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## Senate

The Senate met at 11:30 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.

God of might and mercy, thank You for providing our lawmakers with opportunities for courageous and noble service.

On this third day of the government shutdown, inspire them to work for Your glory in all they think, say, and do. Lord, take their minds and illuminate them with the light of Your divine presence. Equip our Senators for their tasks, that they may be physically fit, mentally alert, and spiritually strong. Create in them the life of purity, honesty, and altruism that contributes to the solution of the problems they face. May they work with perseverance and magnanimity for the new and better day toward which Your divine intentions guide them.

We pray in Your omnipotent 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.

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

#### EN BLOC NOMINATIONS—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of S. Res. 412, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

An executive resolution (S. Res. 412) authorizing the en bloc consideration in Executive Session of certain nominations on the Executive Calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, for the third day, we heard an opening prayer of the Chaplain praying that the government will open up and we in Congress would find a solution to keep the government open. That will help the 750,000 executive branch employees who are on furlough without pay; that will help the congressional staff who are working without pay, help the economy—something we should be doing.

You have heard me say several times how ridiculous it is to shut the government down because it costs money to shut the government down. It costs money to open the government up. The government is supposed to be a service to the American people, and you can't serve the American people if the government is not functioning properly.

#### AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

Mr. President, again, for the third time this week, I want to talk about the agricultural situation.

This week, I have been talking much about the dire situation in real America, where corn farmers are facing the worst corn-to-fertilizer ratios in American history.

You may not have heard about those ratios. Probably that is something that has been developed within the last two decades. But it puts the input costs of

farmers to grow a crop against the price that they receive for that crop, and it is the worst ever.

I mentioned the real America because we who are serving here in Washington, DC, work in an island surrounded by reality, and I want to make sure that the entire country knows what is going on in flyover country.

The last Congress—that would be in December of last year—passed \$10 billion in ad hoc appropriations for crop farmers to weather the economic storm. While this helped some farmers get through one more year, the economic situation on the family farm has only gotten worse.

Any farmer will tell you that they want to sell into the market and not harvest government checks; although, those checks may be necessary again this year.

We need to address the root cause of this issue by giving farmers more markets, so one very important decision that Congress can make is to have permanent year-round, nationwide E15. That would do just that, giving farmers more markets, particularly for corn.

People would say: Well, you better wake up because you have had nationwide year-round markets for 6 years through a Presidential waiver. But we need to have this by legislation because we need more certainty than what an individual President might think about this issue. And you need that certainty because it is going to take a lot of investment of infrastructure and retailers selling gasoline to invest in the equipment that it takes to have E15 nationwide. Some retailers are already doing that but not enough to have all the sales from E15 that we could have.

According to research, E15 would add \$25.8 billion to the U.S. economy, and \$13.8 billion would be from corn demand. Of course, ethanol production helps keep good jobs in rural communities—43,000 jobs in Iowa alone.

Not only would it create markets for farmers, but Congress could pass year-

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



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round E15 and save—actually save—\$3 billion to \$4 billion for the American taxpayer. This is a win-win for the real America, and it would be a real win for where we work here in Washington, DC, that island surrounded by reality.

Any legislation with ad hoc payments to farmers should include allowing year-round, nationwide E15; bring certainty to the market; get that investment in infrastructure that is so very, very important to get the most massive benefits out of E15 year-round.

These ad hoc payments are nothing but a bandaid. We better stop what is causing the bleeding.

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.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it has been 2 weeks since our first vote on a clean continuing resolution to keep the government open. This shutdown could have been avoided well before it began. But because Democrats have not budged from their partisan demands, the shutdown is now entering its third day.

There is a lot that we could be doing right now. We could be considering bipartisan appropriations bills through regular order, going to conference on the three appropriations bills we passed in August, or passing the bipartisan annual Defense bill. But instead, we are stuck in a shutdown mess of Democrats' making, and the American people are suffering as a result.

Republicans remain united around a clean, nonpartisan funding extension. It has passed the House of Representatives, and it is currently sitting right here in the Senate, ready to be voted on. It has no new Republican policies, no partisan policy riders. It is straightforward, simple, and clean.

