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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today, the opening prayer will be offered by Pastor Brad Graves, senior pastor of First Baptist Church from Ada, OK.

The guest Pastor offered the following prayer:

I want to thank you for this opportunity to pray. In front of you today is the vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention. As the senior pastor of the First Baptist Church, as a father, a husband, a grandfather, but most importantly, as a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, let us pray together.

Father God of Heaven, we come to You today in the Name of Your one and only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Countless men and women of faith in You have walked these halls over the last two-plus centuries. Ever since the setting of its cornerstone in 1793, this building has stood as a place not just of legislation but of morality and nobility. It has been a building that the nations of the world look toward with bated breath to learn what the United States of America would do, how they would respond to crises in our world, and how they would assist those in need.

Our own citizens have looked to this building, wondering with hope and prayers that the laws and decisions made in this room and in this building would better their lives, would protect their families, and would enable their God-given freedoms, and this day is no different.

This day, March 4, 2025, is no different than any other day. We may not be at war, we may not be on the cusp of social crisis, but the world is watching our next move, and our citizens need God-fearing leadership.

So now, before the gavel is struck, before the arguments are made, before

the debate begins, we beg You, God, for mercy on our Nation. God, be patient with us.

We ask for Your grace on our leadership. Lord, they carry a heavy burden for which they will stand in account someday.

We ask for the love of God to be displayed through our actions as a nation because we are called by Your Name, one Nation under God.

I have been praying for every man and woman in this Senate Chamber to come to know the love of God. I pray that every family represented in this room would experience the love of God. I pray for every American citizen to understand the depth of God's love for them.

So, God of Heaven, I claim the Scripture that love "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." I claim the Scripture that "everyone will know that you are [their] disciples, if [they] love one another." And I most certainly claim the Scripture that is so familiar to every one of us, that "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whosoever believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life."

Guide these men and women today, dear God, by Your unending, overwhelming love, to do Your will and to follow Your ways and to especially protect the lives of the most vulnerable, to create legislation that supports families and morality and that shows the watching world the love of Jesus Christ is the only way to Heaven.

I ask these things in the Name of my Lord, my Savior, and my returning King, Jesus Christ.

And all God's people across the Nation say amen and amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for debate only until 11 a.m.

The Senator from Iowa.

HAMAS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, October 7, 2023, will probably go down in history to Americans like December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor Day.

On October 7, 2 years ago, Israel experienced a surprise attack from Hamas. As those under attack rushed to safe rooms and to bomb shelters, the terrorist group infiltrating the country began firing on homes and killing Israelis at random.

Those who have seen the footage of the attacks—in many cases, those films have been taken by the attackers themselves—have said that the glee and the pride Hamas showed in killing and mutilating and raping innocent civilians were particularly shocking. It is also very chilling and also very disgusting.

On October 7, Hamas also took roughly 250 residents hostage, even including babies, really old people, and even some Americans. The horror these individuals have faced under the brutal reign of Hamas is unimaginable. The hostages have been subjected to inhumane conditions, deprived of their basic human rights, and used as pawns in the cruel game of manipulation.

Now more than 500 days later, Hamas is still holding dozens of hostages captive, including five Americans. Of the

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



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five Americans in Hamas's captivity, four have been confirmed to have been murdered.

As the families have spent over a year in anguish, waiting for any sign of their loved ones, desperate for their safe return, Hamas has kept their bodies and refused to return them to family and friends, compounding the grief of loved ones. All Americans would say this cannot stand.

The United States must remain steadfast in its commitment to securing the release of these hostages and holding Hamas accountable for these atrocities. Under President Trump's leadership, that is exactly what our country is doing because of President Trump's support for the State of Israel and his stand against hostage taking.

To the families of these hostages, we grieve with you. We share in your pain, and we share in your hope as well.

To the hostages still in captivity, we want them to know they are not forgotten.

The world is watching, and we will not rest until justice is served and you are safely returned home. God bless you all.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. 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 MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, this evening, President Trump will come to the Capitol to address Congress. I am looking forward to hearing the President discuss his accomplishments so far and outline his vision for our country.

