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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our shelter in life's storms, Your Kingdom is above all earthly kingdoms. Today, empower the Members of this body with the wisdom, courage, and strength needed for our times. Infuse them with the passion to act in ways that honor Your Name.

Lord, preserve their health and strength by Your mercy and power. May they find Your grace sufficient for every need.

Bless also the citizens of this great land. Give them the wisdom to pray for our government and our leaders, so that all people may live quiet and peaceful lives in all goodness and holiness.

We pray in Your merciful 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, September 12, 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 to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Laura Margarete Provinzino, of Minnesota, to be United States District Judge for the District of Minnesota.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now before the month is out, both parties in both Chambers must unite on the most important goal of this work period: keeping the government open with a temporary extension of Federal funding. A continuing resolution, as we all know, is not a substitute for the appropriations process, but, rather, a tool to give us more time for the appropriators

to do their work. And, fortunately—in this body at least—Democratic and Republican appropriators have a very good track record of working together.

In divided government, the only way Congress has been able to pass CRs is through bipartisan cooperation. We have seen that again and again and again these last 2 years.

Unfortunately, House Republicans have regrettably forgotten that lesson. About a week ago, they introduced a 6-month CR that, from the first, proved to be unserious, partisan, and insufficient. And given what has happened in the House in the last few days, it is becoming clearer and clearer that only a bipartisan solution will work. We have been saying this all along, but the events of the past few days even further confirm just how much it is true.

A real proposal for avoiding a shutdown would be the one that both sides write together, but House Republicans wrote their CR behind closed doors, without any input from the Democratic leader in the House, the President, myself, or any of the Democratic appropriators. A real proposal for avoiding a shutdown would avoid poison pills, but House Republicans wrote their CR with poison pills front and center. They know perfectly well this approach doesn't work.

A real proposal for avoiding a shutdown is one that doesn't hamstring our national defense, doesn't weaken our border security, and doesn't hurt our veterans and farmers and so many others. And instead of a short-term extension of the deadline, the House Republicans released a bill that kicks the can down the road for half a year.

That is no way to govern; particularly on military affairs, it is no way to govern. You can't run a military with a 6-month funding patch like House Republicans' leader proposed. It would slow down everything: insufficient resources for recruitment and troop pay increases and research. This 6-month CR would hurt the awarding 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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new military contracts and cause immediate and immense uncertainty and cost increases for the old ones.

So I urge Speaker Johnson to set aside this CR proposal and try again. We have already lost 1 week in this 3-week work period. We all know what we need to do if we want to ensure the government does not shut down: We need a bipartisan bill, a temporary extension. The Democratic leader in the House and I are ready and willing to work with the Speaker, as we have done before.

#### INFLATION

Mr. President, now on inflation, yesterday Americans got another piece of excellent news in the fight against inflation. According to the Department of Labor, the consumer price index was measured at 2.5 percent in August compared to a year ago. This floor chart illustrates just that: 2 years ago, 2 years after we passed the Inflation Reduction Act and Chips and Science, inflation has now slowed to a 3-year low. Here is what it was in 2022; here is what it is right now. It went from 8.3 percent when the Chips and Science Act and the Inflation Reduction Act were passed to 2.5 percent today. Let me repeat: 2 years after the Inflation Reduction Act and the Chips and Science Act, inflation has slowed to a 3-year low.

Republicans claimed investing in America would make inflation skyrocket and drive our economy into a recession. Instead, the United States has had the strongest post-COVID recovery in the world. Manufacturing, construction at an alltime high, nearly triple its peak during the past administration, and inflation continues to trend lower. And inflation has slowed, despite Senate Republicans trying to block and derail so many of the bills we have pushed in this Chamber to lower costs and make life easier for American families.

Remember, when Republicans had a chance to vote for lower prescription drug costs for seniors, they voted no. When Republicans had a chance to cap insulin at \$35 a month for Americans on Medicare, they voted no. When Republicans had the chance to dramatically expand the child tax credit and cut child poverty in this country in half, they voted no. And when Republicans had the chance to invest in rebuilding America and bringing advanced manufacturing jobs back to our shores and open new factories for EVs and solar and chips, many of them still voted no—though, then back home, they tried to take credit for these jobs. For 3 years, Republicans have proudly been the party of “no”: no solutions, no plans, no attempts to fix our country’s problems.

