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Senate

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, turn to us and have compassion, for we sometimes feel overwhelmed. Rescue us from the traps of freedom's enemies, enabling our lawmakers to accomplish your work on Earth.

When the problems of our Senators seem to go from bad to worse, remind them that You are an ever-present help in times of trouble. Keep them from stumbling or slipping in their efforts to honor You. May integrity, honesty, and perseverance protect them as they put their hope in You. And, Lord, bring peace to our troubled world.

We pray in Your strong 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 he President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, November 2, 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.

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 move to resume the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of the following named officer for appointment as Chief of Naval Operations and appointment to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601 and 8033: to be Admiral, Lisa M. Franchetti.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

MILITARY NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, for months—for months—over 300 general and flag officer nominations have been indefinitely delayed because of the holds of the senior Senator from Alabama, and the consequences are mounting.

As war continues in the Middle East, the Senator's holds have prevented the

swift confirmation of the commander of the Navy's 5th Fleet and the deputy commander of the U.S. Central Command, both vital for our operations in that region of the world. The Senator continues his holds even as U.S. troops in Iraq and Syria have been attacked two dozen times in the last 2 weeks.

At one point this summer, the Senator's holds meant that for the first time ever—ever—all three branches of the military operated simultaneously without confirmed leadership. And now the U.S. Marine Corps is suddenly without a leader due to illness, but because of the Senator's holds, there is no No. 2 in place to step in.

And it will get much worse for our military if the Senator continues his recklessness. The Pentagon says that by the end of this year, up to three-quarters of the generals and admirals in the Defense Department will be affected by Senator Tuberville's holds.

Let me say that again. The Pentagon recently estimated that by the end of this year, up to three-quarters of the generals and admirals in the Defense Department will be affected by Senator Tuberville's reckless, reckless holds.

Patience is wearing thin on both sides of the aisle over the Senator's antics. Last night, a group of our Republican colleagues tried to confirm many of our military nominees by consent. For 4 hours, late into the evening, our colleagues moved from one nominee to the other, and the Senator from Alabama brazenly stood there and objected to each one.

Democrats and Republicans alike have tried to reason with the Senator from Alabama, offering him one solution for compromise after the other, but every step he has refused to cooperate.

So 2 days ago, Chairman REED of the Senate Armed Services Committee introduced a resolution that will allow the Senate to quickly confirm the

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



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nominees currently being blocked by the Senator from Alabama. This resolution was referred to the Rules Committee, and, when the time comes, I will bring it to the floor of the Senate for consideration. If we can't solve this problem another way, we will all have to vote to move these nominees forward.

We will work with our Republican colleagues in good faith to move this resolution forward because most of us want these holds on our military leaders to come to an end quickly. Our military deserves better. Our service members deserve better. Their spouses and their kids and their entire families deserve better. These holds must not continue. We will work to move this resolution, and I hope to see bipartisan support so we can finally get these hundreds of nominees appointed to their posts.

In the meantime, the Senate will move forward on three critical senior military nominees here on the floor. We will vote to confirm the nomination of Lieutenant General Mahoney to be the second in command at the U.S. Marine Corps. As I mentioned, Lieutenant General Mahoney's confirmation has become a top priority for the Senate after the Commandant of the Marines, Gen. Eric Smith, was unexpectedly hospitalized after a serious medical emergency. We pray for the General's recovery and for his family.

We will also vote to confirm ADM Lisa Franchetti to be the next Chief of Naval Operations. Admiral Franchetti's confirmation will mark a significant milestone in our military's history. Once confirmed, Admiral Franchetti will be the first woman ever to lead the U.S. Navy.

I am proud to say she is a Rochester, NY, native, and a graduate of Pittsford Mendon High School.

Admiral Franchetti is an exceptional leader with a distinguished career serving our Nation. I am confident she has the experience, the skills, and the vision to succeed as the U.S. Navy's top officer.

Finally, we will vote to confirm the nomination of Gen. David Allvin to be Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force.

Both parties must work together—work together—to ensure that our military is fully staffed and fully equipped to defend the American people at any time, but particularly at this time of crisis, and that begins by confirming these vital nominations today.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Mr. President, now on the supplemental, today, the House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on the GOP's unserious and woefully inadequate aid package. By now, it is glaringly apparent that the House aid package is even worse—worse—than what people originally thought because, yesterday, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office reported that the House Republican package will add over \$12 billion to the budget deficit.

