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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 12 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2024

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.

Precious Lord, we praise You with all our hearts because even when wrong seems to rule, you remain sovereign. You are our strength for today and our hope for tomorrow.

As our lawmakers open their hearts to You, may they sense that Your presence is as pervasive in statecraft as in religion. Illuminate their finite minds with Your eternal light, giving them wisdom beyond their own. Lord, remind our Senators that some problems You will not solve until they are ready to be used by You in working out the solutions.

We pray in your awesome 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, April 8, 2024.

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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S.J. RES. 67, S.J. RES. 68, S.J. RES. 69

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I understand there are three joint resolutions at the desk due for a second reading en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the joint resolutions by title for the second time en bloc.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 67) to provide for related procedures concerning the articles of impeachment against Alejandro Nicholas Mayorkas, Secretary of Homeland Security.

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 68) providing for the issuance of a summons, providing for the appointment of a committee to receive and to report evidence, and establishing related procedures concerning the articles of impeachment against Alejandro Nicholas Mayorkas.

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 69) to provide for related procedures concerning the articles of impeachment against Alejandro Nicholas Mayorkas, Secretary of Homeland Security.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, in order to place the joint resolutions on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceedings en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the joint resolutions will be placed on the calendar.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, the Senate gavels back into session today to pick up right where we left off in March: confirming more of President Biden's outstanding nominees and advancing legislation that protects and serves the American people.

There is much the Senate has to accomplish in the coming weeks, and getting anything done—anything—will require bipartisan cooperation. It is not easy but nevertheless essential.

Today, the Senate will commence by voting to invoke cloture on the nomination of Susan Bazis to be a U.S. district court judge for the District of Nebraska. I have also filed cloture on the nominations of Robert White to be a district judge for the Eastern District of Maryland and the nomination of

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



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Ann Marie McIff Allen to be a district judge for the District of Utah.

On the legislative front, Congress has until April 19 to pass an extension of FISA's national security authorities. That is the next major deadline we face on the calendar. Preventing FISA from lapsing will take bipartisan cooperation and swift action. The House is currently working on the best path forward on FISA, and the Senate stands ready to jump into action to prevent this important national security authority from lapsing. We must get FISA done this work period.

As the Congress gavelled back into session, I also urge Speaker JOHNSON and House Republicans to snap out of their paralysis and pass the Senate's national security supplemental. The situation in Ukraine is desperate. Speaker JOHNSON has now sat on his hands for 55 days as the national security supplemental has collected dust in the House. That is 55 days of America standing on the sidelines while our friends in Ukraine fight and die on the battlefield with no support; 55 days of our European allies wondering when the United States will step up. With each passing day, Ukraine continues to run out of ammo, continues to run out of soldiers, and continues to run out of hope that it can successfully expel the Russians from their borders.

Let's be blunt. The biggest reason Ukraine is losing the war is because the hard right in Congress has paralyzed the United States from acting. That is it. That is the reason. Speaker JOHNSON has to decide for himself whether or not he will do the right thing for Ukraine, for America, and for democracy, or if he will allow MAGA Republicans to hand Vladimir Putin a large victory.

I am confident that if the Speaker puts the Senate's national security supplemental on the floor, it will pass. It remains the best, quickest, and most realistic way to get Ukraine the help it needs.

So, again, there is a lot that the Senate must do in the coming weeks and months, and to get anything done will require bipartisan cooperation. I thank my colleagues for their good work so far in 2024 and look forward to working with all of them to keep delivering for the American people.

CAPITAL ONE AND DISCOVER MERGER

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now on Capital One and Discover, nearly 2 months ago, Capital One and Discover quietly announced plans for an unprecedented, multibillion-dollar merger that in the long run could risk higher costs for consumers and small businesses alike.

Capital One and Discover are two of the largest credit card-issuing institutions in America. If they merge, the new company would likely become the largest credit card issuer in the United States, with over 400 million cus-

tomers. That could risk higher interest rates, bigger fees, and diminished competition.

