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Senate

The Senate met at 3 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, we are grateful for Your mercies renewed each day and for Your faithfulness every night. As the dew refreshes the Earth morning by morning, let Your spirit restore the faith and energy of our lawmakers.

Lord, give them the discernment to understand the challenges of our times and the wisdom to devise ways to meet them. Keep them open and alert to Your providential leading as You guide them to a destination that will bring glory to Your Name.

May the collective talents of our Senators be mobilized in the awesome task of building a better Nation and world. Make their hands ready to lift burdens and their hearts eager to respond in service to humanity.

We pray in your great 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. CURTIS). 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.

HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to tell my colleagues and the public about a part of the Big Beautiful Bill that passed 2 weeks ago that isn't getting much attention.

I have been a longtime supporter of health savings accounts. They encourage responsible utilization of healthcare services by offering lower cost insurance and greater flexibility of care.

I am proud to have led the charge in the early 2000s to make health savings accounts accessible and a stronger option for Americans.

Today—would you believe it—over 30 million Americans have a health savings account with an average balance of more than \$3,000.

Senate Republicans, through the One Big Beautiful Bill, went a step further, strengthening health savings accounts. First, the bill allowed health savings accounts to work with direct primary care service arrangements.

Direct primary care is a membership-based model of care that lets patients choose a primary care provider of their choice and gain access to a suite of care options without needing to go through an insurance company's red-tape.

Doctors and providers, under this way, also benefit since they can spend more time with the patient rather than completing unnecessary paperwork. When patients have access to timely and high-quality primary care, they have better health outcomes and live longer.

Prior to the law change, there were rules preventing consumers from contributing to and using health savings accounts for direct primary care. Direct primary care will also improve rural healthcare by expanding access to physicians and other healthcare providers and also expanding access to

telehealth to reach patients in a more timely fashion.

We also allow individuals who have purchased a catastrophic or bronze health plan on the Federal marketplace to now contribute to and use a health savings account.

In addition, this will improve access and competition on the Federal marketplace, and that, we all know, is sorely needed.

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. 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, yesterday marked 6 months since President Trump took office, and today is the 200th day of the Republican majority here in the U.S. Senate.

In that time, the Trump administration and Senate Republicans have been hard at work executing the mandate we received from the American people last November. We already have a number of accomplishments on the list.

We got started by sending the Laken Riley Act to President Trump's desk during his first week in office to keep criminal illegal immigrants off our streets.

President Trump signed the HALT Fentanyl Act last Wednesday, which permanently classifies fentanyl analogs as the deadly drugs they are.

On Friday, he signed the GENIUS Act, the landmark bill to bring digital

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



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assets into the mainstream and secure U.S. leadership in financial innovation. And the first rescissions package in three decades is headed to the President for signature.

We have passed measures to end 16 burdensome Biden-era regulations. We passed the TAKE IT DOWN Act to combat nonconsensual explicit images being shared online.

And, of course, 2 weeks ago on the Fourth of July, the President signed into law the Big Beautiful Bill to deliver permanent tax relief to the American people to make our country safer, stronger, and more prosperous.

We have additional bills coming down the pike. The Armed Services Committee under Chairman WICKER recently reported the National Defense Authorization Act of fiscal year 2026, and the Appropriations Committee under Chair COLLINS has reported out four bipartisan bills, which we will begin considering this week.

I said last year that I was committed to bringing appropriations bills to the floor through regular order, and we are in the process of doing exactly that.

Of course, any regular order consideration of appropriations bills is going to require cooperation from Democrats. This week, we will get a glimpse of where Democrats are on this issue.

It was deeply disappointing the Democrat leader threatened to shut down the government if Republicans dared to pass legislation to trim just one-tenth of 1 percent of the Federal budget, but I am hopeful that is not the position of the Democratic Party.

Time will tell.

The Senate also has important work to do to confirm the President's nominees. We started out this year by confirming 21 of the President's Cabinet nominees at the fastest pace in more than two decades, and we have kept up our focus on getting President Trump's team into place.

We have now confirmed 96 civilian nominees, far outpacing where the Senate was at this point in the first Trump administration. And the only reason, frankly, that we are not moving faster is because of Democrats' historic—that is right historic—level of obstruction.