Now, Speaker Johnson said he wanted a pay-for. He insists that emergency funding for Israel has to be paid for, when we usually don't pay for emergency funding. But the hypocrisy here is that, by cutting funding to go after tax cheats, he will actually explode the deficit by billions and billions of dollars—what a joke.

I am glad that the President issued a veto threat over this stunningly unserious proposal. Unserious at a time of crisis like this? From the House GOP leader?

The Senate will not be considering this deeply flawed proposal from the House GOP, and, instead, we will work together on our own bipartisan emergency aid package that includes aid to Israel, Ukraine, competition with the Chinese Government, and humanitarian aid for Gaza, so much needed.

Let me say that again. The Senate will not take up the House GOP's deeply flawed proposal and, instead, will work on our own bipartisan emergency aid package that includes aid to Israel, Ukraine, competition with the Chinese Government, and humanitarian aid for Gaza.

It still mystifies me that at a moment when the world is in crisis, at a time when we need to help Israel respond to Hamas, the House GOP thought it was a good idea to tie Israel aid to a hard-right proposal that will raise the deficit and is totally, totally partisan, and all the while helping wealthy tax cheats get away scot-free. Why would they make support for Israel conditional on this hard-right giveaway to the wealthy? It is truly astounding, and it shows you how weak and unserious—and what a joke, frankly—the House GOP proposal is.

And don't just take it from me, folks. The Republican vice chairman of the Joint Economic Committee had this to say about the House GOP bill, and he is a Member of the House GOP. He said:

I think it was intellectually lazy. . . . It's a little hard to have, "I care about debt," and then at the same time move something as your pay-for that actually will have a multiplier of raising the debt.

That is a top Republican saying this House Republican proposal "actually will have a multiplier of raising the debt."

I really regret that the House Speaker has chosen this as his first major legislative step. When we spoke the night he was elected, I said: Let's work together in a bipartisan way. And I reminded him that things only get done if you work in a bipartisan way.

Speaker Boehner, Speaker Ryan, and Speaker MCCARTHY had to learn that lesson the hard way. I hope the Republican leader will examine what he has done and change course and work in a bipartisan way to help fund these necessary items for Israel, Ukraine, and Gaza, and the South China Sea.

The right way forward is something very different from what the House GOP is pushing. We need to stand with Israel. We need to provide swift human-

itarian aid for Gaza. We need to help Ukraine, which desperately and immediately needs the help. And we need to stay one step ahead of the Chinese Government.

The Senate will work on our own emergency aid package, not the one proposed by House Republicans.

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 Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, America's status as a global superpower comes with global interests and global responsibilities. We have a direct interest in a stable and peaceful Middle East, and we have a responsibility to stand with Israel, our closest ally in the region, and to impose real costs on those who seek to harm U.S. personnel. We have a direct interest in preserving free commerce and deterring aggression in the Indo-Pacific, and we have a responsibility to future generations of Americans to win this century's long-term strategic competition with communist China. And we have a direct interest in stability and security in Europe, not only because we have treaty obligations to NATO allies but also because Europe is our largest trading partner, largest source of foreign, direct investment, and a critical engine of our own economy.

As I have explained repeatedly, the emergency funding we have appropriated in response to Russia's war against Ukraine isn't charity. These resources are helping a Western-oriented country degrade the military strength of a major U.S. adversary. Ukraine is blunting Putin's tools of aggression and disrupting his imperial ambitions in Europe, and all without involving American servicemembers in the fight.

But let's be honest. Aside from the funds we have appropriated for U.S. military training and logistic support in Europe, the bulk of America's security assistance is being spent in factories right here at home. Some of it goes to purchase new weapons for Ukraine, but far more of it is going to replenish our own arsenal. Our investment is growing American military strength to meet the challenges that come with global leadership.

Since Putin's brutal escalation last year, the United States has invested \$24 billion in replenishing our—our—arsenal with brandnew capabilities. We have poured \$692 million into new munitions and tactical vehicles produced in Missouri, almost a billion dollars in Alabama, and more than a billion dollars in Wisconsin.