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Senate

The Senate met at 4:30 p.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.

God most high, Your faithfulness endures through all generations. Hear our prayer. You desire truth and justice, and You are true to Your promises. You promised Your children in Isaiah 54:17 that no weapon formed against them will prosper.

Lord, let Your presence be felt today on Capitol Hill. Open the hearts of our lawmakers to Your guidance, as You empower them to serve with faithfulness. Dwell in them and those who support their work, making them fruitful for the glory of Your Name. May they hear Your call to rise and follow where You lead, as You inspire them to be obedient to Your perfect will. Give them patience with those who oppose them, and may they trust in Your perfect love, which never fails.

We pray in Your mighty 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 (Mrs. BRITT). 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, with

Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Iowa.

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTIONS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, recently, we witnessed China peddling false claims as it continues to try and convince the United States that China is a good partner. China has recently claimed that “the Chinese always honor and deliver what has been promised.” What China asserted is nonsense. Nobody ought to believe that the promises made are honored.

So I want to give you one example: intercountry adoptions.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, China “temporarily” restricted travel into the country, which stalled hundreds of families from completing their adoptions. Today, the families I mentioned continue to be separated from their adoptive child in China or are learning that the child they have been matched with for many years has been rematched with a different family in China. The latter is the case for the Robinson family of Iowa.

Does that sound like China always honors and delivers what it promises? I think not.

In September of last year, I wrote to the Chinese Ambassador to the United States, outlining my concerns about China’s termination of its intercountry adoption program and urged China to not go back on its promises, but, instead, allow for matched adoptions to finally be completed. That has not happened.

It is a positive development that Chinese families have a stronger will and capacity to adopt orphans within their own country. Children having a safe and loving home is always a good thing. But my point of contention is that China left American families in the dark and didn’t engage in good faith. American families were not given the same opportunity as families

from other countries to be united with their children. Real commitments were made, and they were dismissed. This brought disruption to families and needlessly left children orphaned.

Again, I suggest China doesn’t honor its commitments, and I pray that the hearts of Chinese leaders experience a transformation.

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. Madam 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.

IRAN

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, before I begin my remarks this afternoon, I want to speak briefly about Iran.

For decades, the regime in Iran and its terrorist proxies have sought to sow chaos and violence throughout the Middle East. They threatened “Death to America” and to wipe Israel off the map. All the while, the mullahs have pursued a nuclear enrichment program that goes well beyond what is required for peaceful energy purposes.

Madam President, Iran can never be allowed to have a nuclear weapon. This has been the position of President Trump and Members of this body for years.

Since his reelection, President Trump made clear that a peaceful resolution was possible if Iran agreed to give up its nuclear weapons ambitions. Iran’s leaders refused.

As a result, on Saturday, the President ordered precise and limited

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



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strikes to go after Iran's nuclear program, consistent with this long-held national security imperative. I am grateful for the professionalism of all of our servicemembers in carrying out this important mission.

Just a few hours ago, Iran launched an attack against our servicemembers in Qatar and Iraq. President Trump has been clear that he is not afraid to hold Iran accountable for any retaliation, and Iran risks going down a dangerous road with these attacks.

Nevertheless, I am glad that the initial reports indicate that no Americans were killed in these strikes. If Iran is considering any further attacks against U.S. forces or interests, it should think long and hard about the consequences.

I look forward to hearing from the administration during tomorrow's all-Senators briefing.

ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, we are getting closer to passing a bill that will help make America stronger and more prosperous—a bill that will ensure that working families can keep more of their hard-earned money; that will help small businesses grow and create jobs, strengthen America's farms and ranches, rebuild our military, secure our border, and, of course, unleash American energy. This bill is great news for our entire country, for Americans from every place and walk of life.

But, today, I want to talk about how this bill will help make my home State of South Dakota stronger and more prosperous. That starts with making tax relief permanent.

In 2017, the Republican-led Tax Cuts and Jobs Act meant lower tax bills for South Dakotans. That bill lowered tax rates for every income bracket, doubled the child tax credit, and nearly doubled the standard deduction. But those tax policies are set to expire this year, if Congress doesn't act, which would mean an average South Dakotan would see a \$2,500 tax hike next year.

We are not going to let that happen. Our bill will extend the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act's lower tax rates. It will extend the doubled child tax credit. It will extend the nearly doubled standard deduction.

But not just extend them; make them permanent so that no hard-working American has to worry about a looming tax hike again, a few years down the road.

I said we are going to make the \$2,000 child tax credit permanent, but we are actually going to go further by increasing the tax credit by another \$200. Under the Republicans' bill, the child tax credit will now be \$2,200 per child, permanently.

We are also delivering on a number of the President's campaign promises that will provide further relief to hard-working Americans. Under our bill, seniors will be able to reduce their

taxes further with a \$6,000 boost to their standard deduction. Police officers, firefighters, and hourly workers won't have to pay tax on their overtime pay. Waitresses and busboys will benefit with no tax on tips. And the next generation will be able to access new investment accounts, as adults, that they can use for their education, to buy their first home, to start a business—in short, to get a running start on their American dream.

I could go on, but the bottom line is this: a bigger bottom line for hard-working Americans for the long term, more money in their paychecks, more opportunity, and a brighter future ahead.

Madam President, the 2017 tax reform also helped grow our economy by lifting the tax burden on American businesses. Small businesses, farms, and ranches all benefited from lower tax rates and investment incentives. Tax reform freed up cash that business owners could use to invest in their operations and their workers. And South Dakotans saw those benefits on Main Street and on the farms and ranches that are the lifeblood of our State.

Now Republicans are poised to make many of those reforms permanent. That includes investment incentives, like full expensing for new equipment and for domestic research and development.

It includes the job-creating 199A small business deduction.

It includes raising the death tax exemption to \$15 million and linking it to inflation, meaning countless family farms, ranches, and small businesses will be spared the threat of this fundamentally flawed tax and the headaches that come with trying to plan for it.

And, speaking of farms and ranches, in addition to providing farmers and ranchers with tax relief, our bill updates the farm safety net to address some of the challenges farmers and ranchers have been facing.

It increases reference prices for every covered commodity, and it makes these prices more responsive to market conditions in the coming years. It increases crop insurance coverage and affordability, including for farmers just starting out. It supports livestock producers by making existing programs more responsive to drought and by funding the prevention of animal diseases that can devastate livestock. It invests in critical conservation programs, including programs that support South Dakota's wild bird populations, and it supports a bright future for agriculture by funding grants for research at agriculture research institutions and promoting trade for commodities in foreign markets.

America's farmers and ranchers have faced some serious challenges in recent years—some of the toughest, in fact, in recent memory. I am proud that we are addressing their needs in this bill, and I can assure America's ag producers that their priorities will continue to be a priority here in Washington.

There is a lot more I could say about this bill and how it will help South Dakota and our entire country, but before I close, I want to focus on how it will make America more secure.

It makes a downpayment on strengthening our military by investing in the equipment our men and women in uniform need to keep America safe amid today's threats and tomorrow's. That includes expediting the production of the new B-21 long-range strategic bomber, the future backbone of the Air Force's bomber fleet. In the coming years, the B-21 will operate from several locations, including South Dakota's Ellsworth Air Force Base, and it is emblematic of the type of investments this bill is making in our military's future.

This bill also makes a significant investment in our border security, including finishing the border wall.

And, last but not least, it unleashes American energy. It reverses course from the Biden administration's hostility to responsible conventional energy production, and it will help guarantee a secure, stable, and affordable energy supply for American families and businesses and for our national security.

A safer, stronger, and more prosperous America is within reach. We have made a lot of progress on this bill, and it is almost time to vote. I am looking forward to finishing our work and getting these policies in place for the benefit of South Dakota and of our entire country.

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. Madam 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.

IRAN

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, earlier today, we received reports that Iran has targeted U.S. military bases and U.S. servicemembers in the Middle East, putting the lives of thousands of Americans at immediate risk. I join Americans in praying for their safety.

This afternoon, I asked the Trump administration to immediately provide a classified briefing, laying out the full threat picture, the intelligence behind Iran's retaliation, and the detailed scope and timeline of any U.S. response. More importantly, I demanded they lay out exactly what measures they are taking right now to keep our servicemembers safe.

As I said Saturday night, Congress and the American people are owed answers. No President should be allowed