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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 5, 2025, at 10 a.m.

Senate

SATURDAY, AUGUST 2, 2025

The Senate met at 9:30 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.

Eternal God, we have too long depended on our own strength. Though we talk of Your greatness and might, we too often seek to tackle life's challenges and problems by leaning upon our limited power and understanding. Remind us that every good and perfect gift comes from You and that we have no strength apart from You. In a world where evil seems so rampant, inspire our lawmakers to lead pure and unselfish lives that are worthy of Your Name. Lord, use them to create good will that will challenge the best in people and will usher in the reign of Your abiding peace. Draw them together in oneness, in diversity, unity, in patriotism, and loyalty in a shared commitment to You. We pray in Your wonderful 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 proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Andrew Puzder, of Tennessee, to be Representative of the United States of America to the European Union, with the Rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, once again, I am going to remind people that there was some wrong done by the U.S. Government between the periods of about 6 years ago to 10 years ago, and the taxpayers of this country might wonder why a Senator is bringing this stuff up. It involves government coverup. The public's business always ought to be public, and if there is government coverup, we need to make sure that the public knows about it and people in government know about it that might be wanting to cover up things today so they learn a lesson that I hope I can say that nobody is going to get away with wrongdoing if they are working for the U.S. Government.

So here I go on something that most people would consider history but has got a present-day purpose for doing. As part of my longstanding oversight of the FBI's discredited, "Crossfire Hurricane" investigation into President Trump, this week I made public a formerly classified document. Probably most of it shouldn't have been classified in the first place. That is the way the government does things to cover up.

The American people deserve to see the facts that the FBI previously buried. This document, known as the Durham Annex, contains intelligence suggesting Hillary Clinton's campaign fabricated the Trump-Russia narrative in 2016. But the FBI turned a blind eye to the evidence. In other words, it was used as a political weapon.

The American people deserve full transparency about the FBI's failure to investigate this intelligence and related records so that America's law enforcement Agencies and intelligence communities aren't weaponized again.

I am grateful to Attorney General Pam Bondi and FBI Director Kash Patel for working with me to totally bring this information to light, and it is just not those two people that President Trump has appointed but other people like Tulsi Gabbard, Director of National Intelligence, have done in other ways things that were buried by previous administrations that she is making public knowledge of. And I could say, very generally, that the Trump administration is better than any Republican or Democratic administration in the past of trying to get

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



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some of this wrongdoing out and declassifying stuff that shouldn't have been classified in the first place.

Now, what I have just told you is not the end of the story. There is a lot more to uncover, and you can expect more documents to be released from this Senator in the coming months. This is not a Republican issue, this is not a Democrat issue, this is an issue of the bureaucracy, in this case the FBI being used as a political weapon, covering up. In fact, some of these documents that I released, Director Patel told me, and I think he also told the public this, that they found some of this evidence in what the FBI would call a burn bag.

So we have got to make sure that this stuff doesn't happen again.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The 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.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, yesterday afternoon, we reached an agreement with Democrats on an appropriations package, and I am pleased to report that as of last night, we passed three of the fiscal year 2026 appropriations bills: Military Construction-Veterans Affairs, Legislative Branch, and Agriculture. Those are the three appropriations bills that we were able to pass last night.

I would say it is a very good start on appropriations, and a striking contrast, I might add, to last year when the Democrat leader failed to bring a single appropriations bill to the floor for a vote, notwithstanding the fact that 11 of the 12 passed out of the Appropriations Committee with big bipartisan margins.

And I want to thank Senate Appropriations Committee Chair COLLINS, as well as Senators HOEVEN, BOOZMAN, and MULLIN. I also want to thank Senator MORAN, who had done outstanding work on the Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill. And that would have passed last night had it not been for the opposition of a single Democrat Senator.

Thanks are due to all the members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, which has now reported out 8—8—of the 12 fiscal year 2026 appropriations bills.

The Senate is currently in its best place on appropriations in years, and I am grateful for all those who worked cooperatively and in good faith to make last night's votes happen. It is good to have the Senate back on a regular-order track on appropriations, and I will continue to work for a regular-order process as we continue, and I hope that Democrats will join us in that effort.

