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## Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TED BUDD, a Senator from the State of North Carolina.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Lord, God, You are holy, and we daily experience the unfolding of Your prevailing providence. Lord, we are thankful that those who continue to seek You will eventually find You.

Help us to make You our choice and our source of hope as our lawmakers seek to serve You by making choices that honor You. Purify their intentions that they will say what they believe and will act consistent with their speech. Lord, keep them aware of how their thoughts, words, and deeds affect the good fortune of those in need. Sustain the hurting people in our Nation and world, carving tunnels of hope from mountains of despair.

We pray in Your invincible Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The senior assistant executive clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, September 8, 2025.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable TED BUDD, a Senator from the State of North Carolina, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. BUDD thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Edward L. Artau, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Florida.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

#### RULES CHANGE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President:

For 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.

Let me just repeat that.

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, none of those words are original to me. So far, I have simply been quoting the Democrat leader from back in 2022. But his words perfectly summarized the longstanding tradition of the Senate—a tradition that Democrats have destroyed this year.

As the Democrat leader correctly stated, "For decades, Democrats and Republicans have regularly cooperated to swiftly confirm the many, many individuals selected by each President to serve in their administration."

Now, on a practical level, that has looked like expediting individual nominees and blocks of nominees by using unanimous consent or voice vote, which is a way, as the Acting President pro tempore knows here in the Senate, of moving things along more quickly.

During President George H. W. Bush's 4 years in office and President Clinton's first 4 years, both Presidents had 98 percent of their civilian nominees—get this: 98 percent—confirmed through unanimous consent or voice vote. George W. Bush—President Bush—and President Obama both had 90 percent of their nominees confirmed by unanimous consent or voice vote in their first terms.

Then we get to President Trump's first administration. Democrats, upset at the President's election, introduced an unprecedented new level of partisanship into the historically bipartisan confirmation process, forcing time-consuming votes on civilian nominees who would once have gone by unanimous consent or by voice vote.

But even so, despite this new level of partisanship introduced by Democrats, both President Trump in his first term and President Biden had more than

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



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half of their nominees confirmed by unanimous consent or voice vote.

Well, fast-forward to today. President Trump has been in office for 8 months, and he has not had one single civilian nominee confirmed by unanimous consent or voice vote—not one. Democrats have dragged out the process of every single nominee, even on nominees they ended up voting for by large margins. It is Trump derangement syndrome on steroids. That is right—Trump derangement syndrome on steroids.

If this were a matter of historically bad nominees, as the Democrat leader tried to claim, the Democrats wouldn't be voting for a number of these nominees in committee or supporting them on final passage. No, this isn't about the quality of the candidates or any other substantive issue; this is simply the world's longest, most drawn-out temper tantrum over losing an election. Democrats can't stand the fact that President Trump was elected, and so they have destroyed decades upon decades of Senate precedent and turned a historically bipartisan process into an exercise in petty partisanship—an exercise in petty partisanship that is doing a profound disservice to the American people because, of course, Democrats' actions have consequences.

First and foremost, those consequences are delays in filling essential positions throughout the administration—in our government, the people's government. Empty desks do not help the government function, and unnecessary delays rob a duly elected President of the team he needs to carry out his responsibilities.

Dragging out confirmations also ties up the Senate floor. As the senior Senator from Minnesota said last year in what I would say were much less dire confirmation circumstances, “As the Senate spends more of its time working on nominations, this leaves less time for legislating on issues that are important to the American people.” Well, thanks to Democrats' historic obstruction, that is even more true today. We are, in fact, as the senior Democrat from Minnesota said, at risk of becoming a “full-time employment agency.”

This situation has become unsustainable. To clear the current backlog of nominees on the calendar and in committee, we would need to take another 600 votes before the end of the year. Now, let me just repeat that to put it into context. To clear the current backlog of nominees on the calendar and in committee, we would need to take another 600 votes. To put that number in perspective, that is more votes than this recordbreaking Senate has taken all year up until now. Again, that is just for nominations that have already been sent to Congress, not those that are going to be forwarded and that we are going to have to process additionally, on top of the 600 votes, between now and the end of the year. There literally are hundreds more nominations to come from the administration.

