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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable GEORGE S. HELMY, a Senator from the State of New Jersey.

PRAYER

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

Almighty God, we have humbled ourselves, prayed, and sought You. We have turned from evil, believing that You have heard and forgiven us and will bring healing to our land. You have spoken, so let Your will be done.

In this season of transition, bless President Joseph Biden and President-elect Donald Trump. Lord, use them to enable our Nation and world to lead peaceful and quiet lives that are godly and dignified in every way.

We pray in Your sovereign 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 legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, November 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 GEORGE S. HELMY, a Senator from the

State of New Jersey, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. HELMY thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of April M. Perry, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

2024 ELECTION RESULTS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, 1 week ago, a near-record number of Americans carried on the grand tradition of voting in a national election and of passing the torch peacefully.

There are many things we can say about what happened last Tuesday. It was not the result many of us wanted. But we live in a democracy where the will of the people is respected and followed, and the American people have spoken.

I congratulate President-elect Trump on his victory, and I look forward to speaking with him soon.

I congratulate Vice President HARRIS and Governor Walz for running a historic campaign. They can be proud of the incredible work their team has done over the last 4 months. The values Vice President HARRIS ran on will live on—individual freedom, opportunity for all, and working together to build a safer, stronger nation.

For those of us who have been given the honor of representing the people of our States, we look forward to serving, to governing, to working in a principled and bipartisan fashion, to reward the trust the American people have placed in us.

Now, to my fellow Democrats across America, it is natural and appropriate to feel deep disappointment, grief, and even anger in this moment. I understand those feelings. It never feels good to come up short. But when you do, you get up, you dust yourself off, you learn, and you prepare to do better in the future. You study what occurred. We will do that. You listen to what voters are saying, and you find ways to make government responsive to those wants and desires, those dreams, those needs.

And you also take the approval of the voters from places we each represent—those voters who sent us back to the Senate—and carry forth the principles we campaigned on and we won on, and you find ways to put those principles into practice as much as possible, while finding ways to work in a bipartisan fashion to get things done.

As I have told my caucus this week, we should regard this election not merely as a defeat but, more importantly, as a challenge. The American people have presented us with a challenge, and we must answer the call. We have to look at what we did right, what we did wrong, and what we didn't do but should have done.

First, we have to look at what we did right and continue to pursue those goals. Many of our Senate colleagues, after all, are returning to the Senate

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



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despite facing strong headwinds. I will say more about that in a moment.

Second, we have to understand the things we did wrong and how we must change.

And, third, we have to look at what we didn't do but should have done.

We will have these important and necessary conversations in due course, and everyone must have a seat at the table. We must be honest. We must be practical. And we must never abandon the roots that have defined the Democratic Party for generations.

To Democrats who were back around in 2004, remember the grief we felt back then? It was a tough election, for sure. But what happened afterward? We got back to work to regain the trust of the American people. I was proud to be part of that process as chair of the DSCC. And just 2 years later, the tide turned in a dramatic way.

Finally, before I turn to the Senate, let me say this: I hope that, after last week, we can put to rest the fantasy of stolen elections and rigged outcomes.

Four years ago, the losing side refused to accept the will of the people, and it led to a violent insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. This year, we will not go down that dark and violent path.

Now, let me go on to the Senate. Last Tuesday brought a mix of success and disappointment for Senate Democrats. In the final analysis, we hoped for a better result. As happens from time to time, control of this Chamber will change from one party to the other.

To Senator BROWN and Senator TESTER, we could not be prouder of the races you ran. More importantly, we could not be prouder of the legacy you have built here in the U.S. Senate. You are some of the finest people I have ever worked with in this Chamber. To both of you, I say: Thank you. Job well done. Job well done.

I have spoken to both Senators TESTER and BROWN a couple of times this past week. They are not ones to get down on themselves. They are going to be just fine, and they will continue to do great things for their home States and for our country. But I feel for the people of Montana and Ohio, who will now lose two incredible leaders.

To Senators ROSEN and BALDWIN, we are thrilled that you are coming back for another term, despite all the headwinds and obstacles you faced back home.

