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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, most holy, wise, and powerful, You are the Governor of the Universe. Keep our lawmakers this day in health of body, soundness of mind, and purity of heart. Infuse them with a spirit of courage that comes from believing that their times are in Your hands. Lord, strengthen them to labor for the fulfillment of Your purposes, empowered by You to navigate through life's turbulent waters. Direct them through every difficulty, comfort them in times of sorrow, and supply their needs according to the riches of Your grace.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 11, 2018.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Sen-

ator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COTTON thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Brian Allen Benczkowski, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday I had an opportunity to meet with Judge Brett Kavanaugh as we begin preparations for his confirmation process to the Supreme Court. It is really impossible not to come away impressed. Judge Kavanaugh is the real deal. He has the all-star legal resume and the top-light academic credentials. His extensive judicial record is defined by fairness, thoughtfulness, thoroughness, and analytical precision. I was already confident the President had

made an outstanding choice. Now I am even more confident. My colleagues here and Americans around the country won't have to take my word for it; just look to one of Judge Kavanaugh's former professors at Yale Law School. Here is what Professor Akhil Amar wrote in the New York Times: "It is hard to name anyone with judicial credentials as strong as those of Judge Kavanaugh."

Current faculty at Yale Law described him as a "true intellectual," "a leading thinker," and "a wonderful mentor and teacher to our students."

Even at Harvard, his alma mater's archrival, a scholar agrees that Judge Kavanaugh is "a generous, honorable, kind person."

Ask the legal professionals who have clerked for him on the DC Circuit. They are in a better position than most to speak to his writing as a jurist. In a letter to our colleagues on the Judiciary Committee, 34 of them share that Judge Kavanaugh "drafts opinions painstakingly, writing and rewriting until he is satisfied each opinion is clear and well-reasoned, and can be understood not only by lawyers but by the parties and the public."

As the confirmation process gets underway, I have a distinct feeling this isn't the only testimony of this sort that we will be hearing. Judge Kavanaugh seems to impress everyone with whom he crosses paths—at least those who haven't blindly announced in a fit of partisanship their opposition to this nomination before he was even named.

I am glad that President Trump has made such a strong selection, and I look forward to our colleagues in the Judiciary Committee taking up this nomination.

Mr. President, speaking of the personnel business, we are continuing this week to process President Trump's qualified nominees for other important positions in the judicial and executive branches. Yesterday, we confirmed 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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