



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 118th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 170

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2024

No. 104

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, June 21, 2024, at 9 a.m.

Senate

THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2024

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable LAPHONZA R. BUTLER, a Senator from the State of California.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Shepherd of souls, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, we seek the completeness that can only be found in You. Lord, lift us above Earth's strident noises until we hear Your still, small voice in our inmost being. Give the Members of this body the wisdom to permit their deep needs to drive them to You. Provide them with the wisdom to heal divisions, to find common ground, and to transform dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows. May Your presence break down every divisive wall and bring a spirit of unity. Lord, lead our Senators into a future where justice will roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

We pray in Your glorious 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, June 20, 2024.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable LAPHONZA R. BUTLER, a Senator from the State of California, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Ms. BUTLER 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 Nancy L.

Maldonado, of Illinois, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, next Monday, America will mark a dark anniversary: 2 years since the MAGA Supreme Court overturned Roe, unleashing a crisis of reproductive health. The day Roe was overturned will be remembered as one the darkest days for women's rights in modern history.

Two years later, America looks almost unrecognizable when it comes to reproductive rights. Millions and millions of women across America have fewer freedoms today than their mothers and grandmothers did. At least 20 States have passed total or near-total bans on reproductive freedom—shameful.

This week, I moved to place the Reproductive Freedom for Women Act on the legislative calendar so we can be ready to move this bill soon. I thank Senator MURRAY for leading this bill and every woman Senator on our side of the aisle for cosponsoring it with me.

Protecting freedom of choice is not a show vote. It is a “show us who you are” vote. The American people certainly want to know who their elective representatives truly are and are entitled to know where they stand on choice. That is why, all month long, we have prepared votes on choice and contraception and IVF. Americans want to

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



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know where their representatives stand on such an important issue.

Americans didn't elect us to sweep these issues under the rug, even if some Senators think they are difficult. By voting on these bills on women's healthcare, we are moving the issue forward because it is important for Members to be forced to take a position. That is the only way we will make progress.

Of course, some would want to sweep it under the rug. They say it is political. That is because they don't want to vote on it. They don't want to show their constituents that they are blocking something that the majority of their constituents demand.

We all know these issues are very, very personal to so many people. We all know that the other side is trying to hide. We are not letting them hide, and we are not letting them hide because that is the only way we will move this issue forward—by being public, by showing where people stand, and then by having, as our system has been designed to work since it was founded, their constituents putting pressure on them to do the right thing.

As I have made abundantly clear over the past couple of years, Democrats are always ready to work with the other side on legislation. But when we can't agree, Democrats aren't going to shy away from issues Americans fiercely care about, and protecting reproductive freedoms is among the most important issues in the minds of the American people.

So, once again, let me repeat: Voting on reproductive freedom is a "show us who you are" vote, and, all month long, Senate Republicans have shown everyone just how out of touch they have become with the mainstream. Hopefully, votes like this force them to change over a period of time.

In the last 2 weeks, Senate Republicans have shown that, for all their attempts to sound moderate on reproductive care, when it comes time to vote, they choose MAGA extremism over the wishes and desires of the American people. When Senate Republicans blocked Federal protections for contraceptives, they chose MAGA extremists over the American people. When Senate Republicans blocked Federal protections for IVF, they chose MAGA extremism over the American people. When Donald Trump continues, to this day, to brag about working with Senate Republicans to confirm three hard-right Supreme Court Justices to eliminate Roe, he is choosing MAGA extremism over the American people.

Make no mistake, the MAGA hard-right attacks on women are not done. First, it was abortion, then contraception, then IVF. What is next? If they get their chance, they will push for their ultimate goal of a national abortion ban.

That is why voting on legislation protecting access to contraception and IVF is so important. That is why affirming a woman's fundamental right

to choose is so important. And that is why Senate Democrats will continue to fight back against Republican attacks on reproductive care and never stop until the protections of Roe are the law of the land.

REMEMBERING WILLIE MAYS

Madam President, on a sad note but, in some ways, happy because he was such a great man, on Tuesday, the world of baseball said goodbye to one of its greatest athletes and its greatest human beings—he was one of the greatest Americans to ever play the game—Willie Mays. He died in Palo Alto at the age of 93.

Many call Willie Mays the great five-tool player in the history of baseball, but even that sells it laughably short. What Willie Mays meant to the game, what he meant to New York, what he meant to America can never be recorded with statistics. He was a living embodiment of America itself.

Born in the segregated South, he served in the Army, captured the hearts of millions from New York to San Francisco by dominating America's pastime at a time when Black players were just beginning to ascend into the major leagues.

He would play stickball with the kids on the streets of Harlem, get swarmed by admirers at the Red Rooster, and he was simply one of the nicest and coolest and most magnetic Americans who ever lived. That combination—nice, cool, and magnetic—it is a rarity. It is a rarity in anyone. There it was in Willie Mays.

When I was growing up, Mickey Mantle was my guy. I was a Yankees fan. So we were on the receiving end of Willie Mays' awesome powers. I was too young to remember the 1951 World Series, but I knew it was passed down from the older kids on the street as to how Willie Mays was an incredible competitor, as well as someone who was kind at the same time.

Of the many things that Willie Mays taught us, one is that you can be great and kind at once. So this week, New York and America says thank you, thank you, thank you to one of the greatest ever. I doubt we will ever see anyone like Willie Mays ever again.

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. Madam 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.

UKRAINE AND ENERGY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, last week, a U.S. company announced it had reached an agreement to begin exporting American liquefied natural gas to Ukraine for the first time. That

is certainly good news for our friends on the frontlines of Russian aggression, for allies across Eastern Europe, and for the workers and producers behind some of America's most affordable and reliable energy.

Exporting American abundance is a win-win proposition, and it is one that our closest trading partners in Europe have increasingly recognized as an opportunity to offset their reliance on Russian gas.

But setting aside last week's good news, the Biden administration is still chronically confused about the role that affordable and abundant American energy can play as a geopolitical tool, a source of American leadership, and an engine of our own economy.

In a joint pledge issued 2 years ago, President Biden committed to help reduce Europe's reliance on Russian energy and increase global energy security. Then, a few lines later, he reiterated his commitment to the unenforceable virtue signals of the Paris climate deal.

Sometimes it seems that cognitive dissonance is the most powerful force in the universe.

Remember, the President who continues to insist he is serious about helping America's closest allies resist the predations of Putin's Russia is the same President who made stunning American energy development a day-one priority. He is the same one who decided not to intervene when he had a chance—before Russia's escalation in Ukraine—to block the expansion of European reliance on Russian gas with the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline. And, of course, this is the same President who earlier this year issued a de facto ban on new permitting for LNG export infrastructure that would make it harder for American producers to respond to demand for reliable alternatives to Russian or Iranian energy.

As I have discussed at length, Russia's escalation in Ukraine prompted some of our closest European allies to finally start investing seriously in their own defenses. It has also been an opportunity to rethink their dangerous overreliance on Russian energy.

Back in February, one German state-owned energy provider was in the process of switching from buying Russian gas to buying American gas instead, but the plan was stifled by the administration's decision to appease its activist base instead of reinforcing America's allies.

So last week brought good news. But here is the rub: This new commitment to Ukraine relies, in part, on the completion of a new LNG export facility that is stuck in the Biden administration's regulatory purgatory. And even as already permitted infrastructure comes online, producers who want to create new American jobs and expand their capacity to meet foreign demand are simply out of luck.

Since 2016, American LNG has been a remarkable success story. It had driven our economy to become a net energy