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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Spirit of God, descend on our hearts. For apart from You, we live our lives in vain. May our Senators walk in Your ways, keeping Your precepts with such integrity that they will never be ashamed. Lord, incline their hearts to Your wisdom, providing them with the understanding they need to accomplish Your purposes in our world. Let Your mercy protect them from the dangers of this life, as they learn to find delight in Your guidance. Keep them ever mindful of the fewness of their days and the greatness of their work. Remove from them any bitterness or resentment that corrodes their peace. Deliver them from the tyranny of trifles, as they strive to accomplish Your work on Earth.

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.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. STRANGE). The majority leader is recognized.

### HEALTHCARE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, Americans have been hurting under ObamaCare. Senators took a big step toward moving beyond its failures with

the motion-to-proceed vote earlier this week. It allowed the Senate to proceed with this important debate. It allowed the Senate to work through an open amendment process.

Senators have considered proposals already, including some procedural motions from across the aisle. Senators will have the opportunity to consider many, many more amendments tonight. I know that colleagues in both parties are eager to do so.

I encourage Senators with healthcare ideas—whether Republicans, Democrats, or Independents—to bring their amendments to the floor. We have heard many different ideas on healthcare in recent months. Not every idea, of course, is a good one.

One idea from the Democratic leader is simply to throw money at insurance companies—no reforms, no changes, just a multimillion-dollar bandaid.

Another idea from many other Democrats is to quadruple down on ObamaCare with a government-run single-payer system. It is called single payer because there is one payer, or insurer, the government. Nearly every healthcare decision would be directed by a Federal bureaucrat. Taxes could go up astronomically. The total cost could add up to \$32 trillion, according to an estimate of a leading proposal.

We will vote on single payer this afternoon, and we will find out what support it enjoys in the Senate—especially on the other side of the aisle. We all know this is likely to be a very long night. It is part of a long process that has taken a lot of hard work from a lot of dedicated colleagues already.

One phase of that process will end when the Senate concludes voting this week, but it will not signal the end of our work—not yet. Ultimately, the goal is to send legislation from Congress to the President—legislation that can finally move us beyond ObamaCare's years of failures.

The President is ready to sign legislation. Congress will keep working to

pass it because we know the American people deserve better than ObamaCare. They deserve better than ObamaCare and its skyrocketing costs. They deserve better than ObamaCare and its plummeting choices. They deserve better than the job-killing regulations, crushing mandates, and collapsing markets ObamaCare has given them.

We all know this. We all know that the ObamaCare status quo hasn't been working for the people we represent. We have known it for literally years.

Many of us committed to voting for a better way on healthcare. That is what every Senator who supported the motion to proceed voted for on Tuesday.

Let's finish our work. Let's not allow this opportunity to slip by. We have made important progress already. We can build on it now.

The moment before us is one many of us have waited for and talked about for a very long time. It is a moment that can't come soon enough for the people we represent. I urge everyone to keep working hard so we can get this over the finish line. It is what our constituents and our country deserve.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

### AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT OF 2017

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1628, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

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



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