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# *House of Representatives*

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Thursday, October 1, 2026, at 11:30 a.m.

# *Senate*

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

The Senate met at 10:15 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable ALAN ARMSTRONG, a Senator from the State of Oklahoma.

## PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our sustainer, You know our thoughts from afar. Because of Your mercy, we are not consumed. Great is Your faithfulness. Lord, send Your spirit to empower us to live worthy of Your great Name.

Guide our Senators as they confront the vicissitudes and challenges of our time. Give them the confidence and the assurance that Your purposes will prevail. In the hectic pace of their lives, help them to slow down long enough to hear Your still, small voice of wisdom. Ease the tensions that pull them apart, and keep them united as they strive to do Your will.

Lord, You know us better than we know ourselves; therefore, have Your way in our Nation and throughout our world.

We pray in Your Holy 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 legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
*Washington, DC, September 30, 2026.*

*To the Senate:*

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable ALAN ARMSTRONG, a Senator from the State of Oklahoma, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,
*President pro tempore.*

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

## RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership 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.

## RATEPAYER PROTECTION ACT—Motion to Proceed

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 684, H.R. 9340.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 684, H.R. 9340, a bill to amend the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to establish a Federal standard relating to the recovery of the full, incremental costs of upgrades that serve large-load customers, and for other purposes.

## MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR EN BLOC

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I understand that there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The leader is correct.

The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 5602) to prohibit the use of Federal funds for the planning and construction of any structure or monument at Memorial Circle at Columbia Island/Lady Bird Johnson Park in the District of Columbia.

A bill (S. 5603) to prohibit the demolition of Presidential memorials.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, in order to place the bills on the calendar under

● 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 provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceeding en bloc.

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

## WAIVING QUORUM CALLS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum calls with respect to the cloture motions for H.R. 7008, H.R. 9340, and the Sonderling nomination.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the theme of the Senate this week is common sense. Today, we will be voting on two eminently commonsense pieces of legislation: the Stop Insider Trading Act and the Ratepayer Protection Act.

The Stop Insider Trading Act actually pairs two commonsense measures: a stock purchase ban for Members of Congress and a voter ID measure. Neither requires much explanation.

To ensure that Members of Congress and their families are not benefiting financially from insider knowledge of the market, the stock purchase ban would prohibit Members of Congress, their spouses, or their dependent children from purchasing stocks issued by public companies while the Member is in office. It would also ensure transparency when it comes to stock sales by requiring Members of Congress and their immediate family to provide advance, public notice of any stock sale. And these rules are enforced with real penalties.

It is a pretty simple measure but an important way to ensure that Members of Congress are held to the standards that Americans should be able to expect of their representatives.

The other half of the Stop Insider Trading Act is also pretty simple. It would do nothing more than require that Americans present a photo ID when they go to vote. That is it. Very simple and something that has the overwhelming—overwhelming—support of the American people. And when I say ''the American people,'' I mean the American people—Republicans, Democrats, Independents, everyone.

While this vote should be a no-brainer, I do have some concerns, because while the American people overwhelmingly support a photo ID requirement, for some bizarre reason, congressional Democrats have decided that photo ID for voting is a step too far. I say ''bizarre'' because I haven't seen Democrats crusading against showing ID in any of the other situations where Americans are required to present their photo identification. My Democrat colleagues don't seem to have a problem with showing photo ID to board an airplane, to rent a car, to start a new job. They don't seem to have a problem with showing photo ID at the doctor's office or when buying alcohol or when opening a bank account. They don't seem to have a problem—if the Presiding Officer can believe this, they don't seem to have a problem with having a requirement to show a photo ID at their own political events. Think about that. It is only when it comes to voting that congressional Democrats suddenly, inexplicably see photo ID as a terrible problem, even though not only the majority of Americans but the majority of Democrats support photo identification.

It is pretty hard to explain the Democrats' position, but I suspect one of two things is going on here. Either Democrats are just reflexively opposing this proposal because it came from Republicans or Democrats believe that there are, in fact, people out there voting illegally and that it is benefiting Democrats and they would like to keep that going.

I will say that 13 House Democrats found voter ID and the stock purchase ban to be so common sense that they broke with their party and supported the Stop Insider Trading Act when it moved through the House. I would love to see Senate Democrats follow their example. I guess we will see soon enough.

In addition to the Stop Insider Trading Act, the Senate will be voting on the Ratepayer Protection Act this week as well. I know I have used the words ''common sense'' a lot lately, but as I said, it is the theme of this week's legislation. And the Ratepayer Protection Act is as common sense as it gets. It would simply promote the adoption of a standard that would require data centers to shoulder the electricity costs associated with their operation and construction. That is it—a simple piece of legislation designed to protect hard-working Americans from the increased energy costs associated with data centers.

The Ratepayer Protection Act passed overwhelmingly in the House of Representatives, with almost every Democrat—almost every Democrat—as well as Republicans supporting it. So you would think it would have had a pretty easy passage through this Chamber as well, but when we brought this legislation up here in the Senate a couple of weeks ago, Democrats objected. For what reason, I don't know—presumably a political one.

Given the overwhelming support for this measure in the House, it is difficult to conclude that Democrats blocked this bill for any reason other than the desire to deny Republicans another win in an election year, which is a pretty poor reason for opposing a measure to protect Americans from higher energy costs.

But they have another chance this week, and I guess we will see.

Will Democrats support commonsense measures like a stock purchase ban, photo ID to vote, and protection from higher energy costs? Or will they continue to play politics?

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

## TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, well, for 2 years, Democrats fought fiercely to protect the interests of the American people while Senate Republicans fought tooth and nail to shield Donald Trump. We all knew how disastrous this President would be. We set out to expose how Trump and his party were hurting the American people, and we would do everything we could to stop them.

We fought to lower the skyrocketing costs of Trump's economy: the cost of food, the cost of housing, the cost of energy, the cost of groceries, the cost of gasoline. Republicans pushed policies to drive those costs up.

We exposed Trump for his unprecedented corruption; Republicans aided and abetted his grifts every step of the way.

We worked relentlessly to control Trump's chaos that we see every day; Republicans encouraged him as he spiraled out of control.

Later today, I will talk more about how Senate Democrats have worked together to block the worst Trump's GOP had to throw at the American people.

Now, of course, there is still a lot of work remaining to see America through the storm this administration has unleashed. But Senate Democrats are well positioned to stand up for the American people with the same devotion, cooperation, and discipline we showed these past 2 years.

## RATEPAYER PROTECTION ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on the weak data center bill, the only thing that came out of Trump's big AI summit yesterday was a photo op; no Federal guardrails to protect against catastrophic risk, no signal from Trump that he plans to act.

All Trump had to say was ''there should be tremendous self-regulation.''

Relying on self-regulation is how we got into this mess. Americans are calling for real solutions, real guardrails, real solutions on AI.