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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. Today's opening prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Pastor William L. Nash, Glad Tidings Pentecostal Church, Mangham, LA.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Our eternal God, as this body assembles for session today, we thank Thee for the blessings of Heaven upon America in its 248th year of our freedom.

Our prayer on this wonderful September day is for the wisdom and anointing of Thy Spirit to descend upon each Senator. May guidance and strength for sound legislation move from each committee room to the floor of this Chamber. May these honorable servants represent the heartbeat of America. After all, they are sent by the people for the betterment of the people.

Forgive us, O God, of our failures; repair our altars. And may this Chamber of Calhoun, Webster, Long, and Goldwater become renewed with the best fruits of labor. Lead the Senators to the mountaintop of victory so that, 100 years from today, we may say: It was good to have been here.

In the Name of Jesus Christ, 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 24, 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 LEADERSHIP 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 Michael Sfraga, of Alaska, to be Ambassador at Large for Arctic Affairs.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, both parties in both Chambers continue the

work of avoiding a shutdown. House Republican leadership needs to get the CR done quickly because we still need time in the Senate to move the bill through the floor. House Republicans should work with Democrats—House and Senate Democrats—to find the best path to getting the bill passed in a bipartisan way. The House Republicans have already wasted enough time as it is.

Once the House acts, the Senate will move quickly to get the CR done. I encourage my colleagues on both sides to prioritize speedy passage of the CR. If both sides keep working together, if we stay away from poison pills and partisan spectacle, then the American people can rest assured there won't be a government shutdown. But we still have more work to do.

Of course, nothing was inevitable about the tight deadline we face now. The bipartisan CR I negotiated with Speaker JOHNSON and Leaders McCONNELL and JEFFRIES is more or less the result people expected from the beginning—a short-term CR, one that does not last 6 months, that is free of poison pills, and which honors the bipartisan funding levels we agreed to earlier this year.

But this feels like the third or fourth time this Congress that House Republicans have had to learn the same elementary lesson: In a narrowly divided government, partisan bully tactics and appealing to the extreme just does not work, plain and simple.

I know a few on the hard right say: Oh, we can demand, bang our fists on the table, and force everyone to do what we want. That ain't happening. What they want to do is so destructive to America that the overwhelming number of Democrats and a large number of Republicans don't want to do it. But nonetheless this feels like the third or fourth time in this Congress that the House Republicans have had to learn the same elementary lesson—I say particularly the House hard-right

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



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Republicans and the Freedom Caucus. In a narrowly divided government, partisan bully tactics and appealing to the extreme simply does not work.

I would have thought that would have been made clear a year ago, when Speaker McCarthy kept trying and trying and trying to appease the hard right with increasingly severe funding cuts, and it ended up being all for naught anyway. We ended up passing a bipartisan CR, and radicals turned on Speaker McCarthy.

This time around, it was Donald Trump again telling the hard right to shut the government down if we didn't agree to their poison pill provisions—never mind that a shutdown would mean costs would go up, programs like Head Start would halt, and public safety here and at the border would suffer. To Donald Trump, these are all OK because they are just apparently the cost of feeding his ego. It is bewilderingly cynical to see Donald Trump push for a shutdown, knowing the pain it would cause the country. But thankfully we are still on track to avoid that kind of mess. Of course, we still have more work to do.

I earnestly hope today brings good news in the House. We here in the Senate are ready to work to get this bill done quickly.

#### ABORTION

Mr. President, now on abortion, last week, a report by ProPublica told a heart-wrenching story of Amber Thurman of Georgia, who died because abortion bans in her State prevented her from getting lifesaving emergency care.

I know you are familiar with this case, Mr. President. It is the first known case of a woman dying because of new abortion laws in the wake of the MAGA Supreme Court's disastrous repeal of Roe. Doctors said her death was preventable.

This was a prime example of the government interfering in lifesaving medical decisions—exactly what is envisioned, unfortunately, in the MAGA Project 2025. Sadly, as we all know, she will not be the last.

A person's ability to receive lifesaving care, including lifesaving reproductive care, should never, never hinge on what State they live in. It should be something to which everyone in every State has a right.

