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## House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Thursday, June 18, 2026, at 10 a.m.

## Senate

TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2026

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.

Holy God, in whose presence the dark nights of challenge are dispelled by the dawn of Your love, You know our needs before we express them.

Bless our lawmakers with guidance, strength, and perseverance. Inspire them as instruments of Your peace, bringing unity where there is division, light where there is darkness, and hope where there is despair. Lord, give them the wisdom to seek justice, courage, and humility.

Help us all to treat one another with compassion, respect, and integrity, recognizing our shared humanity and our need for Your grace. May our words and actions reflect Your love. And, Lord, bring peace to our troubled world.

We pray in Your righteous 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 PRESIDENT pro tempore (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.

### E15

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, a top issue for Iowans and particularly an issue in these midterm elections is the farm economy, which isn't very good. Farmers continue to face stronger headwinds. It is not profitable today, particularly in grain farming. It is not just an Iowa issue. It is not just an American issue. I recently read that Brazil farmers are being foreclosed on because of low prices there as well.

There are two ways of attacking this. There are only two sides of a ledger. We can help lower input costs and increase markets for farmers. Farmers continue to say they don't want checks from the Treasury that are often passed on to the input suppliers; they want their prices from the marketplace.

So I have a solution about the marketplace. I and other Senators, both Republican and Democrat, have been talking about the ethanol issue of E15. We have been doing that for months now. I have been sharing that year-

round E15 would create a nearly \$14 billion increase in demand for corn in the United States. Those figures come from economists and the Iowa Corn Growers Association.

But this does not show the full picture. E15 would also add \$25.8 billion to the national gross domestic product and 128,000 jobs. Most of the jobs and value created from E15 support rural communities. High-paying jobs go to local ethanol plants, grain cooperatives, ag equipment manufacturing, and other agriculture suppliers. And, of course, the farmers benefit from it as well.

During my annual 99-county Q&As that I hold around the State—this year and each year—I have heard directly from Iowans at county farm bureaus, other businesses, and cooperatives how year-round E15 will support the rural American economy.

It is time, then, that the Senate pass E15 legislation. It is good for the farmers. It is good for good-paying jobs in rural America. It is good for the environment because ethanol is cleaner burning than gasoline from fossil fuels. It is good for national security, as we depend less on foreign sources of energy. So I like to say when I do a ribbon-cutting at the opening of an ethanol plant, it is good, good, good. You have heard it too: M'm, m'm good.

I want to speak also about ethanol and E15 as a process right here in the U.S. Senate, and I think it is about time that this be highlighted by both Democrats and Republicans from agricultural States that support E15 but don't talk about it enough. Now, it could be handled as a separate issue in

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



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the U.S. Senate, and that would be the appropriate way to do it. But you know, when the Senate is only in session about 3 days out of the week, we aren't getting much done with separate pieces of legislation. So something like E15 is going to have to find a home in some other bill—the farm bill, the Defense bill, appropriations bills. But we aren't talking about what that is going to do. I just mentioned three possibilities, and there aren't a whole lot of other possibilities.

There is even talk around here that you don't hear or read in the press, but talk about maybe the government is going to shut down just before the election, that maybe Democrats want the government shut down just before the election. Then, you know what, you get into continuing resolutions, and continuing resolutions are usually what we call clean—nothing added to it.

So let's say we get to October 1 and there are no appropriations bills. Then you have a continuing resolution until Thanksgiving. Then you don't pass appropriations bills and you have a continuing resolution until Christmas. And then Christmas comes and you have a continuing resolution that maybe takes you over into the new calendar year, middle of February. And if those are all clean appropriations bills, where are you going to put E15 if it is not on the farm bill or the Defense bill or appropriations bills?

Now, we have to start thinking about that, both Republicans and Democrats, from farm States that support ethanol. We have to be thinking about what we are going to do if this isn't going to come up as a separate bill on the floor of the U.S. Senate. And I think we had better put our heads together. That is probably at least 28 Senators from grain-growing States in the United States where we grow. At least 14 States, 28 Senators better put our heads together, or we are going to lose the opportunity of getting E15.

