

appointments to Commissions, committees, Boards, conferences, or inter-parliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses or by order of the United States Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 2024, THROUGH MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2024

Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, I ask for my colleagues' unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn, to convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted, on the following dates and times, which I now shall read: Friday, August 2, at 12 noon; Tuesday, August 6, at 9:30 a.m.; Friday, August 9, at 10 a.m.; Tuesday, August 13, at 9:15 a.m.; Friday, August 16, at 10 a.m.; Tuesday, August 20—bright and early—at 8 a.m.; Friday, August 23, at 11:45 a.m.; Tuesday, August 27, at 9 a.m.; Friday, August 30, at 11 a.m.; Tuesday, September 3, at 2 p.m.; and Thursday, September 5, at 12:45 p.m.; further, that when the Senate adjourns on Thursday, September 5, it stand adjourned until 3 p.m. on Monday, September 9; that on that Monday, following a very reverential prayer and a very noble pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Abelson nomination; and that cloture motions filed during today's session ripen at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, September 9.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, it gives me great pleasure to say that following the remarks of the extraordinary Senator from Texas, the senior Senator, that if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that after the remarks of Senator CORNYN, that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOOKER. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

REMEMBERING SHEILA JACKSON LEE

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, while he is still on the floor, let me thank my friend from New Jersey, and I particularly appreciated the comments about our mutual friend, now deceased, Sheila Jackson Lee. I know her family was there today for a memo-

rial service, the celebration of her life. She was, well, what we call in Texas a piece of work. She was not an easy person to say no to.

(Mr. BOOKER assumed the Chair.)

One of the most significant things that we did together, along with the Senator from New Jersey, in recent months was to do for the Nation what Texas has done for the last 40 years; that is, celebrate Juneteenth.

As you know, this is a celebration of the announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation in Galveston, TX, 2 years after it was signed—slaves who learned for the first time they were free. We celebrate that on Juneteenth.

It was an honor to work with her on that, as well as the Senator from New Jersey, and I appreciate his comments about her.

SENATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, on another matter, this week can only be described as a tale of two Senates. Things started off strong. We began the week by passing bipartisan legislation to help keep our kids safe online.

America's children, as we all know, are spending more and more time on social media and internet platforms, and unfortunately, the dark side of that experience—there is plenty of upside, but the dark side is, there are those who exploit the vulnerability of our children online, exploit not only their safety but also their privacy. The bill that passed the Senate this week will give parents more control over their children's online activities and provide greater privacy protections for young people.

This bipartisan push was years in the making, and I want to thank Senators BLACKBURN and CASSIDY and Senator MARKEY and Senator BLUMENTHAL for helping get that legislation over the line.

As the Presiding Officer knows, there are other bills that have passed unanimously or virtually unanimously out of the Judiciary Committee, and I hope that the majority leader will bring those bills to the floor as soon as they can be scheduled.

Given the Senate's lack of productivity, the return to legislating was a welcomed change of pace this week, but unfortunately, it was short-lived. After passing this online safety bill on Tuesday, the majority leader reverted to his tried-and-true Senate schedule of late; that is, taking up nominations and scheduling partisan show votes. In other words, we started off strong and, I am afraid, ended with a whimper.

This has become the standard operating procedure of late. We spend weeks voting on some of President Biden's most controversial nominees, many of whom are clearly not qualified for the jobs they have been nominated to fill. Then we cap off the week with a controversial bill that stands zero chance of becoming law, just to give our Democratic colleagues a new talk-

ing point on the campaign trail. It is a cynical and sad practice. We saw that with regard to legislation concerning the border, contraception, abortion, in vitro fertilization, and now today with tax policy.

This afternoon, the Senate voted overwhelmingly to deny cloture on a tax bill because it hasn't gone through the committees of jurisdiction here in the Senate—the Senate Finance Committee. There was no hearing, no markup, no opportunity to offer amendments, no ability to improve that legislation here in the Senate, which will impact families and communities all across the country.

Our House colleagues did their job. They went through the committee process, got a strong bipartisan vote. It passed the House with a strong bipartisan vote. But I have been here long enough to know that the Senate does not readily rubberstamp things that the House of Representatives does. In fact, that is the reason the Senate exists—to be a place where we can have debate and amendments and hopefully pass legislation on to the President for his signature that will improve the lives of the people we represent.

This bill actually had some promising aspects, but it still is in need of some serious work—a sentiment that Senators on both sides of the aisle have expressed.

I am especially concerned about the watered-down work requirement for able-bodied adults in order to qualify for things like the child tax credit and the impact it would have both on the workforce and on Federal spending and the national debt.

If we are to remain the prosperous and strong Nation that we were bequeathed by our forebears—by our parents—we can't incentivize able-bodied adults to remain on the sidelines in the job market, and we certainly can't subsidize that when they, in fact, are capable of finding and holding a job and contributing not only to their families but also to our country.

My colleagues have raised several concerns about other portions of the bill, but the majority leader and the chairman of the Finance Committee have shown no interest in moving the bill through what we all know is the normal process.

