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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CINDY HYDE-SMITH, a Senator from the State of Mississippi.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Pastor Sam Steele of Chapel by the Sea from South Padre Island, TX.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Good morning.

Christ Jesus sent people out two by two.

Let us pray.

Eternal God, as our Senators gather—two from each State—they break down barriers that divide, create an environment of honest dialogue, and bring about positive compromise so that there is unity in our diversity and so our Nation is steadfast in the foundation of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Loving God, we lift up to You our brothers and sisters touched by the weather across our land. May we reach out our hands of love and help. Comfort those who suffer, and strengthen those who serve.

Creator God, pour Your wisdom upon each Senator. Bless them with humility as they serve, and make us once again "we the people."

In Your Holy Name we pray. 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, September 25, 2018.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CINDY HYDE-SMITH, a Senator from the State of Mississippi, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH 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 to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Peter A. Feldman, of the District of Columbia, to be a Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission for the remainder of the term expiring October 26, 2019.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, in the past week and a half, the American people have seen a confusing and chaotic process play out right here in the Senate.

They have seen uncorroborated, decades-old allegations of wrongdoing pop up in the press at the last minute, just as Judge Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation process was winding down.

They have seen an accuser's request for privacy disregarded and ordinary standards of fairness completely discarded.

They have seen a disturbing pattern play out on two separate occasions already. It goes like this: No. 1, our Democratic colleagues on the Judiciary Committee get wind of or maybe even go looking for a sensitive allegation. Second, they decline to share it with the majority, meaning the committee cannot promptly take appropriate action. Third, they allow the allegation to leak to the press at the last moment.

Fortunately, in stark contrast to this malpractice, the American people have also seen the exemplary manner in which Chairman GRASSLEY has led the Judiciary Committee throughout the entire process. The chairman has acted swiftly and transparently in pursuit of the truth. He has treated Dr. Ford with kindness and respect. Acknowledging that the irresponsible and irregular manner in which her allegation was brought to light was no fault of hers, the chairman opened a dialogue with Dr. Ford's counsel. He deferred to her preferences on the timing of her hearing and a number of other details.

I will quote from a letter the chairman wrote to Dr. Ford yesterday. Here is what Chairman GRASSLEY had to say:

I am committed to fair and respectful treatment of you. . . . [The] hearing on Thursday will allow you to testify and also will allow the nominee to address the allegations. . . . Both of you deserve a credible and fair process in a secure and professional setting.

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



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