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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 Presiding Officer offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Gracious God, You are known by many names, worshipped in many houses. In You we live, move, and have our being. Strengthen us now in the work that You have allowed us to do, that our country might know Your grace, Your justice, and Your mercy.

Center the concerns of the marginalized, and may the words of the prophet live in our lives: "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."

Grant that our work might bring good news to the poor and all of God's children might be blessed.

In the name of the God who loves us into freedom and frees us into loving. 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 executive clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 9, 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 and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Patricia L. Lee, of South Carolina, to be a Member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2027.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

TRUMP PRESIDENCY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, American democracy faces a test of survival in 2024.

Almost 8 years ago, Donald Trump was elected President and commenced one of the most chaotic periods our country has seen in our lifetimes. Under a Trump Presidency, Republicans tried to rip away affordable

healthcare for tens of millions of American families, and they nearly succeeded. Under a Trump Presidency, Republicans packed our courts with radical judges who took America back half a century by repealing Roe v. Wade.

This week, the Senate will take up a simple resolution cosponsored by every female Senator in our caucus and myself that asks a very simple question: Where do Senators stand on freedom of choice? Do we believe that a woman should have the basic right to reproductive care? Do we agree that the rights protected under Roe should be Federal law?

Freedom of choice is perhaps the defining issue for Americans this year, and, this week, every Senator must show where he or she stands.

Of course, there is more. Under a Trump Presidency, megacorporations and the richest of the rich—the very, very wealthy—saw their taxes go down and profits go up, while middle-class families kept paying more for prescription drugs, childcare, and basic necessities.

Under the Trump Presidency, America was plunged into utter chaos. The pandemic was far worse than it needed to be because Donald Trump refused to confront it head-on and refused to be honest to the American people. We lived in constant anxiety about the next tweet from the White House.

Our allies saw Trump and questioned if they could trust him, while autocrats saw Trump and wanted to be like him. It is no wonder that Trump went out of his way to pay fealty to dictators like Putin and buddy up to Kim Jong Un. It was downright un-American.

Four years later, Trump wants to do it all again. But there is a big difference between then and now. For all the chaos and disaster of the first Trump Presidency, it pales in comparison to the threat of a second Trump Presidency and the threat it would pose to our democracy.

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



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Over the last few weeks, there has been a whole lot of attention about a policy platform drafted by the Heritage Foundation, arguably the most influential conservative think tank in America. The platform, in effect, is the Trump manifesto. The project is staffed by over 200 former officials of the Trump Presidency and is connected to Trump Cabinet members, former campaign advisers, political appointees, and more.

If you read through this Trump manifesto, it is very clear what the hard right is telling America: Put us in power, and we will gut America from the inside out.

Trump's manifesto calls for the most conservative agenda America has ever seen, one that makes 1964 Barry Goldwater look like a moderate.

The Trump manifesto lays the groundwork for a nationwide abortion ban and calls for removing mifepristone from the market. It calls for defunding the Department of Education.

The Trump manifesto calls for reversing Democrats' clean energy agenda, while empowering the Nation's biggest oil and gas polluters.

The Trump manifesto calls for silencing and attacking all of Donald Trump's political enemies. The hard right is done speaking in euphemisms. They are saying it straight to our faces: If you disagree with Donald Trump, watch your back.

To see this happen in America is bone-chilling.

MAGA's political threats are reminiscent of the autocratic fervor we saw in Europe in the early 20th century, and for the first time, we are wondering: Could it ever happen here in America?

I hope not, but it all keeps going.

The Trump manifesto also calls for defunding Federal law enforcement and replacing thousands of Federal personnel with individuals loyal, above all, to Donald Trump.

And, finally, of course, the Trump manifesto calls for more tax cuts for the very wealthy, more tax cuts for corporate elites, more tax cuts for megacorporations, and oil and gas polluters. This is really the end goal of MAGA extremism: tax cuts for the top 1 percent, dystopia for everybody else.

Donald Trump promised that he would be a dictator on day one, and this manifesto is the playbook for how he will follow through on that threat. It is dangerous. The damage may be irreversible. The destruction could be unthinkable. And it would be a betrayal of everything that our Framers fought for, that the Union fought for, that the "greatest generation" fought for.

