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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.

Our Father in Heaven, You clothe Yourself with light as with a robe. You spread the glorious Heavens with Your mighty hand. Listen now to our prayers, and forgive us for our conscious and unconscious transgressions.

Lord, bless our lawmakers until all they do may find the goals You have inspired. May they live this day with a greater dedication to serve You and humanity. Give them grace to fill every hour with an awareness of Your love, mercy, and grace.

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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

ceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Stuart Kyle Duncan, of Louisiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

NOMINATION OF MIKE POMPEO

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today our colleagues on the Foreign Relations Committee will vote to report the President's choice for the next Secretary of State.

It is really hard to imagine someone more thoroughly qualified than Mike Pompeo. His career is a success story on every single level. He graduated first in his class from West Point, served as a U.S. Army officer, and attended Harvard Law School. Then came success in business, and then Mike's neighbors elected him to Congress in 2010.

That impressive resume explains why, a little more than a year ago, a large bipartisan majority of Senators confirmed Mike as CIA Director. His qualifications were perfectly obvious, and, by all accounts, his track record at the CIA shows that vote of confidence was exactly the right decision. He has demonstrated mastery of the daily briefings he both receives and delivers. His high-quality counsel on sensitive matters has won the confidence not only of our national clandestine service but also of the Commander in Chief, and he has returned our CIA to the aggressive gathering of foreign intelligence. Along the way, he has built a reputation for listening to all points of view, trusting career staff, treating everyone fairly, and acting decisively.

In Mike Pompeo, the United States will have a chief diplomat who will enjoy the total confidence of the President and is uniquely qualified to reinvigorate our Foreign Service and represent our interests abroad. It is hard

to imagine a better nominee for this mission, at this moment, than Mike Pompeo. I look forward to upholding the tradition of this body and voting to confirm him this week.

The Senate will also vote later this afternoon to advance the nomination of Kyle Duncan of Louisiana to serve on the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Mr. Duncan's legal credentials show that the President has made another outstanding choice.

With degrees from LSU and Columbia under his belt, he built an impressive record in litigation, rising to serve as appellate chief in the Louisiana office of attorney general.

His accomplishments also extend to private practice, where his work earned the respect of his colleagues and peers, including his opponents in court.

A few weeks ago, a law professor and litigator who sparred with Kyle Duncan in a high-profile case wrote:

Kyle Duncan is a magnificent nominee for the Fifth Circuit. . . . His confirmation should be supported by all who value judges committed to fairness and scrupulous application of the law.

A bipartisan group of current and former State solicitors general wrote to our colleagues on the Judiciary Committee to praise his nomination. Here is what they said:

As frequent advocates in the U.S. Courts of Appeals, we are well-acquainted with the qualifications and characteristics that make good judges, including intellect, integrity, legal experience, and temperament, all of which Mr. Duncan possesses in ample quantities.

They went on to say:

We came to know him as a highly skilled lawyer with an easygoing demeanor, and as someone we could routinely turn to for advice and interest on issues of mutual interest. Even though we have worked for state Attorneys General of different political stripes, we all agree that Kyle Duncan has the personal and professional qualities that should typify the federal judiciary.

No wonder the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on 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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