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## Senate

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be opening in prayer by our guest Chaplain, Bishop Larry Lawrence Brandon, pastor of the Praise Temple Church and the Evergreen Missionary Baptist Church in Louisiana and Oakland, CA.

### PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, who guides the stars and hold our hearts, I humbly seek Your divine presence as the Senate gathers in solemn duty.

God, guide the Senators of this great Nation, the United States. I pray for Your wisdom to light their path, courage to uphold the truth, and compassion to serve with integrity. May the Senators be stewards of peace, fostering unity where there is division and bringing hope to the places dimmed by despair. Grant our Senators the vision to see beyond the immediate to the future, where justice and liberty flourish for all.

God, bless their deliberations. May their decisions forge a stronger, more inclusive society, where every voice is heard, every life is valued, and every action is measured by its benefit to the common good.

Holy One, help us walk together in peace, live together in justice, and stand together in unity.

God bless America. 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, March 12, 2024.

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 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 Jasmine Hyejung Yoon, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Virginia.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Louisiana.

### WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I have the privilege to speak briefly about my friend, Bishop Larry Brandon, who opened up the Senate with prayer. I feel like, with all these pastors—you and Chaplain Barry Black and Bishop Brandon—he is also a remarkable man who has a church in Shreveport, LA, and also in Oakland, CA.

I say: How do you do it?

He goes: Every other week.

He regards his ministry not just to the soul but also to the body. I say that as a doctor, recognizing how the two can be intertwined.

When I first met him, he was about twice as big as he is now. We saw each other at breakfast, and I said: Bishop, you lost weight, man?

He said: I am glad you noticed. Eight-five pounds. If you don't notice 85 pounds, boy, are you blind.

He has done that not only for his own health but for the physical, emotional, and spiritual health of his congregation.

We know I am a doctor. At times, people slip off that diet. We are in Louisiana; so you always have good food.

He says: We never condemn; we never condone. We just always support.

I am speaking about his ministry to their health and also his ministry to their spirit. When we in this Congress adopt that—we don't condemn each other, we don't condone bad behavior, but we work together to support one another for the betterment of our physical, our emotional, and spiritual health—that is a tribute to our bishop.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, thank you. We had three bishops here—three pastors. Now we just have one, but one is very good, too. The presence of God is in this Chamber.

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



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S2351

PRESIDENT ANDRZEJ DUDA

Mr. President, today, Leader McCONNELL and I will be honored to welcome Andrzej Duda, the President of Poland, to the Senate. President Duda arrives in the United States at a critical moment for American leadership and a critical moment for the war in Ukraine.

It has been nearly a month since the Senate passed a bipartisan national security supplemental with 70 votes in support. This supplemental package is a lifeline for Ukraine's survival, the only package on the table with enough resources to stop Russia's advance and help Ukraine reclaim the offensive.

According to a CNN report yesterday, right now, Russia is producing three times—three times—more artillery shells than the United States and Europe. In a very real sense, the war will turn on who can produce and deliver more munitions. That is what this supplemental will do.

I thank President Duda for his visit, and I thank him for being a staunch defender of the Ukrainian war effort. His support for Ukraine shows the war in Russia has stakes that extend far beyond Ukraine's borders. It implicates the very survival of Western democracy.

A little less than a month ago, I joined with Senators REED, BLUMENTHAL, HASSAN, and BENNET to travel to Eastern Europe, not just to Ukraine but to Poland, where we met with the U.S. Ambassador and U.S. military leaders. We met with U.S. military officials just a short distance from the Russian border. And the military official told us:

Senator, without U.S. aid, Russia will control the territory we are standing on now. Period.

Imagine that. Russia will control that territory without the aid. That is what they said.

The consequences of a victorious Putin are very plain. If he succeeds in taking Ukraine, he is not going to stop there. What Putin wants is to destabilize the NATO alliance and permanently undo the balance of power that has kept the peace since World War II and since the end of the Cold War. That is why it is a matter of highest urgency that Speaker JOHNSON and House leadership put the Senate's bipartisan supplemental package on the House floor, because, if he does—mark my words—it will pass. If he puts it on the floor, it will pass.

House Republicans need to do the right thing and answer democracy's cry for help. House Republicans must show the world with whom it is that they cast their lot: those who support freedom and democracy and, hopefully, not those who bow down to autocrats.