So if Democrats' obstruction continues, as Democrats have made abundantly clear that it will, there is no practical way that we can come close to filling all the vacancies in the 4 years of this administration no matter how many hours the Senate works.

So we have a crisis, and it is time to take steps to restore Senate precedent and codify in Senate rules what once was understood to be standard practice, and that is the Senate's acting expeditiously on Presidential nominations to allow a President to get his team into place. So this afternoon, I will be taking the necessary procedural steps to amend the rules. It is an idea, as I said earlier, with a Democrat pedigree. The senior Democrat Senator from Minnesota, along with her colleague in the Democratic caucus, the junior Senator from Maine, made a similar proposal in 2023, which would have codified in Senate rules the long-time Senate precedent of en bloc nominations, of moving nominations in groups.

Our measure is not as extensive as that of my Democrat colleagues. It only applies to nominees at the sub-Cabinet level and not to article III judicial nominees, as theirs did. But the proposals share the same objective, and that is providing for confirming groups of nominees altogether so the President can have his team in place and so the Senate can focus on the important legislative work in its charge or, to quote the senior Democrat from Minnesota on her very similar proposal, “This commonsense reform will help improve efficiency and make sure we're able to fill positions that are vital to our national security, economic success, and more.”

Eight months of petty partisanship is long enough. This Senate has cast more votes up to this point than any Senate going back to the 1980s. We have been in more hours than any Senate going back a couple of decades.

This historic obstruction ends now. Democrats have destroyed Senate precedent, and we are going to fix it—fix it and ensure that in the future, duly elected Presidents of both parties are able to get their teams in place without unnecessary delay so that they can fulfill their responsibilities to the American people.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on Friday, we learned the U.S. economy added only 22,000 jobs for the month of

August, a paltry number, an abysmal number, worse than even the already low expectations. Donald Trump has steered our economy straight into an iceberg, and the “SS Trump” is sinking before our eyes.

And I warned my Republican colleagues: The longer you remain aboard, the greater the danger you face of sinking with the ship—because if one thing is certain, it is that the American people don't want to be paying more for things as simple as coffee and beef, fruits, vegetables. They don't want to see their electric bills go up. They don't want to see their rent go up. And they don't want to see it harder to find a job. But that is exactly—exactly—what is happening right now. Senate Republicans remain on board this ship, the “SS Trump,” at their own peril. It is sinking.

And Republicans know perfectly well what Donald Trump is doing is without precedent. Oh, their favorite comeback is: Well, that is what the American people voted for. They shrug their shoulders; they can't do anything about it.

Well, that is nonsense. This summer, big American companies—Walmart, Target, Best Buy, Ace Hardware, and so many others—have said they are raising prices or that costs will go up because of the tariffs. Americans didn't vote for that. Oh, no. Americans are about to see their health insurance go up by the highest amount in 15 years. Do you think they voted for that? No. They didn't vote for more Americans to get sick, although that is what the Trump healthcare plan will do. They didn't vote for more Americans to die, and that will happen as a result of this Big Beautiful Bill.

Americans sure didn't vote for any of that. Americans want us to pass legislation that lowers healthcare costs, expands people's coverage. They do not want us to vote to boot millions off their health insurance. They do not want the closing of hospitals, particularly in rural areas where the hospitals don't have much cushion. They don't want the laying off of doctors and nurses and healthcare workers so they get less good coverage and it takes much longer to get it. Americans didn't vote for that, but that is what happened.

And here is what the data shows: Americans are fed up with Trump. NBC News Decision Desk Poll, September 7: 57 percent disapprove of Donald Trump's job performance, 43 percent approve; 60 percent believe America, under his leadership, is on the wrong track; 61 percent disapprove of the way he is handling inflation. CBS News, September 3 to 5: 56 percent disapprove of Donald Trump's job performance; 62 percent oppose new U.S. tariffs on imported goods.

So it is no wonder that Democrats are winning in State special elections, even in districts that Trump previously won by as many as 10 points, from one end of the country to the other. These