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Senate

(Legislative day of Tuesday, June 24, 2025)

The Senate met at 3:30 p.m., on the expiration of the recess, 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.
Immortal, invisible, God only wise.
Lord, You have promised in Your Word that "in all labor there is profit." Give our lawmakers today the profit of wise decisions that will bless our Nation and world. Help them to see that with many advisers, there is safety. Make each legislator determine to do what is right as You give him or her the ability to understand Your will and the courage to do Your bidding.

May our Senators stretch out their hands toward You, depending upon You to lead them to a safe harbor.

We pray in Your holy 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. BANKS). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

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 senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Paul Dabbar, of

New York, to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

VETERANS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today I want to bring attention to all of the selfless veterans that have served our country, especially those from my home State of Iowa.

Each and every veteran has put a piece of themselves towards the mission of protecting our Nation that we are blessed to live in, so it is tremendously important to commemorate and thank these veterans.

I want to give you one example of how that is done: the Honor Flights that take place at the World War II Memorial. The veterans that travel from across the country to here in Washington, DC, represent big cities, small towns, and rural areas. But what they all embody is deep courage, sacrifice, and humility. Honor Flights are just one small reflection of the gratitude that we have for these brave souls.

I hope that for visitors to our Nation's Capital who have the privilege to witness an Honor Flight, it may inspire deeper gratitude to all the veterans. This is what I found when, occasionally, I get an opportunity to go to the World War II Memorial to meet the veterans that have flown in from Iowa.

And many times, I had the occasion to see—when he was still alive—former Senator Bob Dole of Kansas, even in his weak condition being in a wheelchair, there to meet those same veterans from all over the country, not just from Iowa.

It is a priority for me to share their legacy with every new generation of Americans to foster a deeper appreciation for our Republic.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive 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

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, next year, if Congress fails to act, a typical family will face a \$1,700 tax hike. A typical family in South Dakota will face a \$2,500 tax hike. Republicans are determined to make sure that doesn't happen.

Later this week, we will consider our reconciliation bill that will prevent that tax hike by extending the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. I say "extend," but we are doing a lot more than just extending the 2017 tax cuts. We are making them permanent. In some cases, we are even improving on them.

Our 2017 tax relief legislation lowered tax rates for every income group. It doubled the child tax credit. It nearly doubled the standard deduction. The bill we are voting on this week will make all of that permanent, and it will go even further when it comes to the child tax credit, increasing it to \$2,200 per child and linking it to inflation—again, permanently.

We are not stopping there. Our bill suspends taxes on tips, boosting the income of millions of Americans who earn tip income. It suspends taxes on overtime pay for millions of American workers, meaning police officers, firefighters, nurses, and others will be able to keep more of what they earn when they spend long hours away from their families. And an increased standard deduction for seniors will allow them to reduce their tax burden even further. The American people have better uses for their hard-earned money than sending it to Uncle Sam. And this bill will permanently ensure Americans can keep more of what they earn.

• 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 other legacy of the 2017 tax cuts is how they boosted our economy by lifting the tax burden on America's job creators. We lowered tax rates for owners of small- and medium-sized businesses, farms and ranches. We made it easier for them to recover the cost of investing in their businesses, which, in turn, freed up cash for them to invest in their operations and their workers. These and other major reforms helped kick-start our economy.

And in the wake of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, our economy grew at a substantially better rate than projected. Real wages increased. Unemployment fell to a 50-year low. The poverty rate fell to the lowest level ever recorded. Business investment increased. Everywhere you looked, there was positive economic news.

Mr. President, we were able to make some of the business tax reforms permanent in 2017. And now we have an opportunity to make the rest of these pro-growth policies permanent. That includes lower rates for small- and medium-sized businesses, the job-creating 199A small business deduction, and full expensing for new equipment and for domestic research and development.

Once again, we are going beyond just making the 2017 tax relief permanent. We are setting our country up for a brighter future by further advancing a pro-opportunity, pro-growth Tax Code.

Our bill includes full expensing for new factories and factory improvements so we can expect to see more growth and more jobs for American workers and more goods made in America. It raises the death tax threshold to \$15 million and links it to inflation permanently, which will spare countless family farms, ranches, and small businesses from a potentially devastating tax and the headaches and expense of planning for it.