Democrats have been forcing cloture votes for every civilian nominee. Something that is without precedent. President Trump is the first President on record not to have a single civilian nominee go by unanimous consent or voice vote at this point in his Presidency. The first President on record. Think about that.

And Democrats are using this strategy even on noncontroversial nominees. Almost a quarter of the nominees whose confirmation process Democrats have dragged out actually got more than 60 votes here on the Senate floor.

The American people gave President Trump a mandate, and he deserves to have his team in place to execute that mandate for the American people. Democrats can continue to drag this process out, but Republicans are going to get these nominees confirmed.

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. 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

BUDGET

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today, we got the news that the Congressional Budget Office, the CBO, confirms Donald Trump's "Big Ugly Betrayal" is going to kick at least 10 million Americans off their health insurance and spike our national debt by another \$3.4 trillion. In truth, the number of people who will lose health insurance could be much higher—as many as 16 million when you account for the cuts to ACA and other forms of insurance.

This finalized, independent analysis from the CBO confirms it: Republicans' signature bill is the ultimate—the ultimate—betrayal of the American people. It betrays every single family who will lose health insurance. It betrays our financial future. It is betraying our children and grandchildren, who will pay for these billionaire tax breaks as the debt rises and rises. It betrays every family worried about paying for groceries, the mortgage, the rent, prescription drugs. All are going up because of Donald Trump and his administration. Every price is going up. It betrays every rural community from the benefits of good-paying energy jobs. Republicans' supposed signature bill betrays everyone outside of the billionaire class and the special interests.

Now, Republicans are going to spin the mother of all propaganda jobs to sell this ugly bill to the American people. But today's report reminds us of something: Facts are stubborn, and the facts are clear. The "Big Ugly Betrayal" is a loser for the country and a loser for the Republicans.

The Republicans can yak, yak, yak when they go back home. But when people lose their jobs, when people's bills go up, when they are paying more, when they are losing their health insurance, that is reality; and no amount of propaganda, no amount of going home and telling people how great this is will undo the actual damage that will be done to the American people. And we know—we know—that they will realize the Republicans have betrayed them.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. This week, the Senate is expected to take up the first set

of appropriation bills for fiscal year 2026.

On the substance, a number of the bills negotiated in committee make significant reversals of DOGE's horrible cuts. Of particular importance are the reversals these bills make to DOGE's cuts to veterans programs, which were so vicious and so mean and hurt so many veterans. And it also makes reversals on other important Democratic priorities.

We will see how Republican leaders plan to move forward with these bills and other bipartisan bills on the floor.

Yet, yesterday, the Republican leader gave an interview where he said he would like to see more bipartisanship when it comes to appropriations. He said, rightly, that it takes cooperation from both sides to move things through the Senate, in the appropriations bills.

But, frankly, the Republican leader is talking a bit out of both sides of his mouth. On the one hand, he talks about bipartisanship and wanting to see both parties come up with an appropriations process. On the other, he is putting on the floor rescission packages with cuts demanded by Donald Trump and Russell Vought that retract many of the bipartisan agreements, with the promise by Russell Vought of more to come.

When Donald Trump and Russell Vought insist on rescissions, and an obedient Republican Congress goes along—even though many of them know how wrong it is—it makes the spending process totally partisan.

The leader's words and his actions are a complete contradiction. He can't have it both ways.

Again, not 1 week ago, Republicans jammed a rescissions package through this Chamber, axing billions in bipartisan funding to public broadcasting and foreign aid, purely on a party-line vote. Less than a day later, Russell Vought comes out and says the appropriations process should be "less bipartisan."

Frankly, I don't want to hear Republicans grouse about Democrats if they are going to give people like Russell Vought a free pass to trash the good work that takes place in this Chamber.

And now, of course, there are reports that Donald Trump and Russell Vought want Congress to agree on another rescissions package in the near future.

Then, there is Donald Trump's "Big Ugly Betrayal"—a purely party-line vote, a partisan giveaway to billionaires and special interests—paid for with the biggest cuts to healthcare, food funding, and good-paying energy jobs we have seen in our lifetimes.

Leader THUNE says he wants to see bipartisanship. That is all well and good. But Leader THUNE can't have it both ways. If Leader THUNE wants to talk about bipartisanship, he should focus on keeping his side of the street clean first, because Donald Trump and Russell Vought have made clear they want to continue launching partisan broadsides that will inflict deep harm on the American people, raising costs,