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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 12 p.m.

Senate

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2023

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Mighty God, thank You for the gifts of compassion, tolerance, and understanding that can help us navigate during these difficult times. May our lawmakers enable these gifts to help them feel the winds of pain, anguish, and despair blowing in our Nation and world.

As our Senators trust Your sovereignty in sunshine and in shadows, show them the right road to follow, guide them with Your precepts, and protect them with Your wisdom.

Lord, fill them with such reverence for You that they shall stand for right and leave the consequences to You.

Bring peace to our troubled world. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 31, 2023.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNOCK 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 3168

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, just a little housekeeping, 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 senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3168) making emergency supplemental appropriations for assistance for the situation in Israel for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, Mr. President, on the business of today, today the Senate Appropriations Committee hears testimony from the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State on President Biden's emergency supplemental request, sent to Congress to address the national security threats happening around the world.

The right path forward for Congress is clear. We must stand with our allies in Israel; we must send humanitarian aid to innocent civilians in Gaza; we must give aid to Ukraine and hold the line against Vladimir Putin; and we must rebuff the aggressions of the Chinese Communist Party in the Indo-Pacific.

As has been true from the start of this Congress, bipartisan cooperation will be the only way anything gets to the President's desk.

So I am deeply troubled that yesterday, House Republicans released a partisan and woefully inadequate package with no aid to Ukraine, no humanitarian assistance for Gaza, no funding for the Indo-Pacific, and, in addition, poison pills that increase the deficit

● 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 help wealthy tax cheats avoid paying their fair share.

The House GOP bill is woefully inadequate and has the hard right's fingerprints all over it. It makes aid for Israel, which has just faced the worst terrorist attack in its history, contingent on poison pills that reward rich tax cheats. In short, it makes it much, much harder to pass aid for Israel.

It is insulting that the hard right is openly trying to exploit the crisis in Israel to try and reward the ultrarich. The new Speaker knows perfectly well that if you want to help Israel, you can't propose legislation that is full of poison pills. And this kind of unnecessary partisan legislation sends the wrong message to our allies and adversaries around the world.

It is almost as if the real goal of this House GOP package is not to help Israel but to get tax relief for the superwealthy, while leaving out Ukraine aid, leaving out humanitarian aid for Gaza, leaving out funding for the Indo-Pacific.

Instead of advancing a serious proposal to defend Israel, defend Ukraine, and provide humanitarian aid, this House GOP proposal is clearly designed to divide Congress on a partisan basis, not unite it. The Speaker's allies have said as much to the press. I hope the new Speaker realizes that this is a grave mistake and quickly changes course. To protect Americans against any one of these foreign threats, we must protect against them all, because you can be sure that President Xi will watch what America does in Ukraine, just as much as they watch what we do in Israel, in the Indo Pacific, and everywhere else. And the last thing Republicans in Congress should be doing is exploiting the crisis in Israel to sneak in a highly partisan provision that caters to the ultrarich, as the GOP package blatantly does.

As I mentioned when I spoke to Speaker JOHNSON the night of his election, the only way we will get anything done is in a bipartisan way. Unfortunately, in his first major decision as Speaker, Speaker JOHNSON has ignored that advice.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on AI, yesterday, President Biden announced the first ever artificial intelligence Executive order that will keep America in the lead on AI. Later this morning, the Senate's bipartisan AI gang—Senators ROUNDS, HEINRICH, YOUNG, and I—will go to the White House to meet with President Biden to discuss how we can work together to pursue bipartisan AI legislation.

I applaud President Biden for doing the right thing by issuing yesterday's Executive order. It outlines a number of commonsense guardrails that will increase American leadership on safeguards and better protect Americans against all sorts of risk, from cyber security to bio and nuclear threats.

President Biden's AI Executive order was welcome news, but everyone knows we can and must do more here in Congress. The President's action yesterday importunes us to act, to augment and expand his Executive order with bipartisan legislation. Congress must act with a sense of urgency when it comes to AI because AI is already changing our world in dramatic ways, and other countries are trying to gain ground on us.

Tomorrow, the Senate will continue our bipartisan work on AI with our third and fourth AI Insight Forums.

In the morning, the AI Insight Forum will begin at 10 a.m. tomorrow and focus on our workforce, both the risks and opportunities that AI presents to American workers and our economy. We will hear from leaders in labor, tech, civil rights, and business on how Congress can best protect workers from the changes that IA will bring.

The afternoon AI Insight Forum will bring another diverse group to debate how Congress can prepare for AI in high-impact areas, including financial decisions, healthcare, law enforcement, among other highly consequential use cases. We will be careful to pay attention to potential bias when AI is used.

For the information of Senators, tomorrow's AI Insight Forums will take place in the Kennedy Caucus Room. Each will last approximately 2 hours. I encourage everyone on both sides to attend, and I thank Senators ROUNDS, HEINRICH, and YOUNG for their help making these bipartisan AI Insight Forums possible.

NOMINATION OF JACOB J. LEW

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on Jack Lew, it is going to be a busy day here in the Senate. Before the end of the day, the U.S. Senate will confirm Jack Lew as the next Ambassador to Israel. For the information of Senators, we will have a cloture vote on Mr. Lew's nomination this morning, with a final vote on confirmation in the early afternoon. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of sending an American Ambassador to Israel today.

With everything happening in Israel right now, confirming Jack Lew at this moment will be one of the most important and consequential nomination votes the Senate has taken in a long time. The need to confirm Mr. Lew is plain and irrefutable. Israel in crisis. America needs to stand with her, and a most urgent and obvious step would be ensuring we have an ambassador in place.

As the Senate takes this important vote later today, I want to applaud the remarkable team at the U.S. Embassy in Israel, all of whom have done exceptional work under the most difficult circumstances. When I went to Israel with my Senate colleagues, I got to see the Embassy's incredible work up close, especially the outstanding Charge d'Affaires. So I thank them all

for their dedication in these hard times. But it was clear when we went there that Israel needs an ambassador from the United States, especially at this time. So I hope we will get as large a vote for Mr. Lew as possible.

I want to thank my colleagues on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee who approved Mr. Lew on a 12-to-9 basis. Mr. Lew has a strong, long proven record as a public servant and a ferocious ally of Israel, and it will help send a powerful message of support to Israel to have this appointment filled ASAP.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, on the minibus, on the legislative front, the Senate will move forward this week on bipartisan appropriations legislation. I would note that we are the only bipartisan appropriations legislation in town. The House has passed a series of very, very partisan bills filled with poison pills, cutting deeply, way below the agreement that was made in the last resolution when we dealt with avoiding default.

Last week, we began holding votes on a large number of amendments here in the Senate, offered on both sides of the aisle. In fact, when all is said and done, we will have considered 40 amendments—40—here on the floor. If both sides cooperate, it is my hope we can pass these three appropriations bills by tomorrow. When that happens, these three bills will be the only appropriations bills that have passed through either Chamber with bipartisan support, which is the only way we are going to get any funding passed in divided government.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

ISRAEL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the brutal terrorist attacks of October 7 poured gasoline on the flames of anti-Semitic hatred around the world. Take the alarming reports this weekend out of Russia, a country with a long, troubled history of anti-Semitism. After weeks of pro-Hamas propaganda spewed from the Kremlin, an angry mob overran a provincial airport and surrounded a plane that had just arrived