President Trump may have been in office for a matter of weeks, but he has already built a considerable record of success. Chief among his successes, of course, is the work he has been doing to confront illegal immigration and restore order to our southern border.

Over the weekend, it emerged that there were just 8,450 encounters, approximately, at our southern border for the entire month of February—at least a 25-year low. That is a stunning turnaround. To put that number in perspective, under President Biden, the Border Patrol sometimes saw that number in a single day. It is incredible what President Trump has accomplished in just 6 weeks.

I haven't even mentioned how his administration has been making our communities safer by arresting and deport-

ing criminals here illegally. In just 6 weeks, they have taken a lot of dangerous people off of our streets.

It all goes to show what is possible when you have a President committed to protecting our border and our Nation's security.

Of course, that is not all the President has accomplished during his first 6 weeks in office. Among other things, he has also been laying the groundwork for unleashing American energy. While Democrats may not like to admit it, the United States is rapidly heading toward an energy crisis where we simply don't have the supply to meet the demand.

The Washington Post noted last March:

Vast swaths of the United States are at risk of running short of power as electricity-hungry data centers and clean-technology factories proliferate around the country, leaving utilities and regulators grasping for credible plans to expand the nation's creaking power grid.

That is a pretty serious situation.

Instead of taking steps to increase our energy supply, the Biden administration pushed us further toward crisis with measures designed to restrict conventional energy development and force Americans to adopt electric cars, putting a vast new burden on our electric grid.

Fortunately, President Trump recognizes the precarious situation we are facing, and he is already demonstrating his commitment to increasing our Nation's supply and promoting a secure and affordable energy future. I look forward to hearing from him as he discusses the work he has been doing tonight.

Here in the Senate, we have been working to support President Trump's agenda first and foremost by getting his Cabinet in place. I am proud to report we have confirmed 20 of the President's 22 Cabinet nominees—a substantially faster pace of confirmations than in any of the three previous administrations.

In addition to Cabinet nominations, we have also been laying the groundwork for making the tax cuts we passed during the first Trump administration permanent as well as delivering a transformational investment in our border, national, and energy security.

Of course, we are currently working to overturn burdensome Biden administration regulations using the Congressional Review Act.

This week, we are taking up two rules that infringe on Americans' financial freedom. First, we will vote on Senator CRUZ's resolution to stop the Biden administration's digital asset broker rule, which puts at risk the privacy and security of tens of millions of Americans who trade digital assets. This rule could also mean forfeiting American leadership in financial innovation by giving the advantage to foreign companies that do not have to comply with the rule and driving innovation overseas.

Later this week, we will vote on Senator RICKETTS' resolution to prevent an unnecessary expansion of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, or CFPB. The Biden administration made a last-ditch effort to increase government supervision of nonbank payment apps like Venmo and PayPal by expanding the CFPB's authority. But these types of apps are already regulated, and they accounted for just 1 percent of the CFPB's consumer complaints in 2023. Why add another layer of bureaucracy?

Apparently, Democrats can't help but see innovation as an opportunity for regulation. All told, the Biden administration saddled Americans with \$1.8 trillion in regulatory burdens. That is a big weight on the economy and on crucial industries like American energy, and we will continue our work to alleviate these burdens. The Biden administration left our Nation facing a lot of challenges, but we are turning the page on the Biden administration's failed policies, and I firmly believe there is a brighter future ahead.

I look forward to hearing from President Trump tonight as he outlines his vision for American greatness.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS

Mr. SCHUMER. So, Mr. President, tonight, Donald Trump will address the Nation before a joint session of Congress. This will be the fifth time Donald Trump speaks from the House Chamber, and by now, the American people know just what to expect.

They can expect Donald Trump to launch a deluge of mistruths and falsehoods. But tonight, we won't hear one peep from Donald Trump about his broken promise to bring inflation down on "day one." We won't hear one syllable about how Donald Trump's policies are making inflation and the costs that average American families pay worse.

So this morning, let's start with that here, starting with tariffs. Last night, for the first time in decades, the President of the United States imposed 25 percent tariffs on nearly all goods coming from Canada and Mexico.

What does this mean for the American people? What do Donald Trump's tariffs mean for the American people? They are going to pay more. Everyday