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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 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.

Gracious God, thank You for the gift of Yourself and for teaching us how to live and serve. Lord, forgive us when we take Your grace for granted. Forgive us also when we fail to treat others as we ourselves desire to be treated.

Lord, transform our lawmakers into instruments of Your glory, enabling them to strengthen our Nation and world. Remind them that fierce winds bring no anxiety to those who keep their eyes on You. Imbue our Senators with Your wisdom, that they may know the road to take. Sustain them in all of their endeavors, keeping them from stumbling and slipping.

And, Lord, bring peace to our Nation and world.

We pray in Your powerful 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. 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.

### USMCA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I have come to the floor many times recently to explain how important the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement is to the economies of the three countries—particularly the United States and particularly agriculture in the United States—and that we need to soon make a decision to continue the USMCA. It is up for review, and that review ought to be conducted very quickly because of the economic importance that I have kind of tried to demonstrate on the floor of the U.S. Senate—how it has expanded trade between our countries and business between our countries and how it has been so beneficial to the economic growth of all three countries but particularly the United States. So I have said the renewal is really a no-brainer.

So I continue my review today of this USMCA, but there is one part of that agreement that does not show up in the text of the agreement or is easily calculated in dollars, as I have tried to explain the value of the USMCA in dollar terms. In other words, it is hard to give any statistics to this aspect of the USMCA and its value.

It is the invaluable effect of countering China on the global stage because of what has developed as a result of the USMCA. That is through alignment on agricultural, environmental, intellectual property rules and regulations, and by aligning rules of origin, strengthening nearshore supply chains, and countless other provisions. The USMCA protects our domestic workers, our companies, and our products from being replaced by Chinese competition.

The alignment of the North American economy, because of the USMCA, to U.S. standards—that all sends a very strong signal to the rest of the world. That signal is this: If you align with the United States, you and your economy will prosper.

As more and more countries are finding out, aligning in the opposite direction—with China—means intellectual property theft, continuously moving goalposts, and regulatory uncertainty. Because of the USMCA and the North American economy being aligned—because of the USMCA—I think it shows the importance of counteracting China.

So I urge the Trump administration to quickly advance trilateral conversations on renewing USMCA, and I say this especially with Canada because I see we are dragging our feet in regard to sitting down with Canada. We should not be pushing Canada to the back burner in the USMCA negotiations. The United States and Canada economically are so integrated that it is important to keep this moving.

The Canadians showed their willingness to expand trade with China, to our detriment. They did this in January—including in electric vehicles. This administration must move quickly to ensure Canada remains focused on strengthening trade between our two countries, and we do that by sitting down with Canada very quickly.

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 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.

### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 4344

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture

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



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motion with respect to S. 4344 be withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The cloture motion was withdrawn.

#### NOMINATION OF KEVIN WARSH

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, later today, the Senate will finish considering the nomination of Kevin Warsh to be the 17th Chairman of the Federal Reserve.

Leading the Federal Reserve System is an enormous task. The decisions the Fed makes affect Wall Street and Main Street and kitchen tables all across the country. So it is critical that we have people who understand not only the macro—the global economy and the markets—but who appreciate the microeconomy, and that is the hard-working Americans, their jobs, and their livelihoods.

Kevin Warsh is just such a person.

He credits his knowledge of the real economy to growing up in Upstate New York where his dad ran a children's clothing store and manufacturing company. From Shaker High School, he went on to Stanford University and then Harvard Law School.

He then started a career on Wall Street, but he shifted to public service and joined the Bush administration's economic policy team in 2002. Four years later, President Bush nominated him to the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. At age 35, Kevin Warsh was unanimously—unanimously—confirmed here in the Senate and became the youngest Governor in the history of the Federal Reserve. Being the youngest person to take a seat in the Federal Reserve's boardroom is impressive enough, but Kevin Warsh didn't just take his seat—he was a key player during the time he was on the Board.

Kevin Warsh seems to have just the profile of a Federal Reserve Chairman; yet Democrats oppose his nomination. That is right. For the first time in its history, the Banking Committee reported out a nominee for Fed Chairman on a party line vote because every single Democrat opposed Mr. Warsh's nomination—and, actually, only one Democrat was even present for the vote. The other 10 Democrats on the Banking Committee didn't even bother to show up for it.

