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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, October 6, 2023, at 10 a.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2023

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHN W. HICKENLOOPER, a Senator from the State of Colorado.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, rule and reign in our lives. Lord, we are gratefully aware that You are the giver of every good and perfect gift. We are further aware of our own unworthiness.

As our Senators labor today, make them extensions of Your power in our world. May they arrange their priorities according to Your will and view their challenges from an ethical and moral perspective. Help them to walk in Your way, that You may prolong their days and prosper their work. Lord, sustain them in moments of stress and tension by renewing their faith in You.

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 (Mrs. MURRAY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 4, 2023.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN W. HICKENLOOPER, a Senator from the State of Colorado, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. HICKENLOOPER 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 to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of James C.

O'Brien, of Nebraska, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (European and Eurasian Affairs).

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

REMEMBERING DIANNE FEINSTEIN

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, tomorrow, the U.S. Senate will close in observance of the memorial of our late friend and colleague Senator Dianne Feinstein. It will be my honor—a sad, tearful, but great honor—to speak tomorrow at my friend Dianne's memorial. And I thank all my colleagues who will be in attendance. I know that it would mean the world to her for her colleagues to join in this one last goodbye.

I will have more to say tomorrow, but, over the past few days, I have been coming back to the same thought again and again: Dianne Feinstein was a public servant of uncommon integrity. Many of us here try our best to pursue the common good, but Dianne was on another level. When she thought something was right, when she had a cause she believed in, she pursued it until the end, until her cause endured.

I got to see it for myself when she championed the Assault Weapons Ban. The NRA launched horrible, vitriolic, arguably chauvinistic attacks, but she remained undeterred. She knew her cause was just, and she persisted, and, in the end, her cause won the day.

It will be a long, long time until the Senate sees someone as consequential as Dianne Feinstein again.

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



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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. President, now, on a different note, across the way, yesterday, a small band of MAGA extremists plunged Congress into pandemonium. For the first time in American history, a Speaker of the House of Representatives has been removed from his position at the hands of radicals that he empowered from day one. What happened yesterday is a failure entirely of the House Republicans' own doing, a disaster in the making, to the great detriment of Congress and to the detriment of the American people.

Speaker Boehner, Speaker Ryan, and now Speaker MCCARTHY have all learned the same hard lesson: You cannot allow the hard right to run the House or the country. And all three of them were chased out by the MAGA right. You cannot allow a small band of MAGA extremists, which represent just a very small percentage of the views of the country, to tell the overwhelming majority of Americans what to do.

But Republicans' problems with MAGA extremism seep far deeper than any single leader. MAGA extremism is a poison that the House GOP has refused to confront for years, and until the mainstream House Republicans deal with this issue, the chaos will continue.

I thought House Republicans would have finally realized the dangers of MAGA extremism after what happened last fall, but, year after year, they end up making the same mistake, and it always leads to disaster. By now, I hope it is obvious: MAGA extremism is not good for House Republican leadership. It is not good for the GOP. It is not good for Congress. And MAGA extremism is disastrous for the country.

If MAGA Republicans had their way, they would take our country back all the way to the 19th century. They would turn the clock back radically on women's choice, on voting rights, on workplace protections, on education, on corporate greed, on the environment. They would disfigure our precious democracy, all for a handful of greedy, very wealthy people who just want to not have anything to do with the rest of us.

The MAGA agenda is a dark and dangerous vision of America, one most people overwhelmingly reject. Even so, they are the ones running the show right now in the House GOP.

We find ourselves in a dangerous situation. With about 40 days to go before the government shuts down, the House has ground completely to a halt. Until Republicans stop their infighting, the House can vote on no bills; no appropriations work can get done. If, God forbid, some national crisis were to occur that demands immediate action, the House would be unable—unable—to quickly respond.