And an entire generation of Americans will be able to access new investment accounts when they reach adulthood that can be used toward their education, to start a business, to buy their first home, and to get a running start on the American dream.

Mr. President, this is a good bill. It is going to be great for our country. The Council of Economic Advisers, which accurately predicted the economic growth and higher wages in the wake of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, released its forecast of the Senate bill this morning. It contains a lot of good news, starting with as much as 4.9 percent higher GDP in the next few years. That means more jobs. It means bigger paychecks, as much as \$10,000 per year for a typical family. It means more opportunity. Believe it or not, it means more revenue, revenue that we bring in in the right way—by growing our economy—not by raising taxes. In fact, the same forecasters who got the effects of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act right are estimating as much as \$6 trillion in deficit reduction stemming from the bill's pro-growth policies.

Mr. President, we are well on our way to getting this bill passed this

week, which means we are well on our way to a stronger and more prosperous America. That means Americans keeping more of their hard-earned money; it means American businesses growing and investing in our country and our workers; and it means a thriving economy like we had before the pandemic.

Republicans are ready 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 executive 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 (Mr. SCHMITT). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

IRAN

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the Trump administration has failed miserably—miserably—in its responsibility to inform Congress about what is happening right now in the Middle East. Before the strikes, leaders in Congress got virtually no heads up. Then the administration delayed the briefing scheduled yesterday. It was scheduled a week ago. Now they are trying to get away with sending only the Secretary of State and Defense for tomorrow, instead of the usual intelligence officials that attend the briefings.

Let's be very clear: A briefing from only the Secretaries of State and Defense would be woefully insufficient. If they are the only ones in attendance, they will only parrot whatever the President wants them to say.

Sending intelligence officers to briefings in Congress is a longstanding bipartisan practice, and Congress is entitled, as the representatives of the American people, to hear from the administration about matters of national intelligence and national security.

Refusing Congress like this would be egregious, troubling, and a violation. It would make Americans wonder: Why would Donald Trump prefer to send two talking heads to meet with Congress instead of intelligence analysts and policymakers.

Intelligence officials have an obligation to seek the truth, to speak the truth. Perhaps that is why Donald Trump does not want to send the intelligence officials to talk to us. Maybe Donald Trump doesn't want Congress or even America to know the truth about what is going on.

We know there have been a lot of confusing reports—some from intelligence sources—over the last days, suggesting the strikes in Iran were not as successful as the President initially claimed. There may be questions about the accuracy of these reports. I have no idea if these reports are accurate.

And, today, the President said, earlier this morning, that “the intelligence was very inconclusive. The intelligence says we don't know.”

All of this only underscores the need to hear from intelligence analysts and to hear from them directly.

What is the administration hiding? Were the strikes successful? How much enriched uranium does Iran still have? How many months will it take them to make a nuclear device? Are they locating centrifuges in a new place, and what is our knowledge of that? Are our troops safe? Are Americans in the region safe? Is the conflict contained? What happens next? And how will the administration achieve the critical national priority of preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon?

Both parties, by and large, agree that Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon. I do. But if the President is misrepresenting the impact of our military strikes and these reports have some accuracy—we don't know if they do—and if the President is turning away from diplomacy with Iran, as his recent post suggested, then what the hell is going on? What is Donald Trump's plan?

We really don't know the answers to any of these critical questions. The administration refuses to be transparent. All we get are talking points and tweets. We know that Donald Trump makes things up, day to day, and then has to retract and turn around.

And tomorrow, all we are going to get are talking points from Rubio and Hegseth, because that is what we know they are trained to do.

On top of that, today, it was reported the administration may actually start limiting intelligence sharing with Congress. The administration should immediately undo this decision, if it is true.

Are they afraid of the truth? Do they want to hide the truth?

The intelligence Agencies are known to tell the truth. Is that why they are so afraid to get their information out—the information of the intelligence Agencies out?

As I said yesterday, the administration's stonewalling of Congress is outrageous, evasive, and derelict. The administration has no right to stonewall Congress on matters of national security. Senators deserve information, and the administration has a legal obligation to inform Congress precisely about what is happening right now abroad.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MEDICAID

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today because Republicans are making America safer and more prosperous, and, as part of that, we are strengthening Medicaid.

You know, I am a doctor. I practiced medicine in Wyoming for over 20 years,