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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.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.

Most high God, You are the great King of the Earth. Nations must submit to Your sovereignty, for You hold the hearts of national and global leaders in Your hands.

May our lawmakers remember that You can show them a way out of any difficulty, empowering them to not give up. Remind them that the tests they face are similar to what other generations have experienced and that You will enable them to prevail as You have done in the past.

Lord, thank You for Your faithfulness, mercy, and love.

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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

ALLOW STATES AND VICTIMS TO FIGHT ONLINE SEX TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2017—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will re-

sume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 1865, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 339, H.R. 1865, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that section 230 of such Act does not prohibit the enforcement against providers and users of interactive computer services of Federal and State criminal and civil law relating to sexual exploitation of children or sex trafficking, and for other purposes.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

SENATE AGENDA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, this is the start of another busy week in the Senate. We have a lot to accomplish for the American people.

This week, we will take up an omnibus that builds on the bipartisan funding agreement we reached back in February. It will provide our Armed Forces with the stable funding they need to meet emerging challenges.

Among other important matters, it will also strengthen our fight against the scourge of opioid addiction—an issue the President has already declared a public health emergency and is continuing to address today up in New Hampshire.

We have several concrete opportunities to make America safer and more secure. First, we will vote on the confirmation of Kevin McAleenan, the President's nominee for Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Mr. McAleenan is a 16-year veteran of the CBP. He served under administrations of both parties. His nomination carries the unflinching support of a bipartisan group of leaders and was thoroughly vetted in committee. Ensuring our national security means steady control over what and who comes across our borders. I would urge everyone to join me in voting to confirm him later today.

Later this week, the Senate will turn to another important matter relating

to America's safety and security. We will take up legislation to combat the evil of sex trafficking. Keeping children safe from exploitation has been a key focus for several of us going back some years. In 1984, I advocated the passage of the Missing Children's Assistance Act. In the 1990s, I was proud to introduce measures that mandated centralized reporting for missing children's cases and created a national database and screening system to identify abusers. In 2003, I joined a number of colleagues as founding members of the Senate Caucus on Missing, Exploited and Runaway Children. As recently as 2015, the Senate passed the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. This week, it is time to build on those achievements and take another step.

It is time to confront the reality that trafficking has largely moved from the street corner to the smartphone. From 2010 to 2015, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children saw reports of suspected child sex trafficking increase more than eightfold. Last year alone, more than 8,500 cases were reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline. Part of the problem is a 1996 communications law that is being misused to protect websites that knowingly facilitate sex trafficking. The legislation before the Senate will reform that law and ensure these institutions can be held accountable for facilitating these heinous crimes. Senator PORTMAN has worked long and hard on this subject. He has helped assemble a broad, bipartisan coalition.

I would urge everyone to join me in voting to advance this legislation later this afternoon.

TAX REFORM

Mr. President, now, on one final matter, the good news about tax reform keeps piling up. Here is one important headline from just a few days ago. "U.S. consumer confidence hits 14-year high." That is right; tax reform is contributing to a dynamic, growing economy, and Americans are taking notice.

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



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