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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TED BUDD, a Senator from the State of North Carolina.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God, source of righteousness, joy, and peace, challenge us when we assume we know what is right instead of seeking Your wisdom.

Lord, guide our leaders and lawmakers to seek Your truth, follow Your direction, and make decisions with humility and discernment. Help them pursue what is best for our Nation and world, trusting in Your sovereignty, power, and love.

Remind them that nothing is impossible with You. Strengthen them with Your wisdom, fill them with Your peace, bless them with Your abundance, and prepare them for each day ahead.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The senior assistant executive clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 20, 2026.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable TED BUDD, a Senator from the State of North Carolina, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BUDD thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leader time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2027—Motion to Proceed

Mr. THUNE. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 436, S. 4784.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant executive clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 436, S. 4784, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 2913

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the second time.

The senior assistant executive clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2913) to authorize support for Ukraine, and for other purposes.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceeding.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, it will be placed on the calendar under rule XIV.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 829.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Michael C. Martin, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant executive clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the

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



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Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 829, Michael C. Martin, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

John Thune, Tim Sheehy, John Barrasso, Pete Ricketts, Thom Tillis, Rick Scott of Florida, John Cornyn, Steve Daines, Bernie Moreno, John R. Curtis, Chuck Grassley, Jim Banks, Mike Crapo, James Lankford, Kevin Cramer, Mike Rounds, Ted Budd.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 831.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Antonio M. Pozos, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant executive 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 nomination of Executive Calendar No. 831, Antonio M. Pozos, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

John Thune, Tim Sheehy, John Barrasso, Pete Ricketts, Thom Tillis, Rick Scott of Florida, John Cornyn, Steve Daines, Bernie Moreno, John R. Curtis, Chuck Grassley, Jim Banks, Mike Crapo, James Lankford, Kevin Cramer, Mike Rounds, Ted Budd.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 827.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Daniel Mack Traynor, of North Dakota, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant executive 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 nomination of Executive Calendar No. 827, Daniel Mack Traynor, of North Dakota, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit.

John Thune, Tim Sheehy, John Barrasso, Pete Ricketts, Thom Tillis, Chuck Grassley, Ted Budd, Shelley Moore Capito, Bill Hagerty, Kevin Cramer, Cynthia M. Lummis, Marsha Blackburn, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Tom Cotton, John Hoeven, Darline Graham, Ted Cruz.

DEMOCRAT PARTY PRIORITIES

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, at the beginning of last year, the New York Times took a poll of the American voters, and the headline captures their results. This is what it said: "Many Americans Say the Democratic Party Does Not Share Their Priorities."

Let me repeat that, Mr. President. "Many Americans Say the Democratic Party Does Not Share Their Priorities."

That is right. A New York Times poll taken weeks after voters rejected Democrats at the ballot box suggested that one of the reasons for Democrats' loss was that Americans don't think Democrats share their priorities.

The story went on to say:

The issues that people cited as most important to them personally were the economy and inflation, health care and immigration

... But when the poll asked Americans to identify Democrats' most important priorities, Americans identified issues like abortion and climate change, among others.

Our Democrat colleagues have found themselves out of power for 18 months now. And we have given them plenty of opportunities to show some evolution—perhaps even moderation—to voters.

But as the record shows, Democrats are still in thrall to the far left of their

party. They still have the same priorities that turned voters off from Democrats in the last election.

Mr. President, for starters, radical transgender ideology remains an article of faith among Democrats.

Democrats have repeatedly opposed efforts to keep biological men out of women's sports. And when the Supreme Court ruled unanimously last month that State laws protecting women's sports are allowable under the plain language of title IX, one Democrat Senator called the ruling unjust.

"Unjust," Mr. President.

As if a young woman working hard all season, only to lose to a man with an inherent biological advantage, is somehow just.

The overwhelming majority of Americans believe that biological men should not be playing women's sports, but that doesn't seem to matter to Senate Democrats. And their commitment to transgender ideology doesn't end with supporting the presence of men in women's sports.

Democrats have also tacitly—or not so tacitly—endorsed radical gender transition procedures being performed on minors. Procedures, I might add, with no substantial medical evidence to support them and plenty of reason to believe they are extremely dangerous for children, but apparently Democrats are fine subjecting children to those risks.

And of course, Mr. President, Democrats are still proudly pro-abortion. And when I say pro-abortion, I mean pro-abortion.

How else do you describe a party that wouldn't even support legislation to provide medical care to a baby born alive during a failed abortion?

A party that can't bring itself to support a bill to ensure that a pregnant college student knows that there are resources available to help her finish her degree and have her baby.

The party that directed small business COVID relief funds to Planned Parenthood, even though they were legally ineligible.

A party that is doing everything it can to eliminate pregnancy resource centers simply because they won't recommend abortion.

As I said, Democrats are in thrall to the far left of their party, and it is not just on those issues. Far-left activists seem to be the audience for almost everything Democrats do these days. Take, for example, Democrats' two—that is right, two—record-long government shutdowns.

Last fall, Democrats shut down the entire Federal Government for a record 43 days to show the far left that they were fighting President Trump. And while TSA lines snaked outside of airports and Americans were visiting food banks because they had to work without pay, the Democrat leader was quoted as saying:

Every day gets better for us.

Better, that is, for Democrats seeking the approval of the far left.