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

Let us pray.

O mighty God, teach us the mystery of life. Help us not to be victims but victorious in the living of our days. Lord, lead us to a place of understanding in spite of sorrow, pain, and setbacks. Make us more than conquerors because You love us. Today, instruct our lawmakers as they seek to be guided by honesty. May they perform their daily tasks following Your priorities. Show them Your truth so that they will be instruments of Your purposes when their light of hope is threatened. Renew them with faith in Your providence and power. We pray in Your omniscient 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 PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). 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 pro-

ceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of David Fotouhi, of Virginia, to be Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, last week, Secretary Noem ended a program that is called the Quiet Skies Program. It is a program that was well-intended when it was set up, but the Biden administration weaponized it to target its opposition, including the now-Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard.

Quiet Skies was supposed to track American airline travelers who had prior contact with known or suspected terrorists.

You can have no argument with that intent to make sure that air travel is safe, but instead it has been revealed that the Biden administration's Transportation Security Administration allegedly tracked U.S. citizens based upon nine nonsecurity-related considerations.

As just one example, whistleblowers told my office, some who were merely present at a rally on January 6, 2021, with President Trump were added to the Quiet Skies' list of targeting.

In another allegation, a woman was accused of invading the Capitol on January 6 and later added to the Quiet Skies. The woman was disabled and couldn't physically engage in those actions.

Now, fortunately, Secretary Noem shut down Quiet Skies to end this weaponization, and that should be music to everybody's ears.

In August 2024, I wrote to Biden's Transportation Security Administration questioning their abuse of this authority under this Quiet Skies Program. I did not get sufficient answers from the previous administration.

I will continue my oversight to learn the full truth about the Quiet Skies Program, and I appreciate Secretary Noem and Director Gabbard's leadership as my office works with them on the oversight request.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. President, I would like to discuss a long-running oversight project of mine. In particular, during the last two Congresses, my oversight showed many ways that the Biden administration failed to protect unaccompanied alien children.

We all know that the previous HHS and the Department of Homeland Security lost track of hundreds of thousands of these kids. This is a crisis of their own making. They rushed, as we saw on television almost every night over the last few years—rushed people across the border too quickly to deal with the resulting chaos.

My oversight has shown other failures. I released documents showing that the Biden Health and Human Services placed kids in a household tied to the violent MS-13 gang and punished the whistleblowers who reported it.

I have shown HHS failed to give information to law enforcement, placing kids at greater risk of labor and sex trafficking. This oversight was confirmed by a DHS inspector general report in March.

My oversight continues to reveal the previous administration's either deliberate indifference or downright incompetence.

Recently, I released records showing that the Biden HHS also failed to address a backlog of over 65,000 reports expressing concern for unaccompanied children.

This included 7,346 reports related to trafficking. At the same time as the Biden administration was busy targeting pro-life Americans, parents at school board meetings, and traditional Catholics, it failed to follow up on actual reporting of children in danger.

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



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The Trump administration is cleaning up this mess. Secretary of HHS Kennedy has already worked through about a third of this backlog. Three dozen cases have been accepted by the U.S. attorneys for prosecution, with 11 arrests and 3 convictions. Much more is needed, but this is a great first step.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative 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 majority leader is recognized.

ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, work on reconciliation continues apace. We are getting very close to the final bill.

Since I spoke on the floor on this topic last week, two more committees have released their sections of the bill text, the Banking Committee under the leadership of Chairman TIM SCOTT and the Commerce Committee under the leadership of Chairman TED CRUZ.

The Commerce Committee text released on Thursday addresses multiple bill priorities, including border security, savings, and the economy. On the economy front, the Commerce section of the bill focuses on boosting growth and investment by renewing spectrum auction authority and freeing up spectrum currently held by Federal Agencies.

The United States has been a leader in the next-generation telecommunications services like 5G and advanced Wi-Fi, and we are on track to be a leader in 6G as well. That is going to require both an increase in the amount of spectrum available to the private sector and using that spectrum as efficiently as possible through AI and other technologies.

Our bill will help meet that need for spectrum and help produce thousands of new jobs and billions of investment as a result, to say nothing of faster and more affordable internet for Americans.

This has been a long time coming.

I am grateful to Chairman CRUZ and colleagues from the Armed Services and Intel Committees for their continued work to find a way to get this done that preserves key national security interests and delivers a win for the American people.

