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## Senate

(Legislative day of Tuesday, April 14, 2026)

The Senate met at 10 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, 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.

Loving and ever-present God, You have been our help in ages past; You are our hope for the years to come.

Lord, forgive us when we fail to make an adequate response to the flagrant disrespect of Your sovereignty. Forgive us for our reluctance to speak in defense of Your majesty. Remind us that there are certain lines we should never cross.

Lord, we trust You to direct our steps with Your providential power. Guide our lawmakers. Where there is perplexity, provide clarity. Where there is weakness, provide strength. Where there is fear, provide courage.

We pray in the Name of the only One who can save us. 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. ARMSTRONG). 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.

### TRIBUTE TO ATHENA PORTER

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am here to honor a fellow Iowan, a person that I know very well—not necessarily because I talk to them often. So I want to celebrate an Iowan's advocacy to prevent cancer.

Athena Porter, from Leon, IA, is a proud graduate of my university, the University of Northern Iowa, and she also served on my staff for a considerable amount of time. She has now been working for a long time in the rural health clinic there in Leon, IA. She is also a community leader.

In 2023, she was diagnosed with cervical cancer. Unlike most cancers, cervical cancer can be prevented by taking an HPV vaccine. Through proactive preventive care, Athena found out in her twenties that she was HPV positive, making her at risk for cervical cancer. In partnership with her doctors, Athena routinely checked on the status of the virus in her body. After giving birth to her second child, Athena found out news you never want to hear: that she had cervical cancer. Thanks to early detection, Athena was able to get care to eliminate the cancer.

Today, as a result of her bout with cancer, Athena is an advocate for vaccine use, early screening, and proper treatment—all because she appreciates being a cervical cancer survivor.

So I want to thank Athena for publicly sharing her story. Also, let her experience be an encouragement for others to get early care—and get early care as often as you can.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

### WORKING FAMILIES TAX CUT ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I don't know a lot of people who look forward to April 15. No. I suspect tax day doesn't rank high on Americans' favorite days of the year, but I would wager that a lot more Americans were pleasantly surprised this year when they went to file their taxes because thanks to Republicans' Working Families Tax Cut bill, a lot more Americans kept a lot more of their hard-earned money this year.

That is right. Hard-working Americans saw lower tax bills. Tax refunds increased by more than 10 percent compared to last year, and the average refund is more than \$3,400 this year thanks to Republicans' tax cuts.

As the American people have now seen firsthand, the Working Families Tax Cuts provided significant tax relief. First of all, it locked in the lower rates permanently. In 2017, Republicans lowered rates—tax rates—across the board, and as of last year, these new lower rates are now permanent which means that hard-working Americans won't have to worry about a higher tax bill in the years to come.

We also nearly doubled the standard deduction in 2017. The Working Families Tax Cuts raised it even further and made that permanent too.

And then there is the child tax credit which Republicans doubled in 2017. The

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



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Working Families Tax Cuts raised it again to \$2,200. And Republicans didn't just raise the child tax credit, we linked it to inflation so it doesn't lose its value over time. That, too, is a permanent feature of the Tax Code thanks to Republicans' landmark bill.

The Working Families Tax Cuts also introduced a number of new tax relief provisions into the Tax Code. This tax season, more than 30 million seniors claimed a new \$6,000 bonus deduction for older Americans.

Over a million people bought a new American-made car and were able to deduct an average \$1,800 in auto loan interest on that new vehicle. More than 25 million American workers were able to deduct overtime pay from their taxes and realize thousands of dollars in tax savings. And over 6 million workers deducted income from tips this tax year.

With all that, a lot more Americans were looking at a bigger refund when they finished their tax returns, and they are thinking about the best use of that additional money in their pocket: Saving for their first home, investing in their kids' education, taking a family vacation, using their money how they see fit rather than sending it to Uncle Sam.

As its name implies, the Working Families Tax Cuts focuses on working families. But this bill also did a lot to support America's small businesses as well as family farms and ranches.

Thanks to Republicans' landmark bill, 12 million small businesses saw an average tax reduction of \$7,000. This bill made the 199A small business deduction permanent, which has been a significant boost for small businesses and for family farms and ranches.

One agriculture co-op in my State of South Dakota estimates its impact at over \$100 million since it was created by Republicans in 2017.

Millions of small businesses, farms, and ranches were able to use this provision and reduce their tax bill this year freeing up money to invest in their operations and employees, create jobs, and increase innovation.

