



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 164

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, AUGUST 16, 2018

No. 136

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, August 17, 2018, at 9 a.m.

Senate

THURSDAY, AUGUST 16, 2018

The Senate met at 9:30 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.

Holy God, lover of our souls, come into our hearts this day, bringing sweetness, contentment, and peace.

Lord, support our Senators, enabling them to proceed in their work with total trust in You. May they remember with thankfulness the showers of blessings You send them each day. Release them from sorrow, filling them with true faith and sacred consolation. As they strive to trust You with all their hearts, direct their steps, leading them to Your desired destination. Today, may they live to please You.

We pray in Your precious 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. HELLER). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate is back in session this August for a simple reason: We have more to do for the families across America who count on us to work hard and to fight for them. That is why the next legislation the Senate will consider is a pair of critically important appropriations bills that will fund our national defense, along with the Department of Labor and the Department of Health and Human Services.

Talk about subjects that are vital to the American people, at stake is a 2.6-percent pay raise for U.S. servicemembers, the largest pay raise for troops in almost a decade; the equipment, tools, and training they need to complete their mission; and funding to support the necessary programs we just authorized when the John S. McCain National Defense Act became law earlier this week.

At stake are billions of dollars to fight back against the opioid crisis, hundreds of millions to support and retrain American workers who need a boost back into the labor force, hundreds of millions more for employment training specifically for our veterans, funding for the Centers for Disease Control and the National Institutes of Health, and Federal funding for our Nation's schools. I have only scratched the surface. There will be plenty of

time in the days ahead to discuss and detail all of the ways this legislation will help our country, as well as to consider amendments.

Yesterday was a promising start. We agreed to proceed to these two important funding bills by consent after we wrap up the nominations that are before us today. Now we need to keep up the collaboration.

There is a reason why it has been quite some time since we have completed a full, regular process. There is a reason why, for example, it has been 15 years—15 years—since the Senate passed the Labor, Health, and Education bill in time for the start of the fiscal year.

This process is not easy. It is hard work for our Appropriations subcommittees and the full committee to craft this legislation. Then, on the floor, we need cooperation from both sides to process amendments, while resisting the temptation to turn the appropriations process into a free-for-all on all manner of policy issues. But this year, that is exactly what we are doing.

The Senate has already passed 7 of 12 bills. In the next several days, we will consider Nos. 8 and 9. Once we finish them, they will encompass more than 87 percent—more than 87 percent—of total discretionary spending—two more big strides toward avoiding another omnibus and appropriating the taxpayers' money in the right way.

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



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