Last Friday, former President Trump met with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban at Mar-a-Lago, for what they called a "friendly" visit. A few days later, Orban said, during a Hungarian interview, that Trump's position on the war in Ukraine is "very

clear"; that "first, he will not give a single penny for the Russo-Ukrainian war. That's why the war will end, because it's obvious that Ukraine cannot stand on its own two feet." That is Orban saying just what Trump will do.

I hope our Republican colleagues will hear that and heed the message. It is disgusting that Donald Trump fraternizes with thugs like Orban who openly cheer for Putin to win. It is even worse that so many extreme Republicans in Congress are doing Trump's bidding by stalling Ukraine aid here in Congress. That is not a majority of Republicans, but too many just go along. That is the shame of it.

You can be sure that the Chinese Communist Party is taking note of House Republicans who are thwarting American support for its friend in need and assessing what that means for their own ambitions in the South Pacific. I guarantee it.

History will not be kind to those who turn their backs on American values in this pivotal moment. That is why this supplemental must get done. The Speaker must do the right thing and put the supplemental on the floor of the House because it will pass. The clock is ticking. Failure right now only guarantees that America will pay a much higher price—a much higher price—down the line.

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, on appropriations, we have 10 days left for both parties in both Chambers to finish the work of fully funding the government. Both parties continue making progress on appropriations related to Defense, Financial Services, Homeland Security, Labor and Health and Human Services and Education, the Legislative Branch, and State and Foreign Operations.

Both parties took a huge step last week when we passed the first six appropriations bills with strong bipartisan support. We protected important programs for moms and kids, for veterans, for the environment, for housing, and for so much more. But the job is only halfway done, and passing the second group of appropriations bills, of course, is not going to be easy. We got a lot of bipartisan momentum last week when we avoided the government shutdown on Friday, but both sides are going to have to keep working in good faith to keep that momentum alive.

Just as the hard right was tuned out in last week's appropriations bills, they should be tuned out again because they clearly only delay the process instead of moving it along.

It is going to take bipartisanship to ensure our military is fully supported and our troops are taken care of. It is going to take bipartisanship to fund the resources necessary to keep the Chinese Communist Party at bay. And it is going to take bipartisanship to make sure we take care of military families and provide their kids with childcare, healthcare, and everything else they need to live in dignity and strength.

These are the things at stake in the upcoming funding deadline: outcompeting the Chinese Communist Party, taking care of military families, keeping Americans safe around the world.

So Democrats will continue working with Republicans to finish the job. It can only be done in a bipartisan way. We know that.

Thanks to my colleagues Chair MURRAY, Vice Chair COLLINS. Thanks to all the appropriators and their staffs and my staff, as well, that worked so hard on this. Let's make sure we keep last week's momentum going so we can finish the job.

#### PRESIDENT BIDEN'S BUDGET

Mr. President, on the Biden budget, yesterday, President Biden released a budget proposal laying out a bold, optimistic, responsible path for America. The President's budget shows the stark contrast between the Democrats' positive, proactive vision and the Republican's negative, regressive vision for our Country.

Democrats want to lower costs for working families. President Biden's budget includes actions to reduce the price of prescription drug costs, to cut taxes for middle- and low-income Americans, and to restore the child tax credit.

Republicans have made it clear they have no interest in lowering costs for working families and would rather help the wealthy get even wealthier.

Democrats want to protect programs like Social Security and Medicare. President Biden's budget protects and strengthens these vital programs, which tens of millions of Americans rely on every single day.

Republicans have fought relentlessly to slash funding for Social Security and Medicare, which would have devastating consequences for the American people.

Democrats want to make the Tax Code fairer, while cutting the deficit. President Biden's budget ends the reckless Trump-era tax scam that overwhelmingly cut taxes for the wealthiest few and large corporations. It left working families out to dry.

And President Biden's budget proposes measures to cut the deficit by nearly \$3 trillion—\$3 trillion—over the next decade.

This is the President's budget in a nutshell: lower costs, stronger Social Security, stronger Medicare, more investments in America and the American people, all while reducing the deficit. That is something we can all get behind.

#### REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Mr. President, finally, on the VA IVF rule, after the stunningly radical decision by the Alabama Supreme Court jeopardizing access to IVF, yesterday, Americans received some encouraging news. Yesterday, the VA announced it is expanding access to IVF to more of our veterans, giving many more of our Nation's heroes the opportunity to raise and grow a family.