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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.

Eternal God, You have truly been good to us. Even when we stumble and fall, Your mercy continues to sustain us.

Lead our lawmakers to realize that the abilities You have given them are maximized only when they are used for Your purposes. Show them the best way to use their talents and opportunities to honor and serve You and humanity.

May our Senators this day speak words that are constructive and helpful, bringing encouragement as well as vision to their labors. Give them the wisdom to know Your will and the courage to do it. Let Your presence be felt in this Chamber and everywhere on Earth.

We pray in Your Holy 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CAPITO). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to titles II and V of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018.

Pending:

McConnell (for Hatch/Murkowski) amendment No. 1618, of a perfecting nature.

Baldwin motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions.

Wyden (for Nelson) motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

ORDER FOR RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that following the remarks of the Senator from Wisconsin, the Senate stand in recess subject to the call of the chair.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, before I address the issue of taxes, let me address the matter of the government funding bill.

We are now only a week away from a government shutdown, which, to remind my colleagues, could cost our economy thousands of jobs and billions of dollars, as it did in 2013. I think a government shutdown is something we all desperately want to avoid, Democrats and Republicans—I talked to some of my colleagues this morning—with the exception, it seems, of the President.

This morning's Washington Post reports that President Trump has told his confidantes that a government shutdown could be good for him politically and that he has asked friends

about how a shutdown would affect him politically. It is disappointing but maybe not surprising that President Trump appears to be putting politics before the well-being of the American people. As President, the welfare of the American people should always come first—always.

We have a lot of things to accomplish by the end of the year, and a government spending deal is particularly important for our men and women in uniform, as well as a host of programs that create jobs and boost the economy.

The President talks about defending the troops and then threatens a shutdown. It is a contradiction—a contradiction—and I am sure our generals would tell him that even playing around with the possibility of sequester and shutting down the government is no good for our armed services, as well as for the rest of the country.

We should all be focused on avoiding a government shutdown. Certainly Democrats will be working with our Republican colleagues in Congress to that end. I think our Republican colleagues agree. I hope they won't succumb to President Trump's whim based on a political decision and not on what is good for America. President Trump must change his tune—and soon—if he wants to be a constructive partner in those discussions rather than the focal point of blame.

Madam President, on taxes, my Republican friends have stretched into day 2 of their debate on the bill, which still lacks resolution on some critical issues.

After promising over the past few months that their tax bill would pay for itself through economic growth, the Joint Committee on Taxation came out with a report yesterday that showed that these promises were unfounded, way off the mark. Even considering economic growth, the Republican tax bill will add roughly \$1 trillion to the deficit. And many economists have said

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



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