All it does is reopen the government through November 21 to give us more time to pass appropriations bills here on the floor. We have a number of bipartisan bills waiting for floor consideration right now. The only thing standing in the way of reopening the government and getting back to doing the important work is Democrats' \$1.5 trillion in partisan spending demands. That is right, \$1.5 trillion.

Their partisan proposal demands more money—think about this—more money than our entire defense budget just to keep the government open for 4 weeks. That is not a credible proposal. It is a far-left wish list, and it is not how we are going to do things around here.

We can end this shutdown in just a few hours. We need to take one rollcall

vote—just one rollcall vote—on the House-passed clean continuing resolution. The President of the United States says that he is ready to sign it. We just need a handful of Democrats to agree.

Now, once we get the government back open, then we can talk about the issues that Democrats are raising, but we can't do that while they are holding the Federal Government hostage to their partisan demands.

Whatever Democrats are saying publicly, I think, privately, they are all well aware of the problems with their current position.

The senior Senator from Massachusetts has said:

Hostage tactics are the last resort for those who can't otherwise win their fights through elections, can't win their fights in Congress, can't win their fights for the Presidency, and can't win their fights in the Courts.

The Democrat leader called shutdowns "a politics of idiocy, of confrontation, of paralysis."

Mr. President, this shutdown needs to end sooner rather than later, and there is only one way out of it: Democrats need to vote for the clean, nonpartisan continuing resolution sitting right there. All it takes is one rollcall vote—the government is back open. We need to get this government back open, which we can do very, very quickly, and then we can talk about whatever we need to talk about.

Just a few years ago, the Democrat leader had this to say:

We're allowed to come here and disagree over policy. In fact, our system of government was designed to allow for progress despite our large and sometimes raucous differences. But when one side . . . throws a temper tantrum and uses the basic functioning of our government as leverage in a policy argument, our system of government breaks down.

Let's hope the Democrat leader decides to heed his own words and that Democrats' temper tantrum ends sooner rather than later.

Later today, in a couple of hours, Democrats will have another opportunity to vote for the clean continuing resolution, and we will see if they are still committed to their shutdown politics. Republicans remain ready to reopen the government and to get back to doing the American people's business.

How much longer this shutdown lasts depends entirely on Democrats. The choice is theirs.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JUSTICE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, well, it is day 3 of the Trump shutdown, and the government remains closed because Donald Trump and Republicans insist on raising Americans' healthcare premiums and kicking millions off their insurance.

Sending premiums skyrocketing, as Republicans insist, is fundamentally unsustainable. The American people overwhelmingly support affordable healthcare. Seventy percent of Americans support extending the ACA premium tax credits according to a poll released yesterday by the Washington Post, and another poll by KFF yesterday found that nearly 80 percent support an extension. Guess what. Even a majority of Trump supporters support an extension. Even a majority of Trump supporters—nearly 60 percent—support an extension.

You don't need the polls. Just go into a barbershop. Just go into a diner. Just go into a supermarket and ask people. People are learning about this issue, and they are aghast that their premiums could go up so much. They are aghast that our Republican colleagues don't even want to fix it when it affects so many tens of millions of people and the amount that it goes up is so high—so high. It is not difficult. We know Americans want this, and we know many of my Republican colleagues want this as well.

Failure to act would be devastating, and Republicans know it. Even Donald Trump knows it. He talked about it a little bit with us in the White House when we went a few days back.

If we don't act now, then at least 22 million people will see their healthcare premiums double—double—on average. But for many people, it is even worse than that. If these ACA premium tax credits aren't extended, the average 55-year-old couple making \$85,000 a year would see their premiums not just double but triple—\$25,000 a year. How does a senior citizen—even one who has a little bit of savings and a little bit of a cushion—afford \$25,000 a year?

So that is all Democrats want to fix. We are on the side of the people. People know it and want it and need it. It is not complicated. Americans want it. Republican voters want it.

Democrats remain ready and willing to work with the other side. We are ready to work on a path forward to lower healthcare costs for the American people and fund the Federal Government.

I yield to the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

FREEZING GRANTS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am sure that you can agree, having been involved in public service for a large part of your life, that sometimes it takes a long time to make an idea a reality. That has happened many times to me in my public career and, certainly, in my home State.

In 1969, 56 years ago, former Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley proposed extending the Red Line of the Chicago