illuminate their path with the light of Your truth, and keep them from sin, which is a reproach to any people. Help them to overcome the temptation of trying to make it on their own strength. Instead, guide them until they yield to the inflow of Your wisdom, insight, and vision.

We pray in Your powerful 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 (Mrs. MURRAY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, July 10, 2023.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable TAMMY DUCKWORTH, a Senator from the State of Illinois, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,  
President pro tempore.

Ms. DUCKWORTH 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.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

### NEW YORK

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first, I would like to welcome back my colleagues, including our Senate Acting President pro tempore back to the Senate after celebrating the July 4th holiday.

Today, my thoughts are with all New Yorkers impacted by the flash floods that barraged the Hudson Valley, particularly Orange County where the West Point Military Academy is located, as well as other parts of Upstate New York, particularly Ontario County. The situation on the ground remains dangerous. Streets have been turned into rivers; houses have been swept away in their entirety; and, sadly, at least one person has lost her life.

I have been in contact with the local first responders on the ground to ensure we are doing everything we can in my office to help.

Today, I also called on FEMA to be ready to grant any request from the State for a major disaster declaration.

And I urge everyone in New York and across the Northeast to exercise caution in the coming days. The danger is not over.

I will continue to monitor this situation and bring the long arm of the Federal Government to help in every way that it can.

Madam President, now, when people think about the July 4th holiday, they think about fireworks, barbecues, family. But last week, many Americans saw something else too. They saw more construction workers hard at work in their communities. They saw more hard hats and shovels and cranes and cement trucks operating day and night. They saw, in other words, Democrats' agenda in action, an agenda that has created over 35,000 new infrastructure projects over the last 2 years. These projects will mean millions of new good-paying jobs across the country for years to come. New York is a terrific example.

Last week, I was proud to announce that nearly \$7 billion in Federal dollars has been approved for the Gateway Tunnel project, in what will be the largest Federal transportation grant in history for the most important infrastructure project in America.

Gateway has been a true passion of mine for more than a decade, a labor of love that I have been focused on for a long time. It is critical for our economy in the Northeast and, in fact, in the entire country. Should the tunnels under the Hudson not be usable, the Northeast—and probably the country—would go into recession. So this affects everybody.

And the funding I announced was as a direct result of the terrific work we did in Congress to pass generational infrastructure legislation. Our work over the past few years is paying off. The Gateway project alone will create 72,000 new jobs—good-paying jobs—and generate over \$19 billion in ancillary economic activity in addition to the dollars that are being spent.

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



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And our infrastructure agenda is not just about bridges and tunnels either. The administration announced recently over \$42 billion in broadband funding is heading to the States across the Nation—more money so kids can access high-speed internet at home and so more families in both rural and urban communities can stay connected across the country.

I thank my colleagues who worked over the July 4th weekend to announce all the great projects happening around the country. Implementation will remain a top Democratic priority.

#### BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now, on the Senate July work period, as the Senate gavels back in, our North Star remains unchanged: to build on our historic work over the past few years to strengthen our economy, make life better for the American people, and do it in a bipartisan manner whenever possible.

A little over a month ago, both parties came together to avert a catastrophic default on the national debt, while agreeing on spending levels that will keep our country and our economy strong.

This month, the work of funding the government will continue. It won't be easy but must get done with good faith and bipartisan work. I am pleased so far that this process is moving along in the Senate through the Appropriations Committee, through regular order, in a bipartisan way. And we will do everything we can to ensure that it remains that way.

In another act of bipartisanship on something equally significant, the Senate will move forward on the annual National Defense Authorization Act so we can keep our country safe, support our friends in Ukraine, outcompete China, and give our troops the pay raise they rightfully deserve.

I thank Chairman REED and Ranking Member WICKER for moving the NDAA through the Armed Services Committee last month. I hope that we can move quickly on it here on the floor in July.

These two areas—Appropriations and the NDAA, the Defense Act—are prime examples of the kind of bipartisan work we want to see in the Senate and which I have worked with my colleagues to foster.