On the border and national security front, the Commerce text addresses a key aspect of our domestic security: a strong Coast Guard. The Coast Guard secures our ports and waterways, provides support to American vessels in need, and plays a crucial role in enforcing maritime and immigration law and conducting drug interdictions.

Our final bill will make a substantial and sorely needed investment in the Coast Guard, including funding for des-

perately needed new ships and aircraft and maintenance of Coast Guard facilities.

Along with promoting safety of the seas, the Commerce text focuses on safety in the skies with a significant investment in fixing and updating our air traffic control system. The Commerce text also eliminates wasteful and unnecessary spending, which is the key focus of our bill.

So that was Thursday.

On Friday, the Banking Committee released its portion of the bill text, and eliminating unnecessary spending took center stage. Chairman SCOTT and Banking Committee Republicans pored over Federal programs to identify waste, duplication, and inefficiency and identified billions in savings. That includes eliminating the duplicative Office of Financial Research, transferring the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board's duties to the Securities and Exchange Commission to reduce duplication and lower costs, and postponing the implementation of duplicative small business lending data reporting requirements.

The Banking Committee's text also conserves taxpayer dollars by returning unused and unobligated funds to the Treasury. On the national security front, it authorizes \$1 billion for the Defense Production Act to boost domestic production of key national security needs.

I am grateful for the hard work of Chairman SCOTT, Chairman CRUZ, and for the hard work of all the members, both on and off the committees, who contributed to the Commerce and Banking text.

We have several more committees delivering texts this week, including border security language from the Judiciary Committee and energy language from the Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

Our final bill is rapidly taking shape. I am looking forward to considering it on the floor in the very near future. Republicans promised to build a stronger, safer, and more prosperous America, and we are going to deliver.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative 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 Democratic leader is recognized.

LOS ANGELES PROTESTS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, from the moment Donald Trump entered the public sphere, he has thrived on division and diversion. He fans the flames of chaos, then pretends to be the firefighter—always looking for someone else to blame for the infernos he helps ignite—all in an attempt to divert Americans away from his many failures.

Now Donald Trump, cornered by his own failures from pushing a heartless bill that would rip healthcare away from 16 million Americans and raise costs from his reckless tariffs war, to waging war with Elon Musk—Trump is desperately seeking a distraction. His order to deploy the National Guard and Marines—our own troops on Americans—is not just outrageous and provocative; it is a dangerous authoritarian overreach that threatens the very fabric of our democracy. This isn't leadership; it is provocation.

To be very clear, violent protest is not the answer for achieving the work of justice—full stop. Protests must remain peaceful, and law and order must be maintained, but let me emphasize: Deploying federalized troops without a State's consent hasn't happened in over 60 years, and when it did, it was to protect civil rights heroes who were marching for justice in Selma, AL. That moment was about progress. This one is about power and intimidation.

We must all stand up and say loud and clear: America will not be bullied into submission by a President who confuses strength with force and democracy with domination.

Americans don't deserve more fear, more division, more chaos. The President is using the military not to protect the people but to silence them. He is playing politics with the lives of our troops and the safety of our citizens. It is shameful. It is unlawful. It is deeply un-American. Once again, President Trump is choosing chaos over competence and division over democracy.

We must all stand up and say loud and clear: America will not be bullied into submission by a President who confuses strength with force and democracy with domination.

The only consequence of Donald Trump's order of sending troops to Los Angeles is chaos, and Americans don't like it. Instead of deescalating, Donald Trump is pouring fuel into a fire, hoping for an explosion to distract from what he is really doing. President Trump should call back the National Guard and the Marines immediately and leave the work of law enforcement to the Governor and the mayor who are more than capable of keeping order without escalation.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Finally, Mr. President, let me repeat: As Donald Trump orders troops to Los Angeles, he is working here in Washington to steal healthcare from tens of millions of Americans. He is pushing a billionaire tax cut that will explode the debt and sink America's economic future. He is letting DOGE run Social Security to the ground. He is spiking costs for everyday Americans through his reckless tariffs war, and Donald Trump hopes that nobody is paying attention.

ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL

Mr. President, on reconciliation, Republicans continue their tortured effort to ram Donald Trump's "Big Ugly Betrayal" through Congress. In the