It was disturbing to hear the Democrat leader threaten to shut down the government in his July 8 "Dear Colleague" letter. And I hope—I really hope—the Democrats will not embrace that position but will continue to work with Republicans to fund the government.

As I said, we are in the best place we have been in years, but we have a lot of work to do. And I hope that we will be able to continue the good work we began last night with continued bipartisan cooperation.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, I wish I had more good news or better news to offer this morning on the nominations front. I wish I could say that we had also reached an agreement on a nominations package yesterday, but, unfortunately, the Democrats continue to engage in their historic obstruction.

[F]or decades, Democrats and Republicans have regularly cooperated to swiftly confirm the many, many individuals selected by each President to serve in their administration.

Regardless of the party in the White House, both sides have long agreed that a President deserves to have his or her Administration in place, quickly.

That doesn't mean we don't disagree. But it does mean when nominees are held up, opposed, or blocked—it's for a legitimate purpose, not for leverage in partisan games, to score political points at the expense of public safety.

Now let me repeat that last line:

But it does mean when nominees are held up, opposed, or blocked—it's for a legitimate purpose, not for leverage in partisan games, to score political points at the expense of public safety.

Now, interestingly enough, those last lines aren't mine. Those are the words of the Democrat leader just 3 short years ago. And I wish—I truly wish—it was the philosophy of the Democrat leader and his party still espoused today. But, instead, they have embraced a historic level of obstruction, slow-walking every single one of President Trump's civilian nominees, including—including—nominees who have ultimately received substantial Democrat support. That is the very definition of the partisan games the Democrat leader deplored just a few short years ago.

And so just to put a fine point on that, I want to show you where we are relative to history with regard to nominations.

As you can see going back to the Presidency of George H. W. Bush—41, as he is affectionately described—98 percent of all the nominees were confirmed either by voice vote or unanimous consent. That was also true of the Democrat President Bill Clinton. George W. Bush, 43, had 90 percent of his nominees confirmed either by voice vote or unanimous consent. And President Obama—so we went Republican back to Democrat—also had 90 percent of his nominees confirmed either by voice vote or unanimous consent.

Now, that started to drop off in the first Trump administration down to 65

percent. It dropped down to 57 percent during the Biden administration.

But what is really striking is here we are 6 months into—more than that really now—this current administration, and that right there, a big fat zero, is what the Democrats have allowed in terms of nominees either confirmed by voice vote or unanimous consent.

Now, under any circumstance, I understand there are strong disagreements with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle—don't like the President, all that; there is certainly that element—but this is historic and unprecedented obstruction when it comes to allowing someone who has been elected by the people of this country, in a fairly significant, I would argue, mandate, an election, to get their person in place to do the jobs that the American people elected that President—President Trump—to do. And so you cannot, under any circumstance, defend that.

Now, you can say—you know, we can argue, and these numbers are not moving in the right direction, which is why I would argue we have got to change the process by which we do this; otherwise we are going to continue to deteriorate to where any President who comes in here is going to be very, very hard-pressed to do the job the American people elected him to do.

But, really, that one right there, that big fat zero, sticks out in a very big and significant way.

And I wonder how Democrats' continued determination to slow-walk President Trump's nominees will play with the voters who, after all, as I said, elected President Trump with the thought that he would be able to fill up his administration.

Democrats need to get serious about agreeing to a nominations package to confirm a number of these outstanding nominations, and I would tell you—and they are well aware of this—that a lot of the nominees on the current backlog are nominees who have bipartisan support; in some cases, broad bipartisan support, multiple Democrats voting for these nominees coming out of the committee. There are a whole bunch of those that are backed up on this backlog.

And so I sincerely hope that they will change their tune and decide to work with this administration to make that happen; otherwise, I mean, I have said this before, and I think it is true. We are setting records around here for hours in session. We are setting records around here for number of votes cast—I mean, not by a little, by a lot—relative to previous Senates, and a lot of it has to do with that statistic I just pointed out.

It is time for that to change, and we are not asking a lot. We are just simply saying: Treat this President, at least on some level, in the way that previous Presidents, both Democrats and Republican Presidents, have been treated in the past by both Republican and Democrat Senates.