We also need that bipartisanship on other issues too—to reduce the cost of insulin prescription drugs, to hold bank executives accountable, to modernize Federal aviation programs, to reauthorize the farm bill, to make progress on safe banking, and outcompete the Chinese Government.

And, of course, every one of these issues requires bipartisan cooperation. Getting there won't be easy, but we are going to do everything we can to make them happen because every one of them will benefit the American people, and, of course, we will also need bipar-

tisanship to prepare for the radical transformations that AI will unleash in the coming years.

Tomorrow, the Senate will have the first-ever classified all-Senators briefing from the Department of Defense and intelligence community on AI and how it affects our national security.

Our briefers will include Avril Haines, the Director of National Intelligence; Kathleen Hicks, the Deputy Secretary of Defense; and other top experts from our Defense and intelligence Agencies.

We are still in the early stages of understanding AI's role in our national security. So this briefing will be critical for Senators to learn more about how we are using AI to protect our country; also, how it is being used by our adversaries; and what we can do to make sure that we maintain our advantages.

And we have no time to waste. Our adversaries won't wait to deploy this technology against us. Congress cannot behave like ostriches when it comes to artificial intelligence. We need to learn as much as we can about AI, as quickly as we can, so we can play our part to ensure the AI revolution brings prosperity, safety, and unparalleled innovation.

So I thank all of my colleagues on both sides who attended the previous briefing and encourage them to attend this one. And I thank Senators HEINRICH, ROUNDS, and YOUNG for their bipartisan work on our little group that is spearing AI in the Senate.

#### U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, this work period, we must continue to confirm President Biden's nominees and rebalance the Federal bench with judges who respect the rule of law. Sadly, Americans' faith in the Judiciary is at an alltime low after the extreme MAGA right captured the Supreme Court.

In the last few weeks, this MAGA majority on the Court has gutted affirmative action, blocked student debt relief for millions of Americans, and green-lit discrimination against the LGBTQ community.

What we are seeing at the Supreme Court is a sickening hypocrisy: As some Justices feel free to accept lavish gifts and vacations from billionaire friends, they are refusing to help everyday Americans just trying to get a fair shake. And the billionaires who have provided these trips and emoluments are no ordinary, run-of-the-mill billionaires. They are ideological MAGA extremists who bankroll hard-right MAGA causes and then bring those cases before the same judges they patronized.

Congress has clear authority to oversee the Federal judiciary, and that includes making sure that the highest Court in the land is held to equally high ethical standards. So I support Chairman DURBIN and the Judiciary

Committee's efforts to advance SCOTUS ethics reform and look forward to working with them on this issue.

In the meantime, Senate Democrats will continue to help restore faith and balance to the Federal judiciary by keeping up our historic pace of confirming President Biden's judicial nominees.

#### VOTING RIGHTS

Mr. SCHUMER. On voting rights, the great John Lewis said, "Democracy is not a state. It is an act, and each generation must do its part to build what we called the Beloved Community."

We should heed these words in our day and age because today House Republicans introduced their latest broadside against the fundamental right to vote, a sweeping bill that one lawmaker called "the most substantive and conservative election integrity legislation that will come before the House in over a generation." Let me say that again: "the most substantive and conservative election integrity legislation that will come before the House in over a generation." Democrats here in the Senate will never allow such a terrible proposal to become law, and very soon, we will once again move to bring real, much needed voting rights legislation before Congress.

People think that the attacks against democracy came and went on January 6. Unfortunately, sadly, that is not true. In States as diverse as Georgia, Texas, Iowa, Florida, and Arizona, partisans have rewritten the rules of our elections in broad daylight to make it harder to vote—harder to vote—in a democracy that, of course, for centuries has hailed the right to vote and advanced it.

Today's bill from Republicans is the latest example of the giant step backward the Republicans these days are taking when it comes to voting rights, and Democrats will fiercely oppose it.

#### MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2178

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2178) to extend the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

Mr. SCHUMER. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceedings.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.