Donald Trump cannot—must not—be allowed within 10 miles of the Oval Office ever again.

NATO

Mr. President, on NATO, this week, the United States will welcome NATO leaders to Washington for the 2024

NATO summit. Western democracy faces perhaps its gravest threat since the Cold War. So this year's NATO summit comes at an inflection point.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine rages on. Putin's cruelty—cruelty—shows no sign of softening. We read yesterday a heartbreaking and infuriating report. Russian missile strikes obliterated a wing of the largest children's hospital in Kyiv, killing at least 31 Ukrainians, injuring another 150.

Shooting a missile at a children's hospital that had no military significance is vicious; it is nasty. It shows what a scoundrel Putin is.

My heart breaks for those children in hospital whose lives were taken away in the attack, the mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters drowning in grief. Again, this was the largest children's hospital in the Ukrainian capital, where kids who had cancer were going—a place that should be off limits to anyone who is a decent, honorable human being; who has at all a heart.

Putin has none of that—no decency, no honor, no heart—and it shows you how utterly morally bankrupt Putin's invasion of Ukraine truly is.

A lot of hard-right extremists led by Donald Trump tried to kill Ukraine aid earlier this year, but Putin's attack against the children's hospital shows why it is essential for America to stand with Ukraine. They are fighting an evil brute in Russia, and the worst thing America can do is show weakness against Putin or tell Ukraine we will abandon them. I am glad we stepped up earlier.

So as the NATO leaders gather in DC this week, nothing less than the future of Western democracy is at stake. President Biden will bring an unmistakable message to our NATO allies, as well as to our adversaries watching across the world: America will never turn its back on NATO.

My Senate colleagues and I will be honored to welcome the leaders of NATO here to the Capitol this week, as well as President Zelenskyy of Ukraine. We in the Senate will send President Zelenskyy and our NATO allies the same message we have shared from day one: America will never turn its back on you.

The same cannot be said for Donald Trump. Remember, it was Donald Trump who called NATO "obsolete" and said that he would encourage Russia to do "whatever the hell they want" to our NATO allies. Amazing. This is the wrong message to send to NATO, with so much at stake around the world. It is another example of why the MAGA hard right can't be trusted to lead on the global stage.

FIRE GRANTS AND SAFETY ACT

Mr. President, finally, on one other point, the Fire Grants and Safety Act, which we passed here in the Senate, helping our firefighters to get the equipment they need, adding to certain fire departments the more firefighters that they need, making us all safer, making our firefighters safer, and, fi-

nally, renewing the old Fire Grants and SAFER Act that Senator Dodd and I passed back in 2002, is a great thing.

Today, the President will sign it. I salute President Biden for supporting this legislation and helping us get it through the Congress.

I salute our firefighters, both paid and volunteer, who rush to danger to protect us when there is danger afloat. God bless them. I am glad that the Fire Grants and Safety Act that backs them up will be signed into law in a few hours.

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, in 1949, 12 nations gathered here in Washington to establish the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Seventy-five years later, our Nation's Capital welcomes NATO's 32 members back for a pivotal summit.

The most successful military alliance in human history has shepherded the free world through serious challenges—from nuclear-armed Cold War, through vicious terrorist attacks, to a new chapter of multipolar competition. This has always been a collective effort, but it has always required American leadership, and today, America and our allies face a serious test of resolve.

Russian aggression, Iran-backed terror, unchecked nuclear proliferation from North Korea, and China's bid for hegemony aren't just regional concerns; they are facets of an increasingly coordinated threat to Americans' security and prosperity.

The transatlantic alliance faces doubts at home and abroad about the credibility of our commitment to uphold this order. All NATO allies will share the risks if it is undone. All of us will suffer if autocrats and despots succeed in rewriting rules and redrawing maps. Even still, on the occasion of the Washington summit, there are encouraging signs that NATO is rising to meet the challenges.

Two years on, brutal Russian escalation hasn't just woken European allies from decades of neglect for their military capabilities; it has spurred a sea change in defense policy all across Europe and a renaissance of investment in defense industrial bases and cutting-edge weapons.

Across Europe, America's allies are investing 18 percent more on their defenses than they were a year ago. More than two-thirds of NATO's members