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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.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.

Lord of Heaven's army, we find our joy from trusting You. Today, we are trusting Your promise to supply all our needs. As we differ in faces, so we are different in our needs. Provide for our needs from the riches of Your grace.

Lord, surround our lawmakers with the shield of Your divine favor. Remind them that they wrestle against forces that are often stronger and more determined than they may imagine. Help them to claim Your promise that You will not withhold any good thing from those who do what is right. Inspire our Senators to call on You in all of life's seasons.

We pray in Your great 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. BUDD). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this is National Police Week—something we

have been celebrating for decades. And you could sure tell it was National Police Week with the finely dressed in the best of uniforms of the police that were meeting people off the plane, lined up maybe three or four dozen at a time, greeting people as they came off the plane.

So I want to recognize just some of the police that we honor all week, and that is to recognize the hard-working men and women of the U.S. Capitol Police Force. Importantly, the Capitol Police protect the millions of people that visit the Nation's Capital each year for tours and for the official business they come to Washington to have with their representatives.

As the Senate President pro tempore, Barbara and I are fortunate to see the professionalism of the Capitol Police Force firsthand as the agents serve those of us in the Presidential line of succession.

Simply put, this historic body of Senators would not function without the watchful eye of law enforcement. Their service does not come without personal sacrifice, and we often don't thank them enough. So today, I recognize the Capitol Police for their efforts. We ought to carry out our commitment to back the blue every day, not just during Police Week.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, we have a lot to do over the next 2 weeks: confirm Kevin Warsh to the Federal Reserve, approve a nominations package, and fund law enforcement at the Department of Homeland Security.

That last item should not need to be on our agenda. We should have been able to have funded border security and immigration enforcement officers as part of the final Homeland Security funding agreement, but my Democrat colleagues refused. In fact, the Democrat leader said today that Democrats will fight legislation to fund law enforcement at DHS with "every tool we have."

It is difficult to believe that we are here again. We all remember the "defund the police" movement embraced by the left and members of the Democrat Party. We also remember how cities who moved to defund the police backtracked in pretty short order because it turns out, as even some leftists came to realize, we need police officers; we need law enforcement. We live in a fallen world, and there are always going to be people out there who seek to hurt and exploit the innocent, and we need men and women who will stand between the innocent and danger. We need men and women who courageously dedicate their lives to law enforcement.

All of this should go without saying. I can scarcely think of anything more obvious, but, apparently, the need for law enforcement is not obvious to my Democrat colleagues because they are right back to a "defund the police" position. This time, it is defunding law enforcement at the Department of Homeland Security, specifically Border Patrol and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the men and women—the men and women—who patrol our borders and take dangerous criminal illegal immigrants off of our streets.

Mr. President, when I say defunding law enforcement and DHS, I don't

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



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mean reducing the budget. I mean complete and total defunding. My Democrat colleagues refused to provide a single dollar for the men and women who protect our borders. They refused to provide a single dollar for the men and women who take dangerous criminal illegal aliens off of our street.

And I want you to think about that for just a minute.

My Democrat colleagues, apparently, believe there should be no physical presence at our borders and no law enforcement officers to deport dangerous criminals who have entered our country illegally.

We had 4 years of chaos at the southern border under President Biden, but at least we had the Border Patrol, overstretched as it was. Now Democrats, apparently, believe in removing all law enforcement officers from our Nation's borders.

I shouldn't need to state the obvious here: that we need border security and immigration enforcement officers to protect our Nation, just as we need police officers and FBI agents and Secret Service agents and all of the law enforcement officers who serve our communities.

Democrats might like to pretend otherwise, but there are dangerous individuals who would like to make their way illegally across our border—drug traffickers, human traffickers, other criminals, terrorists. And the men and women of the Border Patrol and Immigration and Customs Enforcement are the men and women who stand between us and these dangerous individuals, who turn them back at our borders and take them out of our communities, if they do manage to make their way into our country.

These are the men and women my Democrat colleagues want to defund—not reform. Nope, my Democrat colleagues repeatedly rejected reforms. They want to defund and defund completely—zero—zero agents at our border, zero agents to deport criminals here in the United States illegally. That is what my Democrat colleagues opted for.