But today’s report shows that the Democratic agenda is working. This is dramatic. And despite Republicans’ best efforts to derail our country’s recovery, we have moved forward in a very positive way. We have a lot of work still to do. People still need a lot

of help to make ends meet and save for retirement and provide for their families, but we are on our way. We are on our way, as this chart shows.

#### PROJECT 2025

Mr. President, now on Project 2025, the more people learn about Donald Trump’s 2025 agenda, the more they realize how devastating it would be for our country. Later today, I will join with my Democratic colleagues to shine a light on this revolting MAGA agenda.

On its surface, Project 2025 proposes the most conservative, most radical, most unhinged collection of policies in modern history. Let me say that again: Project 2025 proposes the most conservative, the most radical, the most unhinged collection of policies in modern history.

And when you dig even deeper, Project 2025 is even worse than that. It reads like a hard-right wish list for some of the nastiest, most harmful policies you can imagine. Project 2025 would devastate American education by abolishing the Department of Education and eliminating Head Start for 2.9 million students.

Republicans claim they care about families, but eliminating Head Start means Republicans want to kill a program that studies show makes it far more likely that low-income kids will graduate high school, attend college, earn more money, and lead healthier lives. That is what Republicans would eliminate by killing Head Start.

Project 2025 would send the cost of healthcare and prescription drugs soaring, repealing the \$35 cap on insulin for seniors on Medicare that Democrats enacted into law. The \$35 cap on insulin for seniors was a lifesaving reform—literally, a lifesaving reform. It will help ensure seniors won’t go broke trying to manage their diabetes. But Project 2025 callously, cruelly would kill that measure and tell seniors who struggle to afford insulin that they are on their own—utter cruelty.

Project 2025 would also intensify the GOP’s war on reproductive freedom by laying the groundwork for a national abortion ban, pushing States to monitor women’s pregnancies. Let me repeat that: Project 2025 pushes States to monitor women’s pregnancies.

This is what they call freedom? Give me a break.

Project 2025 would betray our veterans by cutting disability benefits for veterans and defunding VA hospitals, including the only VA on Long Island. The Northport VA could potentially, given their cuts, be defunded.

And, finally, 2025 would make it harder for Americans to own a home by privatizing Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, causing dramatic spikes in mortgage rates.

Owning a home is a hallmark of the American Dream. We shouldn’t make it harder for people to own homes, and that is precisely what 2025 would do.

So let me be clear: Project 2025 is the Trump agenda. Its staff reads like a

who is who of the first Trump administration, and many of them would be part of a second Trump administration and be in charge of writing policy. So make no mistake, America, if Donald Trump returns to the White House, Project 2025 will be the playbook his staff will use for implementing the policies of his new administration, and we are all in danger should that occur.

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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I would like to begin by reminding our colleagues of a report released before the August State work period. It is a report Congress commissioned in the fiscal year 2022 NDAA, produced by a panel of experts that Congress appointed—the bipartisan Commission on the National Defense Strategy.

The Commission was tasked with reviewing the Biden administration’s national defense strategy and conducting an independent assessment of the threats and requirements of our common defense.

Any of our colleagues who haven’t yet taken a close look at this report should. But I would like to reiterate a few of its conclusions that I discussed just last month as the Appropriations Committee finalized defense spending legislation for the coming year.

This ought to grab our attention, from the report:

[T]he U.S. military lacks both the capabilities and the capacity required to be confident it can deter and prevail in combat.

[T]he U.S. defense industrial base . . . is unable to meet the equipment, technology, and munitions needs of the United States and its allies and partners.

[T]he U.S. public are largely unaware of the dangers the United States faces or the costs (financial and otherwise) required to adequately prepare.

The report doesn’t flinch in assessing the full scale of the threats posed by major adversaries: Russian victory in Ukraine would make Moscow “an emboldened and likely stronger power, requiring NATO to build and deploy additional forces, potentially at the expense of other locations where these resources could be applied.

China is outpacing the United States and has largely negated the U.S. military advantage in the Western Pacific through two decades of focused military investment.

And, perhaps most alarmingly, the growing partnership and collaboration between our adversaries “increases the