



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 119th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 171

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2025

No. 2

Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Our Father in Heaven, on this January 6, as our lawmakers prepare to validate the 2024 election results, we praise You because of the greatness of Your faithfulness. Lord, we thank You for reminding us of the fragility of freedom, for the vigilance we must pay to sustain it, and for the redemptive freedom You offer us through Your sacrificial love. Today, use the work of our lawmakers to let this generation know about the unfolding of Your powerful providence.

Lord, forgive us when we forget that Your mercies are new each day. We thank You for the rising and the setting of the Sun, for supplying our daily needs, and for the hope we have in Your redemptive power.

We pray in Your loving Name. 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 Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

CERTIFICATION OF THE ELECTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, in just a few minutes, Senators will head over to the Chamber of the House of Representatives to count the electoral votes and certify the election of Donald Trump and J.D. VANCE as President and Vice President of the United States.

Today, I want to offer my warmest congratulations to President Trump and Vice President-elect VANCE. They scored a tremendous victory this last November.

Republicans improved our margins in nearly 90 percent of counties in the United States and grew support with nearly every demographic group. The Republican coalition is broad and strong and growing. Now the work begins on delivering on our agenda.

Mr. President, Republicans are ready to go. We are committed to ending the Biden-Harris border crisis, securing our southern border, and restoring respect for the rule of law. We are committed to restoring American strength to secure our Nation and discourage the actors fomenting instability on the world stage. We are committed to strengthening our economic and fiscal future, which includes extending tax relief for hard-working Americans. We are committed to advancing American energy dominance to promote both affordable energy and our national security. The list goes on, and we are getting right to work.

Along with advancing these priorities, we will be focused on getting President Trump's Cabinet up and running quickly by ensuring that his nominees are speedily confirmed here in the U.S. Senate. The voters sent President Trump here with a mission, and we are committed to ensuring that he has the people around him that he needs to deliver.

It has been a tough 4 years for the American people. The Biden administration was characterized by a historic inflation crisis that left millions of Americans struggling, a border crisis that jeopardized our national security, and increasing instability on the world stage.

But I believe that a brighter future is ahead. I look forward to working with President Trump, with Vice President VANCE—a Senate colleague, I might add—and with Republicans in both Houses to secure that brighter future for the American people.

REMEMBERING JERRY APPLEBEE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, last week I received news that my high school basketball and track coach, Jerry Applebee, had died. I want to take a moment here on the Senate floor to pay tribute to him.

He was a deeply formative figure for me in my teenage years, setting an example for us players of hard work, determination, and sportsmanship. Together with my dad, also a coach, he founded the Jones County Invitational Basketball Tournament, which is my hometown's annual regular-season basketball tournament—the longest running tournament of its kind in South Dakota, started back in the 1960s—an event I played in and still love attending to this day.

Among the memories I have of Coach Applebee, a lot of them are around that auditorium. And the floor there—the court—is called the Jerry Applebee Court in his honor. As I recall my days playing basketball there, there was one thing that you never could miss in any game in which he was involved, and that was his loud voice bouncing off the ceiling in that auditorium. That auditorium was built in 1954. At the time, it was kind of the Taj Mahal among auditoriums—gymnasiums—in my part of South Dakota, and, to this day, it continues to serve our school

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



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and the surrounding schools really well. Some opposing teams refer to it as “the barn.” But the one thing you were always sure of when Murdo-Jones County was playing a basketball game, you could hear Coach Applebee anywhere in the gymnasium because he had a raspy, strong, resonant, deep voice, and he was not afraid to use it. I remember that in the basketball gymnasium, and I remember it on the track as well.

One of my clearest memories of Coach Applebee—or “App,” as we called him—happened during my senior year. We were playing in the district championship game with a chance to go on in the playoffs and make it, ultimately, to the State tournament, which was every kid in my hometown’s aspiration. Those of us who loved sports always dreamed of playing in the State basketball tournament—something that I had been, from the time I was a kindergartner, aspiring to have the opportunity to do.

We got the last chance my senior year, in a district championship game. We were playing our archrival, Lyman County, in their gymnasium. As was typically the case, it was a back-and-forth game. They were ahead by a point at the end of the first quarter, we were ahead by a point at halftime, and they were ahead by a point in the third quarter.

