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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.

Shepherd of our souls, be enthroned above the angels, and let Your loving providence give wisdom to our lawmakers. Empower them to turn again to You for guidance as You lead them on the path of Your choosing. Lord, let Your smile of approval for their refusal to leave the path of integrity fill their hearts with joy. Listen to their prayers, and protect them with Your powerful salvation. May the words of their mouths and the meditations of their hearts receive Your divine approbation.

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. MULLIN). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will pro-

ceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Aaron Christian Peterson, of Alaska, to be United States District Judge for the District of Alaska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The wise Senator from Iowa.

TRIBUTE TO ZACH STOPPELMOOR

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to honor a young Iowan who has probably had a lifetime of hard work preparing for something that is coming up very soon in the 2026 Winter Olympics. They begin on Friday in Italy.

As the Senator from Iowa, I am proud that West Des Moines, IA, native Zach Stoppelmoor will be representing Team USA. Zach will be competing in his first Winter Olympics in the 500-meter speed skating competition.

He first began skating at around 6 years old at a place called Skate South roller rink in Des Moines. Zach credits his Iowa coaches for instilling a strong work ethic, and he used that Iowa work ethic to win the U.S. trials in January. Zach's goal is to win a gold medal.

I look forward to watching Zach and all Americans compete in the Winter Olympics over the next few weeks, and we should all say: Go Team USA.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

WOMEN'S SPORTS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it is 1 year this week since President Trump signed an Executive order to protect women's and girls' opportunities in sports. The order denied Federal funding to institutions that allow women's sports to be hijacked by biological males.

Well, this is an issue that means a lot to me. Sports are—always have been—a big deal in my family. And I am the proud father of two daughters, both of whom excelled as student athletes, one

of whom is in both a high school and college Hall of Fame. One of my granddaughters has started playing soccer and basketball, and I want all of my granddaughters to be able to enjoy the opportunities and benefits that sports offer.

Women's sports have made tremendous strides in the past decades. Once a low—or nonexistent—priority for schools and universities, women's sports today are thriving, thanks, in large part, to title IX, the landmark 1972 legislation that prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex in education, opening up equal spaces and opportunities for women.

But now women's sports are facing a new challenge: the push to allow biological males to compete in women's sports. Now, let me start by saying that this is a problem my Democrat colleagues and others on the left would like to minimize.

"It is not a big deal" is the clear message we get from them. Well, it is a big deal. Biological males are taking up places meant for women across a wide variety of sports: basketball, swimming, track, softball, volleyball, soccer, wrestling. And women are losing out as a result.

At the most basic level, I should say, they are losing out on a slot on the team. Every roster place that goes to a male is a roster place that does not—does not—go to a female.

And for women who are on the roster, well, the presence of a biological male can, and frequently does, rob them of opportunities to excel. Biologically, men possess physical advantages when it comes to sports, things like greater muscle mass and greater aerobic power, which means that, by and large, men are likely to dominate in women's sports, taking wins and medal opportunities away from women.

And those wins and medal opportunities aren't just chances to excel; for high school students, they can also be the key to things like college scholarships.

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



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As one female runner who was robbed of multiple wins by a biological male described the situation, “It robs girls of the chance to race in front of college scouts who show up for elite meets, and to compete for the scholarships and opportunities that come with college recruitment. I’ll never know how my own college recruitment was impacted by losing those four State championship titles to a male. When colleges looked at my record, they didn’t see the fastest girl in Connecticut. They saw a second- or third-place runner.”

A 2024 United Nations report on violence against women and girls—this one focused on sports—had this to say:

Policies implemented by international federations and national governing bodies, along with national legislation in some countries, allow males who identify as women to compete in female sports categories. . . . The replacement of the female sports category with a mixed-sex category has resulted in an increasing number of female athletes losing opportunities, including medals, when competing against males. According to information received by March 30, 2024, over 600 female athletes in more than 400 competitions have lost more than 890 medals in 29 different sports.

Let me just repeat that:

[O]ver 600 female athletes in more than 400 competitions have lost more than 890 medals in 29 different sports.

You cannot allow biological men to compete in women’s sports without disadvantaging women. That is just simply a fact. It is also common sense. I have given examples and cited a U.N. report, but most people don’t need to know that the idea of biological males taking up space in women’s sports is wrong. Polling shows that a huge majority of the American people oppose biological males playing in women’s sports.

And last year I gave Members of both parties the chance to take action to uphold the intentions of title IX and to ensure that there are genuine spaces and opportunities for women. The Senate voted on the Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act, legislation from my colleague Senator TUBERVILLE, a former high school girls’ basketball coach, to ensure that women, and women only, participate in women’s sports at federally funded educational institutions, and every single Democrat opposed the bill.

