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Senate

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Anna St. John, of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE WEEK

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I have come to the floor before to speak about the value of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement and the value to all three countries, but most importantly the United States. I am here again in honor of National Agriculture Week.

I would like to continue my review of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA for short, and I do it today by thanking President Trump for what he called “the largest, fairest, most balanced, and modern trade agreement ever achieved.”

I hope that President Trump remembers those words—and they were very appropriate words—as he leads the re-consideration of USMCA today.

One little provision, but an important provision in the USMCA, in 2020, when the agreement was signed, it may have been difficult to see just how big an impact the first ever biotechnology provision in a trade agreement would make and how important the dispute settlement piece would be for that agreement, and, in this particular case, helping American farmers.

It happens that in 2022, Mexico tried to ban genetically modified corn. In Iowa language, we say GMO product. This could have led to more bans and shutting off billions of dollars in markets for U.S. ag products.

After a significant push by this Senator and the junior Senator from Iowa, the U.S. Trade Representative filed a successful dispute settlement in the process that was laid out in the USMCA, and that dispute settlement resulted in Mexico reversing its ban on GMO corn. It was a win for U.S. farmers, processors, and the very large, fair, balanced, and modern United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

Now, that is a very small part of this agreement because, overall, the big picture is that USMCA has been a success throughout and for all of our economy, but especially for agriculture.

Now, this agreement—and it is under the agreement—is going through a review process that was called for in that agreement, and the big question is: Will the United States lead Mexico and Canada to continue this agreement to the year 2036?

I am urging this administration that the first few years of the USMCA has been so beneficial to all three countries that it is a no-brainer to continue the USMCA through 2036.

Along this line, I will be meeting with Canadian Senators to talk about how they feel this agreement is going and how successful they think it might be getting it continued.

I hope that it will be continued, and that is what I am urging the Trump administration to see through because, like I say, it is a no-brainer. It should be continued.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior 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 majority leader is recognized.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, who knows every one of our deepest desires, even our hurts are not hidden from You. We rejoice that we are Your children. Thank You for saving us from unseen traps and dangers. Help us to live so that we will inspire generations yet to come.

As Senators do the work of freedom today, may they work with a sense of history. Give them the courage to make decisions that will strengthen our Nation for the storms ahead.

Lord, keep them from the pitfalls that nurture divisions and unite them in their efforts to find common ground.

And, Lord, comfort all who mourn throughout our world.

We pray in Your merciful 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.

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



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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today is day 32 of Democrats' shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security. On Thursday, Democrats, once again, blocked the Senate from proceeding to a DHS funding bill—a bill, I should note, that already includes a number of reforms to immigration enforcement: more money for body cameras, deescalation training, and additional oversight of immigration enforcement activities. And getting on this bill would not have precluded additional reforms from being added. But for the fourth time now, Democrats stopped the Senate from proceeding to consideration of this legislation.

For weeks, Democrats have spoken about the urgent need for reforms to immigration enforcement, but it has been Democrats who have been the biggest obstacle to getting those reforms enacted. The Trump administration took a number of steps on its own, I might add, to reform immigration enforcement, and on top of that, the White House made two substantial and serious offers to Democrats to legislate reforms, the most recent of which was sent more than 2 weeks ago.

But Democrats couldn't even be bothered to respond to the White House's latest offer until late last night, 18 days for Democrats to even bother replying. And that offer—Democrats' third—was basically the same as their first two offers: no compromise and still filled with a number of non-starters that would make it more dangerous for law enforcement officers to do their jobs. Meanwhile, on the Senate floor, the best Democrats have been able to offer is funding some DHS Agencies and leaving others unfunded. It is really pretty remarkable.

Last summer, Democrats threw a fit over Republicans' rescissions package that cut just \$9 billion in Federal spending, a fraction of a fraction of a percent of the entire Federal budget. Now, to hear Democrats talk, they seem to think that entire Agencies—especially the Agencies that secure our border and enforce immigration laws—are dispensable.

The Democrat leader had the audacity to call this a "moderate" plan last week. When did defunding law enforcement become a mainstream position in this country? Now, this might be considered moderate for Democrats, but I think the average American would view it as extreme.

We are now a month into Democrats' second shutdown since October. And like their record-long shutdown in the fall, the victims of this shutdown are beginning to pile up. TSA agents are working without pay. A significant number of agents are calling out sick, leading to long wait times and lines stretching into airport parking garages.

