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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Thursday, October 19, 2017, at 12 p.m.

Senate

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2017

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.

Eternal God, the fountain of all wisdom and power, we are grateful that You still rule in Heaven. May our lawmakers continue to remember that Your purposes will prevail and that Your justice cannot be thwarted. Answer the prayers of our Senators as they daily seek Your wisdom, guidance, and protection. Lord, sustain them with Your unfailing love, rescuing them from the destructive forces that go contrary to Your will. Instruct our legislators even in the night seasons so that Your will may be done on Earth even as it is done in Heaven. Do for them exceedingly, abundantly above all that they can ask or imagine according to Your power working in and through them.

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. SASSE). The majority leader is recognized.

WORK BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate, as I said yesterday, has a full schedule of work before it this fall. It is what the President, Vice President, and I discussed at our working lunch at the White House yesterday.

This week, the Senate is advancing one of the most important items on our agenda with consideration of the comprehensive budget for fiscal year 2018. It is a good budget that reflects the hard work of Chairman ENZI and the Budget Committee. It will help rein in Federal spending. It will help our country achieve balance. It will also help our economy grow.

One of the ways this budget will do so is by providing legislative tools to advance tax reform. After a lost decade of missed economic opportunities, America's middle class deserves an economy that reaches for its full potential again, and tax reform is the single most important thing we can do today to get there.

It is not hard to see why. Our current Tax Code is archaic, arduous, and often just plain bizarre. It holds our economy back. It can hold workers' wages down. It actually incentivizes companies to shift jobs and profits overseas. It makes it easier for the wealthy and well-connected to game the system. Yet it is almost impossible for anyone else to understand it.

A constituent from Harrodsburg, KY, wrote to my office exasperated about the unfair Tax Code. This is what she said: "I am writing today to express my complete and total disgust for the complex, completely unfair, and completely messed up tax system in this country." This constituent, who has worked for nearly three decades as a CPA and has helped countless Kentuckians navigate the system, described some of the hardships faced by her clients and then continued by saying that "the honest, hardworking folks can't get ahead, the cheaters don't get caught and the rich just keep getting richer."

That was my constituent from Harrodsburg, KY, summing up today's Tax Code. Her story underlines the systemic problems of our Tax Code, and it is often our Nation's workers—including those in Kentucky—who continue to bear the burden.

Recently, the Kentucky State treasurer wrote an op-ed calling on Congress to provide much needed relief from our Tax Code. "We need tax reform," she wrote, "to increase Kentucky's economic growth and for greater middle-class prosperity throughout the Commonwealth."

I agree. So does President Trump, his team, and our colleagues here in Congress. We are all in agreement that delivering relief to working families should be at the heart of our plan, and that is what we continue to work toward in developing tax reform.

For families and individuals in Kentucky and across the Nation, we think taxes should be lower, simpler, and fairer. Our plan calls for doubling the

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



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