It is through the House of Representatives. It is further than it has ever been. And if we miss this opportunity, we may never get E15 and lose that \$14 billion that the economists for the Iowa corn growers tell us that we are going to get—increased price of grain.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive 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.

#### SENATE DEMOCRATS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I don't think at this point there are too many

people who think Democrats were actually interested in reforms of Border Patrol and Immigrations and Customs Enforcement because it was pretty clear from their actions that they were not.

If you are interested in getting reforms, you don't say no when you are repeatedly offered a robust reform package, even if you can't get every single thing you want.

But Democrats, of course, said no again and again and again. And eventually, they just walked away completely and refused to provide even a dollar of funding for Border Patrol or ICE. Clearly, they decided that having a political issue for November was more important than reforms.

And you certainly don't have to take my word for it because the Democrat leader came out last week and admitted that the decisions he and his party have made in this Congress have been about one thing, and that is improving Democrats' prospects in November. This is a quote: "We made a lot of strategic decisions that got us to this place—it didn't happen by accident," the Democrat leader said, referring to his view of his party's position. And you know what he ticked off as some of the most strategic decisions? Democrats' two recordbreaking government shutdowns. That is right.

Democrats shut down the government twice to try to improve their chances in November, not to help hard-working Americans, not to get reforms at ICE and Border Patrol—no; to improve their chances in November.

Let's just run down some of the consequences of Democrats' choices. The disastrous situation at U.S. airports that resulted from Democrats' decision to cut off funding for air traffic controllers, for one. There are the incredible lines that Americans faced at TSA in the middle of that shutdown, the TSA officers who have left in droves thanks to Democrats' decision to force them to work without pay for quite literally months this fiscal year.

There is the strain Democrats' actions placed on our national security Agencies and the people entrusted with protecting our Nation. And then there were the government workers lining up at food banks charging necessary expenses on credit cards and wondering if they would be evicted from their homes because they couldn't afford to pay next month's rent.

The damage Democrats have caused have been immense. And for what? For what? To improve their chances in November. Democrats would like you to believe they are the party of the little guy, of everyday American workers, but a better insight into their real attitude might be gained by the Democrat leader's statement earlier in Democrats' first government shutdown when he said this:

Every day gets better for us.

The "us," of course, being Democrats.

Every day gets better for us.

When the Democrat leader made this statement, military families were on the verge of missing pay. So were a lot of civilian government employees like the Capitol Police officers who stand on guard for us around this building. People were wondering how they would cover their rent, their food, their commuting costs, their electric bills.

But none of that was on the Democrat leader's mind. All he could think about was whether the shutdown was good for Democrats' polling.

Then there is the article that came out last week about what House Democrats' first bill would be should they take the majority in November. Democrat leadership, of course, have been trying to push the narrative that Democrats' big interest is in making life more affordable for everyday Americans. But as last week's article made clear, it turns out that House Democrats are by no means agreed that affordability should be at the top of their priority list; they are interested in other issues like a reboot of their proposed Federal election takeover, or simply trying to undo anything President Trump has done presumably—presumably—simply because President Trump has done it.

I wonder if they would try to undo the tax relief Republicans passed for working families which every single Democrat voted against. Hard to know, but as the Democrat leader made clear last week, one thing is for sure: It is not the American people who are top of mind for Senate Democrats; it is their election prospects in November.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive 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, for months—for months—Senate Democrats and I have said that Trump's blunder of a war with Iran can't end soon enough.

We have been told dozens of times that the war is over, and dozens of times we have been disappointed.

Trump has yet to give Americans a reason to believe that this latest peace deal won't leave them disappointed again. It has been 2 days since Trump claimed he had reached an "understanding" with Iran, and he still hasn't released any details, an MOU—memo of understanding—about what it actually is.