(58) Calendar Number 536: William Lane III, of Virginia, to be General Counsel of the Department of the Air Force.

(59) Calendar Number 537: John Noh, of Texas, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

(60) Calendar Number 538: James Caggy, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense. (New Position)

(61) Calendar Number 539: Timothy Dill, of Ohio, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

(62) Calendar Number 540: Michael Payne, of Virginia, to be Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation, Department of Defense.

(63) Calendar Number 541: Maurice Todd, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

(64) Calendar Number 550: Ethan Klein, of New Jersey, to be an Associate Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

(65) Calendar Number 551: Stephen Carmel, of Virginia, to be Administrator of the Maritime Administration.

(66) Calendar Number 552: Timothy Petty, of Indiana, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere.

(67) Calendar Number 553: Laura DiBella, of Florida, to be a Federal Maritime Commissioner for a term expiring June 30, 2028.

(68) Calendar Number 554: Trent Morse, of Florida, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority for a term expiring May 30, 2030.

(69) Calendar Number 555: Michelle A. Schultz, of Pennsylvania, to be a Member of the Surface Transportation Board for a term expiring November 30, 2030. (Reappointment)

(70) Calendar Number 556: Paul Hollis, of Louisiana, to be Director of the Mint for a term of 5 years.

(71) Calendar Number 557: Francis Cassidy, of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

(72) Calendar Number 558: Joseph Gormley, of Maryland, to be President, Government National Mortgage Association.

(73) Calendar Number 559: Travis Hill, of Maryland, to be Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation for a term of 5 years.

(74) Calendar Number 561: Jeffrey Goettman, of Virginia, to be a Deputy United States Trade Representative (Africa, Western Hemisphere, Europe, the Middle East, Environment, Labor, and Industrial Competitiveness), with the Rank of Ambassador.

(75) Calendar Number 562: Arjun Mody, of New Jersey, to be Deputy Commissioner Social Security for the term expiring January 19, 2031.

(76) Calendar Number 563: Julie Callahan, of the District of Columbia, to be Chief Agricultural Negotiator, Office of the United States Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador.

(77) Calendar Number 564: Leo Brent Bozell III, of Virginia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of South Africa.

(78) Calendar Number 565: Benjamin Leon, Jr., of Florida, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Spain, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Principality of Andorra.

(79) Calendar Number 566: Brent Christensen, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

(80) Calendar Number 567: Morvared Namdarkhan, of Texas, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Consular Affairs).

(81) Calendar Number 568: Thomas Bell, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services.

(82) Calendar Number 569: John Walk, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Department of Agriculture.

(83) Calendar Number 570: Andrew Duva, of Florida, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

(84) Calendar Number 575: Erin Creegan, of New Hampshire, to be United States Attorney for the District of New Hampshire for the term of 4 years.

(85) Calendar Number 576: Ryan Anthony Kriegshauser, of Kansas, to be United States Attorney for the District of Kansas for the term of 4 years.

(86) Calendar Number 577: James Kruger, of Mississippi, to be United States Attorney for the Southern District of Mississippi for the term of 4 years.

(87) Calendar Number 578: Scott Leary, of Mississippi, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Mississippi for the term of 4 years.

(88) Calendar Number 579: Michael Selig, of Florida, to be Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

(89) Calendar Number 580: Michael Selig, of Florida, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for a term expiring April 13, 2029.

(90) Calendar Number 582: Melissa Argyros, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Latvia.

(91) Calendar Number 583: Yehuda Kaploun, of Florida, to be Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, with the rank of Ambassador.

(92) Calendar Number 584: Bernardo Navarro, of Puerto Rico, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Peru.

(93) Calendar Number 585: Darryl Nirenberg, of Virginia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Romania.

(94) Calendar Number 586: Tammy Bruce, of California, to be the Deputy Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, the Deputy Representative of the United States of America in the Security Council of the United Nations, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations, during her tenure of service as Deputy Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations.

(95) Calendar Number 587: Christopher Yeaw, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Stability).

(96) Calendar Number 588: Mary Anne Carter, of Tennessee, to be Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Arts for a term of 4 years.

(97) Calendar Number 589: Scott Mayer, of Pennsylvania, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board for the term of 5 years expiring December 16, 2029.

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER FOR AN EVENT TO UNVEIL THE STATUE OF BARBARA ROSE JOHNS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to H. Con. Res. 62, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 62) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for an event to unveil the statue of Barbara Rose Johns.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 62) was agreed to.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT ON NOVEMBER 29, 2025, AND RECOGNIZING ITS TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 531, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 531) celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act on November 29, 2025, and recognizing its transformative impact on the education of children with disabilities.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 531) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in recess until 3 p.m., Monday, December 8; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each. Finally, notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture motion with respect to Executive Calendar No. 571, Robert Chamberlin, ripen at 5:30 p.m.

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

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand in recess under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator CASSIDY.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, we just had a shutdown over something that the American people I am not quite sure understand, but what they do understand is that they cannot afford their health insurance. They cannot, if you will, afford the cost of being insured. Prices of health insurance and of healthcare are up for everybody. It is not sustainable, and they are looking to us—they are looking to Congress—for solutions.

As a physician, as a doctor, I have seen it firsthand. I have seen patients come to see me with insurance, but they could not afford their deductibles. I have seen people who could not afford their insurance and who therefore take the risk that they will not get sick. We should not have that in our country.

