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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont.

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal and powerful God, don't hide from us. Don't stand so far away, for our Nation and world need You. Lord, bring peace where there is war, hope where there is despair, and faith where there is cynicism.

Arise, mighty God, for we put our trust in You. Today, we trust You to guide our Senators. Lord, warn them through their mistakes, encourage them with their successes, and enrich them through life's seasons of gladness and sadness. Inspire them to be worthy of the honor of being Your sons and daughters as You give them a renewed sense of Your providential presence.

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, April 10, 2024.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. WELCH 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 consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Ann Marie McIff Allen, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

#### ABORTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, former President Trump reminded us just a few days ago that he—he—is to blame for the grotesque reversal of women's personal freedom. He said it himself. He said he is "proudly the person responsible" for the annihilation of Roe v. Wade.

Let me repeat those words because the American people need to hear it over and over again. Donald Trump said he is "proudly the person responsible" for ending Roe.

Yesterday, we saw another consequence of a post-Roe America. The Arizona Supreme Court upheld a Civil War-era law banning abortion almost entirely, without exceptions for rape or for incest. The Arizona Supreme Court's decision goes as far as to suggest that doctors can be prosecuted for assisting in an abortion. All of these regressive MAGA judges on the Supreme Court, in some of the other Federal courts, and in the State courts—all come from Donald Trump and he, appointing MAGA judges, and his goal to restrict women's freedoms and to have Roe v. Wade be annihilated.

Make no mistake about it. Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans own the consequences of the Arizona Supreme Court decision. Does anyone seriously doubt that, should Trump become President again, he won't try to add even more extreme jurists to the bench so he can continue his assault on women's reproductive freedoms? Of course, they will. If Trump and MAGA Republicans get into power they would see to it that reproductive freedoms are curtailed even more, from the local level to the national level.

Even in his remarks the other day, when he was trying to cover up what he did, he couldn't resist saying he is "proudly the person responsible" for the annihilation of Roe v. Wade. He couldn't resist because that is where he is at. We know that.

And don't take it from me. House Republicans included a national abortion ban in the Republican Study Committee budget. And remember, the Republican Study Committee includes a majority of House Republicans and their leadership, and they came out for a national abortion ban.

On IVF, Republicans try to talk a good game about supporting access to reproductive services, but not 1 month ago—not 1 month ago—Republicans blocked legislation in this Chamber that would have preserved IVF protections under Federal law. And, while

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



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Donald Trump hopes people forget, he himself is on record supporting a national abortion ban when he was President.

So, unsurprisingly, Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans are now trying to hide their antiabortion records because they know how dangerously out of step their views are with the public. But they can't help themselves, as the President's speech showed 4 days ago. Again, he had to repeat that he was responsible—the one responsible—for the abolition of Roe.

Make no mistake, that is what they will do. And, make no mistake, Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans will have to answer to the American people for what they have done to fundamental liberties in this country—today, tomorrow, and in November.

#### MAYORKAS IMPEACHMENT

Mr. President, on impeachment, as we enter the height of the spring season, there is a lot on the Senate's agenda. We continue to confirm more judges and nominees. We must ensure FISA authorities are renewed during this work period.

Off the floor, we continue to work on a host of issues, like lowering the cost of prescription drugs, increasing travel safety, and AI, and so much more.

As busy as we are, one issue the Senate will soon have to address is the House vote to impeach Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas. As everyone knows, yesterday, Speaker JOHNSON announced he is delaying transmitting the articles to the Senate until sometime next week.

Our plan over here has not changed. The Senate is ready to go whenever the House is. We want to address this issue as expeditiously as possible.

And, as I said yesterday, impeachment should never be used to settle policy disagreements. That sets an awful precedent.

So, when the time comes for the Senate to receive the Articles of Impeachment from the House, we will be ready. In the meantime, we are going to keep working on legislation that matters to the American people and do it in a bipartisan way whenever we can. The American people demand, expect, and deserve nothing less.