It got down to the end of the game. We were down 1 point, with 5 seconds left on the clock. So Coach Applebee calls time-out. We huddle on the sidelines. He calls the play. We break the huddle. My teammates inbound the ball. I had a teammate that came down and set a screen for me on the baseline. I came out—today, to what would be the 3-point line, although we didn’t have the 3-point line back in that day—and I fired off a shot that I would hope was going to win the game and take us on to the regional playoffs.

Well, it came off the back of the rim. It didn’t go down. There were a lot of people in the gym that thought it was going to, but it didn’t.

Obviously, after the game—my last opportunity at pursuing a chance to play in the State basketball tournament—I was sitting in the locker room by myself. Most of the team had gotten on the bus, and they were waiting for some of the rest of us and for the coaches.

Coach Applebee came over to me, and he tapped me on the shoulder, and he said: “JOHN, it’s time to get on the bus. And, by the way, track starts next week.” He knew I wasn’t a big fan of track. Track wasn’t my favorite sport, but he was sending an important message. That message is: Look, you gave it your best shot. You gave it everything you had. There is always another sport, another day, and you will have another opportunity down the road to do what you want to do.

So that was a really important message and very affirming to me at a time as a young athlete who felt not

only had I let myself down but I had let my teammates down as well. I will never forget that comment he made to me at that critical time in what was early, early in my sports career.

Well, I just remembered, too, later that year, his coming and pulling me out of class—I think it was an English class—to tell me that I had made the all-State basketball team’s first team. As he came out and kind of pointed at me and signaled this way, I thought, “Oh, no. What have I done now?” But we got out in the hallway, and he couldn’t have been more excited to share that news. It was an example, again, of how invested he was in the success of the players he coached and the people—the young kids—around him. He was also the principal of the high school and wanted to see them succeed and do well in life.

Well, of course, track season was the next season. In my hometown, oftentimes, we had, you know, a lot of snow in the winter, and sometimes it didn’t get dried up in the spring or if we had a wet spring, for that matter—the track where we ran was a dirt track. It was north of town, and it was a fairly low spot. So, oftentimes, the track was wet. To do our conditioning, particularly early in the season, we would run city blocks. A block would be like the equivalent of about a 400 repeat, and we would run a series of those. We would do our long warmup runs, and we would run city blocks.

The other thing we would do is we would go down to the airport south of town. The airport south of town has a little landing strip, and it is about a half a mile long. My colleague Senator ROUNDS here has probably flown into it. He is a pilot. But we would run down. There was about 2.2 miles to get down there, so that was kind of our warmup run, and then we would do our workouts on the airport runway. We would all line up at one end of the runway, and Coach Applebee would be down at the other end of the runway. If you have ever seen a half mile along a straightaway, he looked like this little figure down there. And we would all line up, and sometimes you could even inch forward a little bit because he couldn’t see you—he was so far away—but he always knew what you were up to, and you could hear him. Even then, you could hear him.

I remember, later that year, running at the State track meet in Sioux Falls, which is a lot larger outdoor place that we ran, and Howard Wood Field in Sioux Falls seats somewhere on the order of 12,000 people, but even in a crowded outdoor arena, you could hear his voice up in the crowd. It was unmistakable. He was always barking something out—in many cases, admonishing you to do better, to run harder, to be more successful.

So I am just grateful for the impact that he had on my life, and as I think about the admonition from him of “track starts next week,” there is always another day. We have to get up

and do our work and make sure that we are doing the best that we can to accomplish our work here on behalf of the American people.

So those are the lessons that I have taken with me: Accept your losses, and get to work on the next thing. It is one of the many lessons that has stuck with me from Coach Applebee. I am going to miss seeing Coach Applebee on my visits to Murdo, and I remain deeply grateful for everything he taught me along the way. And I want his family to know my thoughts and prayers are with them, with his loved ones.

And I will just say: Rest in peace, Coach Applebee.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate majority leader.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 5

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 5) to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to take into custody aliens who have been charged in the United States with theft, and for other purposes.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for a second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2025

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that upon dissolution of the joint session today, the Senate stand adjourned until 11 a.m. on Tuesday, January 7; that following the prayer and 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 the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate Democratic leader is recognized.

JANUARY 6

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, 4 years ago today, I stood on this very spot, alongside my colleagues, as we prepared to certify the 2020 election. As