But even so, most Americans today have no idea that this merger is coming, so yesterday I sent a letter to both Capital One and Discover asking them to share with my office more information regarding antitrust and consumer protections. I want to know more about market shares in this industry. We have already had plenty of consolidation throughout the economy. I want to know about a potential increase in fees. I want to know if workers will be laid off. I would like to hear how consumers are being made aware of this deal.

One thing is certain about credit card companies: Much of their bread and butter is a myriad of fees and sometimes—sometimes—eye-popping interest rates. That is why the proposed merger of Capital One and Discover is such a concern. History is very clear that when big financial institutions get even bigger, the American consumer usually gets the short end of the stick. So before a credit card merger takes a potential swipe at consumers, every question should be answered.

STUDENT LOAN DEBT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now on student loan debt, since the day the President took office, I have urged him to use every tool available to cancel as much student debt as possible. Yesterday, the American people received some exciting news. President Biden, to his credit, announced a new Executive action to provide student debt relief to nearly 30 million more Americans. Specifically, the President's plan will automatically forgive interest accrued on existing student loans for 25 million borrowers. The President's plan will also automatically cancel the full amount of debt for over 4.5 million Americans who have already qualified for forgiveness through a decade in a repayment program, and it will provide more than 10 million borrowers with at least \$5,000 in debt relief.

This announcement is a clear sign that the President is listening. He is listening to Congress's call to take action, which I have done for years, and he is listening to the pleas of millions of borrowers who want to get their lives back on track. So today's announcement is good news. It is good news for everyone, particularly for young people and people of color. Democrats will continue exploring every option under the Sun to lower costs and make college more affordable.

Already, the President's plan has removed the total debt burden for over 4 million Americans. This plan goes much further. But, on the other hand, unfortunately, our Republican colleagues continue to oppose student debt relief and have wrapped their arms firmly around the MAGA Su-

preme Court's cruel decision to block student debt cancellation for millions of Americans, and Democrats are going to make sure the American people won't forget it.

RYAN CORBETT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now on the Ryan Corbett resolution, it has sadly been over 600 days since Ryan Corbett, a New York native, has been unjustly detained by the Taliban. Ryan traveled there to renew his visa and pay the local staff of his nonprofit when he was taken without cause, without explanation, without any semblance of process.

Later this afternoon, I will meet with the Corbett family to talk about our efforts to bring Ryan home. His wife Anna and their three children have been so brave. I have met them already a few times. They have been brave through this tragic situation, and I am in constant awe of their strength and resolve.

Today, I am introducing a resolution, alongside Leader MCCONNELL, calling for Ryan's immediate and unconditional release. I urge the Senate to pass this resolution before Ryan's birthday, which is April 13.

Throughout this process, I have worked closely with the Corbett family, the White House, the State Department, and other high-ranking officials to make sure that Ryan's safe return remains a top priority. We made progress last September when Ryan was designated as "wrongfully detained" by the State Department, giving his case a higher diplomatic priority, but we are still working.

Anna has spoken with Ryan a few times, and he has been reportedly being held in terrible conditions, which has caused his health to deteriorate rapidly. So time is of the essence to get him back.

As long as Ryan is held by the Taliban, I will never stop fighting to bring him back home and reunite him with Anna, his children, and his family as quickly as possible.

I want to thank Leader MCCONNELL for joining me in this resolution and everyone on both sides who has supported this resolution.

JUDICIAL CONFERENCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now on forum shopping, last month, I wrote a letter to the chief judge of the Northern District of Texas urging the district to apply new reforms adopted by the Judicial Conference to limit the practice of judge shopping. I was disappointed to learn that the chief judge and his court have decided to ignore the Judicial Conference's reforms and allow judge shopping to continue to run rampant in his district.

The bottom line is this. It is very simple. Judge shopping jaundices the fairness of our entire legal system. No one, regardless of ideology, should tolerate when interest groups cherry-pick