In fact, despite a difficult year for Democrats, four of our most contested seats will remain in the hands of Democrats. In one other State, the votes are still being counted.

Let me repeat that. Despite a difficult year for Democrats, which everyone predicted would be a place where we lost all of our seats, almost—despite that—four of the most contested seats will remain in Democratic hands: Nevada, Michigan, Arizona, and Wisconsin.

As I said, in one more State, the votes are still being counted.

Donald Trump won all of those States, but so did all our Democratic colleagues and colleagues to be.

Winning four Senate seats from the Nation's tightest swing States does not happen on its own. It is a testament to the incredible work Senate Democrats have done in this Chamber to benefit the American people.

With Democrats in the majority, the United States had its most successful and productive years in decades. Under our watch, this Chamber became a place where we got things done—amazing things done.

We passed bold legislation that lifted America out of crisis, rebuilt our economy, and invested in good-paying jobs. We passed the American Rescue Plan, the bipartisan infrastructure bill, the Chips and Science Act. We took care of our veterans. We defended Ukraine. We protected marriage equality. We passed the Inflation Reduction Act, which has done more to improve the environment than any other act and also lowered the cost of prescription drugs. And we did so much more. These accomplishments will continue to pay off for years and decades to come.

I am proud that the vast majority of our accomplishments were done in a bipartisan fashion. As a result, many of our incumbents are coming back, despite a tough year, and multiple swing seats will remain with Democrats.

Now, to my newly elected Democratic colleagues from across the country, I extend a welcoming hand. I met with these new Members just now in my office. We are excited to get to work. We are excited you are joining our caucus.

Now, let me turn to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. Another closely contested election now comes to an end. To my Republican colleagues, I offer a word of caution in good faith. Take care not to misread the will of the people, and do not abandon the need for bipartisanship.

After winning an election, the temptation may be to go to the extreme. We have seen that happen over the decades, and it has consistently backfired on the party in power. So instead of going to the extremes, I remind my colleagues that this body is most effective when it is bipartisan.

If we want, in the next 4 years, the Senate to be as productive as the last 4, the only way that will happen is through bipartisan cooperation.

Democrats will be ready to do what we have consistently done: work with both sides when the opportunity arises. Democrats will never abandon our values, but neither will we reject an opportunity to move the ball forward to make people's lives better when we can. The question is, now, whether or not Republicans are willing to do the same.

To my colleagues on the other side, once again, do not abandon bipartisanship. It is the best and most effective way to get things done. It was true in the last 4 years, and it will be true in the years to come.

Finally, let me end with this. For millions of Americans, particularly those on this side of the aisle, this is a difficult moment. But as John F. Kennedy once said, "Let us not despair but act."

Let us not despair but act. Let us not give up on the dream that is America. Instead, let us do what those who came before us have always done. Let us persevere. Let us persist. Let us get to work.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

2024 ELECTION RESULTS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, a week ago today, the American people stood to be counted. They lined up to make their voices heard, and the message they sent was resoundingly clear.

Four years ago, they watched Washington Democrats take an economy that was primed for recovery and douse it in reckless taxing and inflationary spending. Over 4 years, they watched consumer prices rise more than 20 percent. As they made tough choices at the grocery store and felt the pain at the gas pump, they watched Washington Democrats deflect blame for the worst inflation in four decades. And last Tuesday, they said enough was enough.

And 4 years ago, they watched Washington Democrats campaign on slashing ICE and halting construction of physical barriers along the southern border. Month by month, they watched as this unseriousness and willful neglect turned into the worst humanitarian and security crisis at the border on record. And last Tuesday, they said enough was enough.

Also 4 years ago, they watched Washington Democrats campaign on defunding the police and going soft on crime. In cities across America, their fears of unchecked violent crime were proven justified. And last Tuesday, they said enough was enough.

Last week, American voters were desperate for leaders who could deliver safe streets, secure borders, stable prices, and strength abroad. So they chose to hire Republicans. They maintained a Republican majority in the House; they created a decisive Republican majority in the Senate; and by a wide margin, they put the White House in Republican hands once again.

The Nation surveyed its problems and decided that Republicans were equipped to put the ship of state back on the right track. Thus far, I have been encouraged by the lack of baseless