It is Police Week this week, a week to honor our Nation's law enforcement officers and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting our communities. Perhaps—perhaps—it will remind my Democrat colleagues of just how much we rely on law enforcement and just how much we need all—of our Nation's law enforcement officers.

WITHHOLDING THE PAY OF SENATORS IF A GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN OCCURS—Motion to Proceed

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 296, S. Res. 526.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 296, S. Res. 526, a resolution withholding the pay of Senators if a Government shutdown occurs.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the standing rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 296, S. Res. 526, a resolution withholding the pay of Senators if a Government shutdown occurs.

John Thune, John Kennedy, Pete Ricketts, Marsha Blackburn, Thom Tillis, Bill Hagerty, Rick Scott of Florida, John Cornyn, Tim Sheehy, John Barrasso, Joni Ernst, David McCormick, Steve Daines, Ashley B. Moody, Jon Husted, Roger Marshall, John Hoeven.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

BUDGET RECONCILIATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, if you want to understand Republicans' priorities right now, just look at the \$72 billion reconciliation bill they revealed last week. The Republican bill would pump tens of billions of dollars into ICE and Border Patrol without any guardrails to prevent these rogue Agencies from continuing to unleash violence on American streets.

But that is not all. To add insult to injury, the Republican bill charges American taxpayers \$1 billion to build Trump's gilded ballroom, while including zero dollars to help Americans with rising costs.

Their billion-dollar bill has zero dollars to help Americans deal with groceries, and their prices are going up. Gas prices are going up. Zero dollars to bring down Americans' healthcare, housing, and electricity bills.

At a time when Americans are struggling to put food on the table, Republicans say, "Let them eat cake," and demand American taxpayers build Trump a palace, while they are at it.

Keep in mind, Donald Trump said, just a few months ago, that "not one penny is being used from the Federal Government" for the ballroom—"not one penny," said Trump.

Well, give me a break. He has put a billion dollars in the budget for it. This staggering waste of taxpayer dollars has nothing—nothing—to do with security and everything to do with Trump's ego.

How long before Trump asks for his name to be emblazoned in gold on the side of the ballroom?

The American people are calling out for help, but these ballroom Repub-

licans have a constituency of one: Donald Trump's ego. That is a disgrace.

Democrats will use every tool in our arsenal to fight this bill. We will bring challenges. We will bring challenges under the Byrd rule. We will offer floor amendments. We will force Republicans to take vote after vote, showing that instead of helping working families, Republicans are forcing Americans to pay for Trump's billionaire ballroom.

Americans don't want this ballroom blitz. They want Congress to bring down costs.

HANTAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on the hantavirus, earlier today, 17 Americans—including 3 New Yorkers—who were on the cruise ship at the center of the hantavirus outbreak arrived in Nebraska, where they remained in quarantine. One has since tested positive for hantavirus.

They should know that all of us here in the Senate are thinking of them and praying for their health. No one should have to go through such an ordeal.

The hantavirus outbreak reminds us of what happened during COVID-19. We need to invest in public health and pandemic preparedness. Sadly, the Trump administration has not learned that lesson. The Trump administration gutted our public health defenses. The public may not know it, but Trump fired the workers whose job it is to protect us from outbreaks like hanta.

Donald Trump, Russell Vought, and now Elon Musk purged hundreds of Federal workers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Department of Health and Human Services including—here is who Trump fired—cruise ship inspectors, port health station staff, disease detectives, and others. He cut all those, and now we have the hantavirus. They were there for a purpose.

Blindly swinging their DOGE chainsaw through the Federal Government, Trump, Vought, and Musk also hamstringed the CDC's Vessel Sanitation Program—a program that didn't cost the taxpayers any money. The cruise ships paid for it, but, of course, they didn't care.

The solution is a simple one. I put out a plan that calls on the Trump administration to rehire these fired outbreak-response experts, to restore funding to protect Americans from infectious diseases, and to rejoin the World Health Organization and other groups that track outbreaks and provide early warning.

Rehire, restore, rejoin—that is how we keep the American people healthy and safe.

Diseases like hantavirus and COVID don't care what your politics are. They threaten everyone. Donald Trump needs to stop politicizing public health and start investing in it.