In July, the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee—the HELP Committee, which I chair—discussed affordability across the entire commercial insurance market, trying to find out why costs are going up so high when you are buying your insurance through your employer or, as the employer, buying the insurance for the employee. But it doesn't matter. If you are on the individual market or if you are on the small business market, you are paying more, and because of increasing healthcare costs, insurance premiums are climbing as well.

Now let's go to the ObamaCare exchanges because the shutdown we just had for over 40 days was related to the fact that subsidies are ending on the ObamaCare exchanges.

A little bit of history: During the COVID pandemic, health insurance premiums were going up so much that Democrats passed extended, temporary, enhanced premium tax credits—if you will, EPTCs—which helped give more money on top of the original ObamaCare subsidies to help people afford their premiums.

The way it works is they didn't give the money to the patient, to the individual, to our fellow American; they gave the money to highly consolidated insurance companies, which take 20 percent of that for profit and overhead.

Now, I am not knocking insurance companies. We all have insurance for our cars, for flood insurance, for property and casualty, et cetera. I am just pointing out that they do take 20 percent of what we give them for profit and overhead.

By giving the money to the insurance companies, we are not actually lowering the cost of the premium; we are just papering over it with subsidies. Somebody is paying for that. It is the taxpayer who is paying for that. The premium is going up. Yes, the person getting the insurance pays less, but we the taxpayers are paying for it. There is no free lunch when it comes to this.

The enhanced premium tax credits don't lower the cost of healthcare, but they are a bandaid on a broken bone.

By the way, we can prove this.

In 2014, taxpayers covered 68 percent of an ObamaCare exchange enrollee's premiums. By 2020, 60 percent had become 80 percent, meaning that is how much the taxpayer was subsidizing. From 2021 to 2025—the era of the enhanced premium tax credits—the taxpayers' share of subsidizing the premiums on the exchanges grew to 93 percent. What started off as 68 percent has become 93 percent this year. Yet, despite all this money—let me repeat—the actual premium never decreased; it is just that the taxpayers were paying more of it for our fellow Americans.

Now, somebody is paying. You and I are paying it. By the way, if you are not getting extra money, if you are paying for it on your own, you are still paying those higher and higher rates. If I were that person individually insured who was not getting the subsidy when everyone else was but my tax dollars were going to subsidize other people, I would feel totally taken advantage of. You are paying for others to get cheaper insurance, but you are paying more because nobody is addressing the higher costs of healthcare.

We should be fair to our fellow Americans who can't afford their premiums. We should be fair to our fellow Americans who are not getting subsidies. So what do we have to do? Well, let's go after the root cause of what is causing the healthcare costs to rise. Let's find out why that is, and let's attempt to decrease the cost of healthcare. It is hard, but I think there are practical solutions that are implementable that could actually do that.

But that is only one part of the conversation. The second part of the conversation is, what do we do about January 1, 2026, when the tax credits that the Democrats passed are set to expire at the end of this year? What do we do for those Americans who are in some cases facing $33,000-a-year premiums who have a salary of $90,000? What do we do for them?

Some people just want to continue the subsidies as they are—the status quo: Let's continue the subsidies for 3 more years. And, yes, the premiums will continue to rise. Yes, it will require taxpayers to subsidize more and more. By the way, the policies we are buying have $6,000 deductibles. They want to continue that status quo.

Well, I can tell you that I am not interested in the status quo. As a physician, I can tell you that putting a bandaid over a broken bone doesn't work. And the Republicans are absolutely interested in finding a solution that can make healthcare and health insurance more affordable beginning on January 1, 2026, but going on beyond that.

So what can we do for January 1, 2026? This is where I think we are headed: If Congress does what it always does, Democrats are going to put up a bill, and it is going to fail. They are going to put up a bill, and they are going to know it is going to fail. The Republicans will put up a bill, and it will fail, and everyone will know that that bill will fail too.

Then premiums will rise on January 1, 2026. The American people who are looking to Congress for a solution will find two bills side by side, neither of which passes and both of which we know will fail, and their premiums will go up. That should not be an option.

I suggest that we find a solution—not a Republican solution, not a Democratic solution, but an American solution. Put differently, not an R, not a D, but an A solution. There are ideas out there on the right and the left that are big ideas, good ideas, or bad ideas, but they are going to take a long time to discuss, debate, figure out, and implement. We have to be focused on January 1, 2026, and that means we have to build on what we already have. Now, folks may not like what we already have, but we have to focus on getting something done in 3 weeks.

So we have two choices: Do nothing and accept the premise that no deal is possible, that the enhanced premium tax credits go away, that there are no reforms to a failing system, that a Democratic bill and a Republican bill both fail like so much fails in Congress, and that the American people are not served—that is one option—or we can roll up our sleeves and figure out something we can all live with.

I think that there is, if you will, such a sweet spot, one in which Congress appropriates funds equivalent—roughly equivalent—to what we would spend on the enhanced premium tax credits, but instead of 100 percent of this money going to insurance companies, which take 20 percent of it for their deductibles and copays, we give 100 percent almost to the patient, to our fellow American, in an account that she controls and can use as she wishes.

So I am proposing not to continue—I will put it up there for our guests in the audience.

Good to see you all.