Every Democrat voted against protecting spaces for women and girls in sports. Not one Member, not one Member of the party that likes to style itself as the champion of women’s rights, could bring himself or herself to support women. Transgender ideology won the day, and women took second place.

And so the challenges for women and girls in sports continue. Thanks to this administration’s actions, title IX is being enforced and upheld, and women and girls playing sports at federally funded educational institutions are protected.

But thanks to my Democratic colleagues, those protections can be re-

moved or reversed by the next administration. Generations of women have benefited from fair competition and equal opportunity thanks to title IX. Will Democrats spell the end of title IX’s achievements?

I hope not.

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 Democratic leader is recognized.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the wounds of this Nation will not heal until the terrible abuses of ICE are reined in. The deaths of Renee Good and Alex Pretti have shocked people from one end of America to the other. The image of Federal law enforcement gunning down and murdering U.S. citizens in broad daylight is abominable.

Now, a few moments ago, Tom Homan announced that there will be a drawdown of 700 law enforcement officers in Minneapolis.

Let’s be very clear. Homan’s announcement is not close to enough. Seven hundred officers is going to be like a drop in the bucket to the people of Minneapolis, as over 2,000 agents—representing 70 percent of agents—will still be on the streets, brutalizing citizens, abusing citizens, abusing people. It is not close to enough.

They all have to leave now. That is what the people of Minneapolis want, and, frankly, that is what the American people want, having seen these images.

Seventy percent of the problem is still stationed in Minneapolis. The chaos is going to continue. The danger that someone gets killed—God forbid—continues. All of ICE needs to leave Minneapolis now. They are not needed. Residents don’t want them patrolling the streets like a military occupation.

To say, if 70 percent represents it, that about three-quarters of Minneapolis will still be militarily occupied ain’t close to good enough. It is not what the people of Minneapolis want. It is not what the American people want. A full withdrawal of ICE is the only step—the only right step—for the safety of the citizens and to allow Minneapolis to go function again.

I have heard from our Senators. People can’t go to schools. Stores are closed. Life is disrupted, and it is disrupted as much by 2,000 agents as by 2,700 agents.

Tom Homan is saying that a small group of agents will leave sometime down the line, and that is meaningless.

And let’s be honest, Tom Homan is no hero. Removing Bovino and replacing him with Homan is like switching from somebody who is really, really,

really bad to someone who is just really, really bad. That is cold comfort to the people of Minneapolis.

Tom Homan was the architect and the chief progenitor of many of the awful policies we see in effect right now that are hurting residents in Minneapolis and in so many other places in America.

Today’s announcement only affirms that the real solution to ICE is never going to come from the executive branch policing itself. ICE’s abuse is not a problem that can be solved by executive fiat—and particularly when it is from Donald Trump. We all know that tomorrow Donald Trump could put the 700 troops back, acting like he didn’t even ask for them to be withdrawn. That is how Trump operates.

We need legislation, not executive fiat subject to the whims of Donald Trump. With Donald Trump, it is easy come, easy go. So we need legislation.

Look, most Americans—certainly I—stand firmly behind law enforcement. They have a tough job. They put themselves at risk every day to keep our communities safe. But what Americans don’t like is a subset of Federal agents going off the rails and acting with zero restraint, zero accountability, and acting like a squad of roving thugs—goons.

So Democrats have been clear about what Congress needs to do to end ICE’s violence and ensure public safety. ICE needs to end roving patrols, follow basic standards of accountability, and end the secret police who are masked and unidentified.

These are reasonable demands. Reasonable demands include masks coming off and cameras staying on. Real reasonable demands include accountability so that someone is looking over what is going on here and stopping it and limiting it. Reasonable demands mean no roving patrols where these ICE agents just, at whim, pick up people going to schools and churches.

What we are asking is common sense and what the American people want, and so it is troubling and perplexing that some Republicans, led by Speaker JOHNSON, are right now siding with the secret police.

Speaker JOHNSON says having ICE agents take off their masks would somehow create further danger. Does he know anything about law enforcement? When he goes home to Louisiana, do the sheriffs or police officers wear masks? No.

In every jurisdiction in America, police officers identify themselves. It is a good way of dealing with the handful of abusive officers that exist. It is a good way to make sure people know what is happening.

And JOHNSON says taking masks off is a danger? A greater danger than people getting shot or beaten to a pulp on the streets by unidentified secret police?

Meanwhile, the senior Senator from Texas called the idea of no masks ridiculous. Senator CORNYN says taking masks off is ridiculous.