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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TODD YOUNG, a Senator from the State of Indiana.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God, who inhabits eternity, whose throne is Heaven and whose footstool is the Earth, You have given us the gift of this day, and we will rejoice and be glad in it.

May our lawmakers never forget that they borrow their heartbeat from You. Continue to sustain them and give them all that they need to glorify Your Name. May Your Spirit move them that they will make concessions without coercion and be conciliatory without compromising. Compel them to be just and honest in all their dealings. May they remember that our country is no better than its citizens and no stronger than its commitment to righteousness. Lord, bless our Senators in their going out and coming in, their rising up and lying down, their labor and their leisure.

We pray in Your loving 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. HATCH).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 30, 2017.

To the Senate:

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

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

STREAM BUFFER RULE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, for too long, coal communities in States like Kentucky were unfairly targeted by the Obama administration as part of its War on Coal. We now have the opportunity to start providing relief to coal families, whose only crime was working to support their loved ones. Easing the pain of these regulations is a priority. I laid it out in a letter to President Trump earlier this year. That letter was a continuation of efforts I began several years ago to push back against the previous administration's assault on coal families. I am pleased the President has already begun taking steps to provide relief from several different regulations imposed by the former administration, regulations that for too long have stifled growth and held our country back.

Together, we can do more, including right here in Congress through the Congressional Review Act or CRA process. One of the first regulations we are working to address is the so-called stream buffer rule, a harmful regulation put into place by the Obama administration at the eleventh hour. One analysis estimates that it could threat-

en one-third of the Nation's coal-mining jobs—one-third. That is why so many across coal country have called for relief from this harmful attack.

We have heard individual voices against this regulation. We have heard union voices in opposition, like the United Mine Workers of America, and we have heard from groups like the Kentucky Coal Association, who recently wrote to me about its negative impact. Here is what they said:

The undeniable truth is that this rule will have a real impact on the real world. It will cause real harm to real people who support real families in real communities.

This regulation is an attack on coal families. It jeopardizes jobs and transfers power away from States and local governments. Today, I am introducing a bipartisan resolution to overturn it.

Congress will also continue acting to provide relief from other regulations that attack our economy and our constituents. In fact, the House will act on its own version of this Congressional Review Act resolution and several others this week. I urge our friends to do so quickly so we can pass them here in the Senate and start providing relief to our coal communities, to our national economy, and to our constituents.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate will continue working to put into place President Trump's Cabinet, and tonight we will have a cloture vote on the nominee for Secretary of State. This nominee is well qualified. He has been a leader at one of America's largest employers, and he has the type of international work experience that will serve him well as our next Secretary of State. We are looking forward to advancing his nomination tonight.

Remember, it is in everybody's best interest to confirm each of the President's well-qualified nominees in a timely manner so they can begin the very important work before them on

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



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