CBS reports that 300 TSA agents have quit since this shutdown began, and that is on top of the 1,100 agents who quit after Democrats' shutdown in

the fall. It is pretty darn understandable if you think about it. What do you do when, for 2 out of the last 6 months, you have to work without pay? Well, that is what Democrats have put these people through. So it is more than understandable that they might be thinking that there has got to be an easier way to earn a living.

I heard from one TSA agent in South Dakota who was at the end of her rope. She writes:

It is very hard to live without getting paid. . . . I do not know how long I can keep doing this.

Well, that is what happens in a shutdown: real people get hurt.

But if you ask the senior Senator from Hawaii, a Member of the Democratic leadership, he says:

We are very serene with what is going on. "Very serene." I suppose that is not a surprising statement considering the Democratic leader characterized Democrats' last shutdown in the fall by saying:

Every day gets better for us.

"Very serene." "Every day gets better for us." For Democrats, a government shutdown is just fine as long as it seems to be working for them politically, no matter whether it is hurting hard-working Americans, no matter if it is jeopardizing public safety and national security. Make no mistake, Democrats' shutdown is harming hard-working Americans and putting national security in jeopardy.

Our country is facing a heightened threat environment right now. There are a few examples of that. Stryker, a medical tech company, was the victim of an Iran-linked cyber attack last week. ISIS-inspired individuals attempted to detonate bombs targeting protesters outside of the home of the mayor of New York City last weekend. And on Thursday, we saw two tragic attacks take place. One of those, in Virginia, was perpetrated by an individual who was arrested in 2016 for attempting to provide materiel support to ISIS. The other, an attack on a Detroit-area synagogue, was perpetrated by an individual who was reported to have had connections to known or suspected Hezbollah terrorists.

This is no time for Democrats' political games. Republicans are at the table and ready to work whenever Democrats are done playing.

SAVE AMERICA ACT

Mr. President, today, we are kicking off an extended debate on the SAVE America Act, a package of commonsense measures united around two themes: protecting our elections and protecting our youth.

You are going to hear me use the adjective "commonsense" a lot in this debate because if there is any word that is suitable to describe the measures we are considering, it is that. If there is anything essential to the integrity of elections, it is ensuring that those who are registered to vote are eligible to vote and that those who show

up to vote at polling places are who they say they are.

And how do you do that? Well, by requiring that Americans show proof of citizenship when they register to vote and that they show photo ID at polling places. That is what the SAVE America Act would do. It is just common sense. And polls show that the American people overwhelmingly agree. But to hear Democrats talk, you would think that demonstrating citizenship or showing a photo ID is an intolerable burden.

And yet I haven't heard Democrats complaining about the thousand other circumstances in which we require photo ID in this country. Democrats are aware that Americans have to show photo ID to get on a plane—right?—and to start a new job and when they head to the doctor's office and to rent a car and to stay in a hotel. Heck, if you want to get a library card, you have to show a photo ID. Do Democrats remember their 2024 convention, when attendees had to show a photo ID to get in? The senior Democrat Senator from Georgia required photo ID to get into his recent rally.

Do Democrats hear themselves? Are they going to start boycotting libraries and airplanes and hotels for requiring a photo ID? Are they going to explain why they are perfectly justified in requiring photo ID for their political rallies while it is somehow an intolerable burden to ask people to show their photo ID when they go to vote?

I expect they won't. They will simply continue with their mindless partisan opposition to commonsense ID requirements for Federal elections.

But let's hit pause on that topic for a minute and go to another issue where common sense and the Democrat Party have parted ways, and that is on the subject of transgender ideology. In their haste to embrace medical transgender ideology, Democrats have put themselves in the absurd position of supporting the hijacking of women and girls' sports by biological males. Yep; that is right. The party that would portray itself as a defender of women has put itself on the record as willing to sacrifice women's athletic opportunities for the sake of biological males.

Now, no one should need an explanation of what the presence of biological males in women's sports costs women. At the most basic level, women are losing out on a slot on the team. Every roster place that goes to a male is a roster place that doesn't go to a female. And for women who are on the roster, well, the presence of a biological male can and frequently does rob them of opportunities to excel.

Biologically, men possess physical advantages when it comes to sports—things like greater muscle mass and greater aerobic power—which means that, by and large, men are likely to dominate in women's sports, taking wins and medal opportunities away from women.