#### CAPITAL ONE AND DISCOVER MERGER

Mr. President, now, on the proposed merger of Capital One and Discover, earlier this week, I sent a letter to Capital One and Discover asking for more information about their plans for a multibillion-dollar merger. If history has taught us anything, it is that, when big financial institutions get even bigger, it can have serious consequences for consumers and small businesses alike. Higher interest rates, bigger fees, diminished competition—these can all be at stake. So my letter asks some questions to both Capital One and Discover that the American people deserve to have answered before this merger goes forward.

We need to know about market shares in this industry. We need to

know about potential increases in fees. We need to know if any workers will be laid off. We need to know how consumers are being made aware of this planned merger. Capital One and Discover are two of the largest credit card-issuing institutions in America. If this merger continues as planned, the new company would likely become the largest credit card issuer in the United States of America, with over 400 million customers.

So, before these two companies merge, the American people deserve answers to these questions to be sure they won't receive the short end of the stick.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, on the supplemental, not a generation ago, the thought of any American political party, much less the party of Ronald Reagan, spreading the gospel of Russian propaganda was deemed unthinkable. But, today, the apple has indeed fallen very far from the tree.

Today, a growing contingency within the hard right is corroding their party from within, turning the party of Reagan, little by little, into a messaging arm of the Kremlin. Two months ago, former President Donald Trump, the presumptive Presidential nominee of the Republican Party, said he would encourage Russia to “do whatever the hell they want” to the countries of NATO.

Let me say that again.

The things that come out of President Trump are really frightening about the future of America, if, God forbid, he should ever get back in power. I hope and believe he won't. But here is what he has said, again. Two months ago, Donald Trump, the presumptive Presidential nominee of the Republican Party, said he would encourage Russia to “do whatever the hell they want” to the countries of NATO—unbelievable, unbelievable.

In the House of Representatives, pro-Putin radicals say we should reward Russia's violent invasion with a peace treaty, instead of standing with Ukraine as they fight for their survival. Sadly, we hear similar things every now and then coming from the fringes of this Chamber—arguments that the war in Ukraine is hopeless, that Ukraine should cede their territory, and that we should cut a deal with Putin, as if he would be satisfied with any deal.

These modern-day Neville Chamberlains ignore the warnings of history. Autocrats have insatiable appetites. If you give an autocrat a little land, he will seek to take a country. And if you give an autocrat a country, he will seek to take a continent.

So the stakes of the war in Ukraine could not be higher. It is not just the war between two nations, but it is a struggle between two conflicting ideals, between democracy and autocracy. As the greatest democracy in the world, the United States has been called on to take a stand.

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.

#### NATO

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, last week, the strongest and most successful military alliance in the history of the world marked an impressive milestone. Seventy-five years ago, at the dawn of the Cold War, with decades of superpower competition on the horizon, the founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization convened here in Washington to formalize a commitment to collective security.

In the years since, NATO has grown from 12 to 32 allies. The transatlantic alliance has always required management. Alliances always do. But, as Churchill observed, the only thing worse than fighting alongside allies is fighting without them.

While we have experienced periods of pronounced tension within the alliance, today is not one of them. Nations on both sides of the Atlantic have increasingly concluded that common threats are best met with shared resolve.

Most recently, of course, the alliance has been proud to welcome Sweden and Finland to our ranks. With highly capable militaries and advanced economies, our newest allies were already taking their own defense seriously. In the face of Putin's brutal escalation in Ukraine, they decided to share the burden of collective security.

But Russian aggression hasn't just expanded the NATO alliance; it has also prompted longtime allies to take their treaty obligations more seriously. Just last week, the Norwegian Government confirmed that it would meet the NATO 2-percent defense spending target this year and that it would nearly double its defense budget over the next 12. For a wealthy country like Norway, with one of the highest per capita GDPs in the world, this is a big deal. Across the alliance, members are making historic new commitments to strengthen their militaries and expand their defense industrial capacity. European allies have contracted to buy 600 cutting-edge American F-35 aircraft to add to their arsenals. On the whole, they are already meeting the 2-percent target, and NATO leaders expect more individual members to reach it by the July summit here in Washington.

There is still work to be done. Not every ally is taking its treaty obligations seriously enough. One of the most concerning laggards isn't even a European country, but it is our neighbor to