So let me say this to the next Speaker of the House, whomever that may be: Think carefully about what happened to your predecessors before trying to coddle the hard right. Each of

your predecessors got burnt each time. I urge the next Speaker not to make the same mistake, not just for their own future but for the country's. Whomever the House elects as Speaker will not be able to ignore the realities of divided government, no matter what the hard right demands. The need for bipartisanship will not change. We will need bipartisanship to keep the government open. We will need it to finish the appropriations process. We will need it to make life better for the American people. For the good of the country, I urge my Republican colleagues in the House to, once and for all, accept that reality. If not, it is my fear—deep fear—that the chaos from yesterday is just the beginning.

CODEL

Mr. President, now on our codel to China, next week, I will lead a bipartisan delegation of Senators on a visit to China, Japan, and Korea. This will be my second time leading a congressional delegation as majority leader after our first visit, which went to India, Pakistan, Israel, and Germany.

Let me first thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for joining me on this visit: Senator CRAPO, ranking member of the Finance Committee; Senators CASSIDY, HASSAN, KENNEDY, and OSSOFF.

"Bipartisan" is our watch word in the Senate, and you can see that this delegation is no exception—three Democrats, three Republicans.

Our trip will be a visit to the most consequential region in the world, focusing on the issues of economic competition and security, on American national security, and on global leadership and advanced technology. Unlike recent delegations to China, I am proud that we will go as elected representatives of the American people, underscoring how serious Congress is about maintaining America's global leadership in the 21st century.

We will meet with government and business leaders from each country, with American Ambassadors and diplomats, and with American companies to hear from them about what they need to best succeed in Asia.

Our message to China will be clear but fair: The Chinese Government must work with us to ensure a level playing field so that U.S. businesses and American workers have the opportunity to compete fairly in decades to come.

So we will focus on the need for reciprocity in China for U.S. businesses, and we will focus on advancing America's national security interests and leadership in critical technologies.

I also look forward to having a direct, candid, and respectful conversation with Chinese leadership on the need to combat the distribution of fentanyl, on China's human rights record, regional security and stability, and on the need for cooperation where possible.

I thank all my colleagues for joining me on this bipartisan delegation to Asia, and I look forward to a construc-

tive trip where we can work together to advance America's interests and leadership on the world stage.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The 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.

KEVIN MCCARTHY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I would like to begin today with a few words about my outgoing House counterpart, Speaker KEVIN MCCARTHY.

Shepherding an institution like the House of Representatives—every bit as stubborn and diverse as the Nation it represents—is a tall order. Getting a slim majority pointed in the same direction at any one time can seem like nothing short of a miracle. I have said before, in reference to my own position, that being leader of your party in the Senate is much like being the groundskeeper in a cemetery. Everybody is under you, but nobody is listening.

Of course, I doubt that KEVIN MCCARTHY has ever seen himself as above anyone else—not the son of a firefighter, not the grandson of immigrants who stood up his own small business and worked his way through school.

In the beginning of the Speaker's House career, it was clear to anyone paying any attention that he was a doer in the model of Teddy Roosevelt's "Man in the Arena" and an idealist in the model of his fellow Californian, Ronald Reagan. Congressman MCCARTHY didn't shy away from worthwhile fights. In fact, he usually dove in headfirst. He didn't hesitate to get his hands dirty.

When the circumstances were tough, he drew on his faith, his family, and his belief in American exceptionalism. His Bakersfield roots kept him grounded. His beloved mother kept him apprised of kitchen table concerns with frequent calls about the price of gas. In other words, he had all the qualities of an effective representative and Speaker.

I am not sure anyone could have predicted just how much these qualities would come in handy over the past 9 months. Speaker MCCARTHY took office with a commitment to America. He insisted on restoring regular order. He made sure that the people's House was once again open to the American people. He took on the gravest challenge, a looming debt crisis, with single-minded determination.

The Speaker and I worked closely throughout his tenure, but I was particularly struck by his persistence. He literally willed the President of the United States to the negotiating table and kept coming back again and again until he had helped secure the Nation's full faith and credit.