Georgia's case is particularly foul because Georgia has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the country, which disproportionately affects Black Americans.

What happened in Georgia is a direct example of how abortion bans continue to exacerbate the racial disparities in maternal death. Amber's doctors didn't perform the medical procedures they knew she needed because of Georgia's law. It was the law overruling their good medical judgment. She went into septic shock, and her heart stopped. All the while, doctors did everything except the medically sound treatment she needed.

In our country right now, doctors are calling lawyers to ask permission before they treat a patient. Can you believe that? That is so wrong. But that is what our Republican colleagues, in their extreme views on women's reproductive health, have asked for.

Today, the Senate will act on legislation to help prevent tragedies like Amber's death from happening again.

First, Democrats will bring up a resolution led by Senator MURRAY that affirms the Senate's position that every person has the basic right to emergency healthcare, including abortion care.

I implore every single Senator—Democrat, Republican, and Independent—to support this resolution. It is a simple idea that emergency care should be a right for all and that doctors should never been afraid of doing their jobs while making life-and-death decisions. How on Earth could anyone have a problem with that?

Democrats will also bring up legislation by Senator BALDWIN to create a grant program that will assist with travel-related expenses for those seeking an abortion. This fund will help people overcome financial barriers like transportation, lodging, and childcare if patients need to travel out of State to get the care they need and require.

Perhaps if Amber had access to this fund and could have left Georgia, if she had the Federal resources to move quicker to get care, perhaps she would be alive today.

I thank Senators MURRAY and BALDWIN for leading these two important bills.

If passed, they may help save lives. I am proud to support them and urge everyone on both sides of the aisle to do the same.

When it comes to abortion, Donald Trump and Senate Republicans have kept pushing the same argument again and again—that abortion is best left to the States—leaving aside the fact that their end goal is a total abortion ban.

The tragedy of Amber Thurman's death shows exactly why leaving abortion to the States is such a dangerous idea in itself. It has led to a dangerously inconsistent application of justice and rights. Many of these State legislatures are dominated, frankly, by radicals who don't know or care one iota about reproductive care.

And abortion is just the start for some of those States. Some of them will want to police a woman's travel. They will want to prosecute people who help a woman receive care. They will want to jail doctors. That is already in the legislative ideas in many of these States. These are utterly delusional ideas.

My Senate Republican colleagues say abortion should be left to the States. What do they have to say about States like Georgia, where abortion laws got someone killed? Do Republicans think this is a just outcome? Do they think this is an acceptable way to legislate on people's individual freedoms—some

States saying one thing, other States saying something different?

I certainly don't think so; Democrats don't think so; and the American people don't think so. Again, all of this is an attempt for MAGA Republicans to get a national abortion ban.

I hope today, Mr. President—I hope today we can see a tiny ray of light amidst so much darkness when it comes to reproductive freedoms. I hope my colleagues on both sides support the legislation today. To say no—to say no—would be a cruel and heartless message to send to the American people.

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.

#### NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, the Pentagon announced the deployment of additional U.S. servicemembers to the Middle East. The proximate cause, of course, is the threat of war on Israel's northern border. But ongoing Iran-backed attacks against U.S. personnel from the Red Sea to Iraq and Syria offer plenty of reminders that America's enemies lack neither the resources nor motivation to target us.

Democrats and Republicans alike should recognize that America's enduring security interests in the Middle East are not served by abandoning the region to Iran, Russia, and China. But what the Biden-Harris administration is grappling with right now is a problem of its own making. It is the combination of a weak and ineffectual response to Iran-backed aggression. It is the predictable and forewarned inadequacy of a force-planning construct that rules out serious preparation for meeting multiple threats at the same time.

I have spoken repeatedly about the naivete of abandoning a multiple-war, force-planning construct, underresourcing our military, and ignoring the growing and interconnected threats our adversaries pose to our interests.

It is worth remembering how former British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan reportedly responded to a question that the greatest challenge for a statesman is "events, dear boy, events." Well, events have proven particularly challenging for the Biden-Harris administration.

At the risk of repeating myself, losing resolve to meet and defeat adversaries when they threaten us only emboldens them. Retreating from difficult challenges only invites even bigger ones. And most importantly, there