That is not all. The working families tax cuts made 100-percent bonus depreciation permanent too, which allows businesses and farmers and ranchers to deduct the full cost of a new piece of equipment the year they start using it.

Permanent research and development expensing is already paying dividends for businesses in my State.

A lot of farmers, ranchers, and small business owners breathed a sigh of relief when they heard that this bill raised the death tax threshold and spared them—spared them—from a potentially devastating tax bill, not to mention from the costly estate planning expenses that come with it.

Since Republicans passed this landmark bill last summer, we have heard Democrats' typical refrain that this bill was just tax cuts for billionaires. That is laughable. It really is.

The largest proportional benefits from this bill went to Americans earn-

ing less than \$50,000 a year. The increased standard deduction from this bill is something that was claimed by more than a 100 million Americans this year to reduce and simplify their taxes. More than 34 million American families claimed the child tax credit this year, which the working families tax cuts permanently increased and linked to the cost-of-living.

And nearly half of filers—half of filers—claimed one of the new tax cuts—no tax on tips and overtime, auto loan interest, or the senior deduction.

Millions of middle-income Americans saw a lower tax bill this year, and that is no fluke. The working families tax cuts puts these hard-working Americans first. It lets them keep more of their hard-earned money to spend, invest, and save how they see fit. It helps hard-working people get one step closer to the American dream.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative 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.

#### IRAN

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday an Ipsos poll found that fewer than one in four Americans think Trump's war in Iran has been worthwhile. And who can blame them? Every metric indicates that Donald Trump's handling of Operation Epic Fury has been an epic failure.

Donald Trump promised this war would be won in a matter of days or weeks. It is now day 47. And let's take stock of the 47 days into this historic blunder. Thirteen U.S. servicemembers have been killed. Thousands of civilians have been killed and injured across the region. The Strait of Hormuz is not only closed, it has become an Iranian cash cow. And Iran's control of the strait is greater today than before when Trump started the war.

Iran's nuclear ambitions have only grown, and the Iranian regime is even more radical than before the war. Americans, meanwhile, are shelling out more than \$4 for a gallon of gas, on average.

Now Donald Trump says that gas prices "could be the same" or "a little higher" by November. Those are his words. Trump says gas prices "could be the same" or "a little higher" by November. Unbelievable.

Trump's No. 1 promise entering the White House was to bring inflation

down, and now he is admitting his own war could drive gas prices up for much of the rest of the year. When Donald Trump admits his own war will drive gas prices up through November, you know there is trouble coming down the road for American motorists.

Donald Trump is learning the hard way that ending a war is a lot harder than beginning one. He would rather pick a fight with the Pope online than reckon with what is truly on the line right now: the lives of American servicemembers and the livelihood of American working families.

And throughout all this miasma, all this mess, this horrible war, where are the Senate Republicans? Months into this war, still no hearings, no testimony, no clarity on how it will end. Don't the Republicans, when we are in war, don't they know their responsibility? I don't care if they are the same party. Don't they know they have a responsibility to get the facts out and let the American people know what is going on here? Because Trump isn't giving people any idea, but he still keeps changing his mind and his goals in the war, none of which he has achieved.

So where are Senate Republicans? The American people have a right to ask. Enough is enough. Trump may not understand how damaging his war has been to the American people. Republicans may be hiding from having hearings or asking questions, but Senate Democrats who know how damaging the war has been are asking a whole lot of questions.

That is why we will force a vote on another War Powers Resolution. This is the fourth since the war began. I thank Senator TAMMY DUCKWORTH for her work on this week's resolution. I thank Senators KAINE and BOOKER and other Members of our caucus for their continuing leadership on this crucial issue.

Republicans have voted against this resolution three times now. But as the war drags on for 47 days with no end in sight, they should join us on this resolution and end the war once and for all—and all the troubles it is bringing to Americans once and for all. It is 47 days already, where are you?

If the Republicans vote no again, we will continue to force votes on these resolutions every week until either this war ends or the Republicans get the courage to stand up to Donald Trump.

#### WORKING FAMILIES TAX CUT ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on tax day, not a single American would say that tax day is their favorite date on the calendar. Republicans, however, seem to think today will mark an inflection point in their political fortunes. Evidently, they haven't been paying much attention.

When Republicans passed the One Big Beautiful Bill, they promised Americans that their tax refunds would grow