And, yesterday on the floor, all but one Democrat opposed the first of Mr. Warsh's two nominations: his nomination to be on the Board of Governors. He has already had that job, and a number of Democrats actually supported his nomination the last time; but those same Democrats voted yesterday against appointing him to the Board, and I suspect they will do the same when it comes time to vote on his other nomination to be the Chairman later today.

I wish I could say I am surprised, but this is just how bad Trump derangement syndrome has gotten on the other side of the aisle. Democrats won't say

so, but that is what it is. I expect we are going to hear Democrats attempt to justify their opposition by suggesting that a Chairman Warsh would somehow threaten the Fed's independence. I have to say that is a pretty serious claim and one that doesn't really have any basis in reality.

To begin with, Mr. Warsh's testimony before the Banking Committee should have put any concerns about his independence to rest, but if the depth of his commitment to Fed independence were at all unclear, I recommend my colleagues review a speech he gave in 2010, entitled "An Ode to Independence," in which he said:

Central bank independence is precious . . . Ensuring Fed independence—as the cornerstone of institutional credibility—is our charge to keep. It is central to what the Federal Reserve represents, and to how policy is conducted.

Or they could ask Randall Kroszner, who served with Warsh on the Fed Board, who said:

He's not an ideologue. Since I've known him, he was someone who tried to get things done.

Or maybe—maybe—they could just ask the Democrat leader, who introduced Kevin Warsh at his 2006 confirmation hearing. He said then of Warsh:

He knows unequivocally that the Fed must be independent, nonideological, and nonpartisan, and for this reason, I am proud to support his nomination.

That was the Democrat leader's comments, who is now leading the charge in opposing Warsh's nomination.

#### NOMINATIONS

Mr. THUNE. It doesn't seem to matter who President Trump nominates—the Democrats blindly oppose them. Democrats aren't interested in a person's qualifications. All they care about is opposing President Trump, and it has been that way since he took office last January. President Trump is the only President on record who has not had a single—single—civilian nominee approved by voice vote or by unanimous consent here in the U.S. Senate—the only President in history. Democrats have dragged out the process on every single one of his nominations.

The fact that two Democrats voted for our former colleague Markwayne Mullin to be Secretary of DHS, in this day and age here, appears to be an act of courage in today's Democrat Party—even though it was a vote that traditionally would have been widely bipartisan, if not unanimous, but not when Democrats are in the throes of Trump derangement syndrome.

It is shameful—it really is—but Republicans aren't letting it stop us.

In September, we took steps to restore Senate precedent on largely non-controversial Presidential nominees to ensure that no other President has to face the kind of petty—and I mean petty—partisanship that President

Trump is encountering. Very soon, we will vote on a fourth nominations package containing 49 Trump nominees who have had their hearings and mark-ups and are ready for confirmation, and we will keep moving forward.

I know that Democrats aren't happy that Donald Trump is the President, but that doesn't mean that nominations should be held up for purely political reasons.

As the Democrat leader said just a few years ago:

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 . . .

Well, unfortunately, Democrats have made it pretty clear that they are only—only—interested in partisan games since President Trump took office, but we have got a country to run, and Republicans are doing our job.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

DIRECTING THE REMOVAL OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES FROM HOSTILITIES WITHIN OR AGAINST THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN THAT HAVE NOT BEEN AUTHORIZED BY CONGRESS—Motion To Discharge

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote on a simple question: Will Congress embrace and exercise its constitutional responsibility to decide the question of war?

As Madison summarized:

The Constitution supposes, what the History of all Governments demonstrates, that the Executive is the branch of power most interested in war, and most prone to it. [The Constitution] has accordingly with studied care, vested the question of war in the [legislative branch].

With studied care.

The Founders said that no one person, not even the President, should be able to take this Nation to war.

They would observe that throughout history, Executives were inclined to commit troops and treasure to battles that made no sense in a government by and for the people in a democratic republic. So they stipulated there had to be a debate and a vote here in the legislative branch, an act of Congress, a declaration of war, or an authorization by legislation for war. Yet we have had neither. We have had neither.

In the 1973 War Powers Act, there is a third option. It is a condition in which the United States has been attacked or is under imminent threat of an attack.