That is evidenced especially by the fact that this bill passed the House 6 months ago, and only today has the majority leader scheduled a vote on the final day before a 5-week recess. As the Presiding Officer just said in wrap-up, we won't be meeting again until September 9, so why put a bill like that on the floor today without going through the normal process if you are serious about actually legislating? So this is no more than gamesmanship, and, frankly, it is a waste of the Senate's time and a disservice to our constituents, especially when you look at the mountain of work we have left undone.

When we return on September 9, we will have only 3 weeks to work before

gaveling out for another 6-week recess, leading up to the November 5 election. It is pretty obvious that the majority leader has given us very little time in which to do our jobs, and he has wasted a lot of that time on unnecessary, partisan votes. As a result, some of our most important work remains undone.

First is the National Defense Authorization Act. I believe it is 63 years in a row that the Senate has passed a National Defense Authorization Act, but that is in jeopardy this year because of the little time left in which to consider it when we come back in September. That bill was completed on a bipartisan basis by the Senate Armed Services Committee more than 3 weeks ago, plenty of time for the majority leader to bring that bill to the floor and for us to work through our normal process.

Thankfully, that product was the work of extensive bipartisan participation, including open hearings, mark-ups, and hundreds of amendments at the committee level.

I want to commend both Ranking Member WICKER, from Mississippi, and the chairman, JACK REED, and our colleagues on the committee for the work that went into this important bill, which will go a long way to support our military families and modernize America's defense.

It is pretty obvious that the majority leader could have filed cloture on this bill 3 weeks ago, allowing plenty of time for us to take up and pass the National Defense Authorization Act before the August recess.

Given the great power competition and the fact that conflicts are unfolding not only in Europe but in the Middle East and in the Indo-Pacific, the Defense Authorization Act should be our top priority. This is the most dangerous geopolitical environment that we have seen since World War II. It is regrettable that the majority leader didn't see this as a priority, and so we won't have an opportunity to vote on it until September at the earliest, if then.

As I indicated, during the month of September, we are only scheduled to be in session for 12 days, and there are other critical needs for us to address, the most basic of which is just simply funding the government before the end of the fiscal year, the end of September.

Despite the Senate's truncated schedule, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator MURRAY, and the ranking member, Senator COLLINS, have made serious progress on the appropriations bills.

As of this morning, the Appropriations Committee, on a bipartisan basis, has approved 11 of the 12 annual spending bills. They have put us in a strong position to start voting on individual appropriations bills in September, and I hope the majority leader will allow us to do that, but with only 12 days left between now and November 5, even that is in some jeopardy.

Unfortunately, the Senate's to-do list doesn't stop there. In addition to the

Defense authorization bill and 12 appropriations bills, we need to pass a farm bill by September 30. This legislation is critical to America's supply of food and fiber as well as to the hard-working men and women who grow and produce it.

Ranking Member BOOZMAN from Arkansas has been a tireless champion for America's agricultural sector, and he has been traveling across the country to hear from America's farmers, ranchers, and producers. He and our colleagues on the Agriculture Committee are committed to passing a strong farm bill as soon as possible, but the majority leader hasn't given us any time to consider that legislation before the general election on November 5—certainly, after the current bill expires at the end of September.

So my point is—and I say this with all respect—the leader has not given us a lot of time to get our work done. And when he has scheduled things, like the vote on the tax bill, he does it the day before we break for a 5-week recess, with no real likelihood that we would ever be able to move this legislation through the normal process, with debate and amendments, in the careful way that our constituents deserve.

The Defense authorization bill, the 12 funding bills, and the farm bill should all be signed into law by the end of September, but it is, unfortunately, the case that Senator SCHUMER has only given us 12 days additional during which to act.

Strengthening America's defense in an increasingly dangerous world, funding the Federal Government, and safeguarding our food supply—these are the basics of governing, and we are not doing it. That is no way to treat the government's most basic responsibilities, and I hope that, come November, voters will choose a new direction for the Senate.

TRIBUTE TO EMILY COSTANZO

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I want to say a word about one of my staff members, Emily Costanzo, who has served in my office for the last 5½ years.

Emily is what we call a speechwriter. Speechwriters are unique, in my experience, certainly here in the Senate, because most Senators are accustomed to giving a lot of speeches—some of them not very good, some of them occasionally decent. But the fact is, when you give a speech, as I have just done, usually it involves a number of considerations: It involves policy; it involves Senate procedures; it involves a lot of different considerations. Emily has been an invaluable member of my staff for the last 5½ years to help me be as good as I am capable of being in providing me with the support I need in order to represent the 30 million people of Texas here in the U.S. Senate.

Emily, fortunately, is here in the back of the room.

Emily, let me just say you will be missed, especially your positive, cheer-

ful countenance, and certainly the great work that you have been able to do all of these years. I wish you and Jake the very best in this next chapter of your lives.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANDERS). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, Calendar No. 716, Michael Louis Sulmeyer, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and that the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Michael Louis Sulmeyer, of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense (New Position).

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Sulmeyer nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 12 noon tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 5:03 p.m., adjourned until Friday, August 2, 2024, at 12 noon.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate August 1, 2024:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

DAVID O. BARNETT, JR., OF NEW MEXICO, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DOROTHY CAMILLE SHEA, OF NORTH CAROLINA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO