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Senate

The Senate met at 2:15 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.

Eternal God, the author and finisher of our faith, inspire us to rejoice in the privileges and blessings You have strewn on our pathway. Help us to use the gift of Sacred Scripture as a lamp to guide us through the darkness of challenging times. May we use the gift of intercessory prayer as a key to unlock Heaven's storehouse in order to provide blessings for those who are going through many dangers, toils, and snares.

Lord, in hours of hardship, permit us to use the gift of Your Spirit to enable us to be protected by You from disappointments and self-pity. Infuse our Senators with Your love. Give them a compassion that will prompt them to work for the eradication of injustice and evil in our world.

And Lord, be with our illustrious page class as they leave us in 3 days.

We pray in Your sovereign 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.

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 and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Daniel Zimmerman, of North Carolina, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

MEDICAID WORK REQUIREMENTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, having a job gives individuals purpose and dignity. We should promote policies lifting people out of poverty.

In the 1990s, we passed welfare reform with a Republican Congress and a Democrat President. The results? Welfare rolls went down, poverty rates decreased, and employment and earnings increased.

Establishing work requirements in Medicaid for able-bodied adults with reasonable exemptions, then from the previous precedent of welfare reform—that all makes common sense yet today.

States like Iowa are already leading the way in establishing work requirements for able-bodied adults in Medicaid. Iowa's Governor Reynolds has said:

If you are an able-bodied adult who can work, you should work.

We are doing the same thing at the national level.

Work requirements under the One Big Beautiful Bill only apply to able-bodied adults between the ages of 19 and 64. Individuals will have to complete a minimum of 80 hours of work a month, or about 20 hours a week, of qualifying community engagement activities like working, job training, going to school, volunteering, or a combination of all these.

We have reasonable exemptions for veterans with a disability rated as

total, individuals who are medically frail or otherwise have special medical needs, individuals who are blind, have a substance use disorder, a disabling mental disorder, a physical or intellect disability that significantly impairs their ability to perform one or more activities of daily living, or serious or complex medical conditions.

We also have exemptions for parents, guardians, and caretaker relatives of children aged 14 or under or disabled individuals and foster care youth through the age of 26.

We give "good cause" exemptions for short-term hardships like hospitalizations or for an individual receiving psychiatric care. Individuals impacted by a natural disaster, living in a high-unemployment area, or having to travel outside their community for an extended period of time to receive medical service would also be exempted.

States will obviously be required to establish streamlined processes and use reliable data, like payroll data, to avoid individuals submitting their own documentation. There will also be significant outreach and education to those who will be required to work.

Labor force participation data for prime-age men—25 to 54—indicates that between 1950 to 1970, less than 1 in 30 was out of the labor force. Now—maybe it shouldn't be surprising—since then, participation declined steadily, so that 1 in 30 figure is now 1 in 10. This represents nearly 7 million prime-age men absent from the workforce.

On top of this, recent research found that nonworking Medicaid recipients spend 6 hours a day on socializing, relaxing, TV, and video games. They spend 125 hours during a 30-day month watching TV and video games alone. That is more than 50 percent higher than the 80 hours they would be required to work in a month.

Commonsense Medicaid work requirements for able-bodied adults take the same approach as welfare reform did in the 1990s—move people from welfare to work and self-sufficiency. 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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contrary—being on government programs—is a life of poverty. If you want to get out of poverty, you have to be in the world of work, and that is what we are trying to accomplish through this legislation, just like we do work requirements for every other government program.

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. 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 majority leader is recognized.

ABORTION

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today marks the third anniversary of the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision, overturning Roe v. Wade and returning the question of abortion to the people and their elected representatives.

Three years on, there is much to celebrate. New protections for unborn Americans now exist in many States, and there are babies alive today who would not be here without Dobbs.

But today is also a reminder of how much work there is still to be done. Other States have enacted aggressively pro-abortion laws, and the pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute reports that there were over a million abortions in the United States in 2024. So we still have a lot of work to do to reach a day when every—every—American, born and unborn, enjoys the full protection of the law.

I am sure my Democrat colleagues have plans to commemorate the Dobbs anniversary, not as a day that opened the door to protections for human rights but as a day that opened the door to restrictions on Democrats' most cherished "freedom," and that is the freedom to kill unborn human beings.

I have to say, it is a pretty grim indictment of the moral health of a party when one of its signature issues is promoting the right to kill the youngest and most vulnerable Americans.

As I said, there is still a lot of work to be done, but I am confident that we can get there. I look forward to the day when the life of every American, born and unborn, is protected and when being small and vulnerable does not mean that your human rights are any less respected.

ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL

Madam President, we are rapidly approaching floor consideration of our reconciliation bill and the opportunity to make a historic investment in our Nation's security. I think it is difficult to overstate the opportunity that we have here with this bill. With just a single piece of legislation, we have a chance to undo a lot of damage and put our country on a safer footing going forward.

I often say that if we don't get national security right, the rest is conversation. Everything else we do in government—and our very existence as a nation, I might add—depends on getting our security right. But the disturbing fact is that we have let our readiness slip—to a very troubling level in some instances.

With China beginning to outpace the United States in key defense capabilities and manufacturing, it is especially critical that we act now to prevent the United States from falling behind on the national security front.

Enter our reconciliation bill. While it is no substitute for robust, yearly defense funding, the legislation takes a major step forward in upgrading and updating our national security posture. It invests in shipbuilding, missile defense, defense manufacturing capacity, critical munitions, drones and counter-drone technology, an expanded Air Force fighter fleet, nuclear modernization, U.S. infrastructure in the Pacific, and more.

The past few years have provided an ample reminder that we live in a dangerous world. With this bill, we can put our military—and, thus, our national security—in a much better place going forward, substantially improving our ability to deter and defeat threats.

Madam President, the national defense provisions of our bill alone would make a notable and critically important piece of legislation. But our bill doesn't just make a substantial investment in our national defense. It also makes a generational investment in our border security, which is another key part of protecting our Nation.

Criminals, terrorists, and other dangerous individuals can take advantage of unsecured borders to make their way into our country and take up residence unseen. Iran's recent warning about terrorist sleeper cells in the United States is a timely reminder that there are a lot of hostile nations out there that would like to harm the United States. In the absence of the ability to strike the U.S. mainland via military methods, what better way to harm our country than by smuggling dangerous individuals through our borders to carry out a task. It is a very real danger.

So border security is a key part of national security, and our reconciliation bill makes a generational investment in border security: funding for barriers and technology to secure the border, funding for more Border Patrol agents, funding for more Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents to deport dangerous individuals who have already made their way into the United States. It is all there and more. As with the national defense components, the border security components of this bill would be an impressive piece of legislation by themselves, but we have an amazing opportunity to do them both.

And they are paired with still another security investment, this one in

our energy security. Energy security doesn't always get the same attention as border security and national defense, but it, too, plays a key role in keeping our Nation secure. As European countries discovered, to their cost, after Russia invaded Ukraine, relying on energy from hostile countries or unstable regions of the world is not a winning proposition. The best way to keep a country—and an economy—secure is to have a secure, stable, and abundant domestic energy supply. The United States is fortunate to have abundant domestic energy resources, but the Biden administration set us up for a future of limited domestic production by sharply curtailing access to those resources. Our bill will undo a lot of that damage and free up energy resources for responsible domestic production.

We have an incredible opportunity with this legislation, a seldom-seen chance to make a real difference to our national security—from military to border, to energy. I am grateful to all those who have worked so hard to develop these portions of the bill, and I look forward to passing this legislation in the very near future.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the order of June 23, the Senate not recess from 4 to 5 p.m. today.

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

Mr. THUNE. I yield the floor.

VOTE ON ZIMMERMAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Zimmerman nomination?

Mr. MARSHALL. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BANKS).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGOS), and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 61, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 323 Ex.]

YEAS—61

Barrasso	Curtis	Johnson
Blackburn	Daines	Justice
Boozman	Ernst	Kaine
Britt	Fetterman	Kelly
Budd	Fischer	Kennedy
Capito	Graham	King
Cassidy	Grassley	Lankford
Collins	Hagerty	Lee
Cornyn	Hassan	Lummis
Cotton	Hawley	Marshall
Cramer	Hoeven	McConnell
Crapo	Husted	McCormick
Cruz	Hyde-Smith	Moody