



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 165

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2019

No. 15

Senate

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, give our lawmakers this day the wisdom to seek Your guidance and to make time to consider and act on your precepts. May they not simply embrace the opinions of others but seek Your truth for their lives.

Lord, make them muscular thinkers, not merely reflectors of the thoughts of others. Help them to make pleasing you, O God, their first priority. May they serve You with such humility and gratitude that You can bless them in ways that stagger their imaginations.

And, Lord, be with the members of the illustrious Senate page class, who will be leaving us tomorrow.

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. SCOTT of Florida). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST ACT OF 2019—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to S. 1.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S. 1, a bill to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, later today—on day 34 of this partial government shutdown—the Senate will be voting on a proposal to finally end it. We will be voting on the one plan—the only one on the table—that would reopen the shuttered portions of the Federal Government. It is a pragmatic compromise that could end this impasse right away.

The choice is absolutely clear, and the Nation is watching. Members can vote to immediately reopen the entire government with a compromise package that the President will actually sign, or they can hold out for the Democratic leader's dead-end proposal that stands no chance of earning the President's signature and ending the partial shutdown.

The President's compromise would accomplish three things. First, it ends the shutdown and resumes pay for Federal workers right away. Second, it strikes a bipartisan compromise on the issue of immigration and border security with ideas from both sides. Third, it provides stable, full-year funding for the Federal Government, not another short-term bandaid.

First, ending the shutdown. We have heard from Federal workers whose lives are in disarray. We have heard about the family hardships caused by

the Democrats' unwillingness to sit down and negotiate with the President. We have heard from those who have endured over a month without pay. We have heard from the men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard, air traffic controllers, TSA agents, and other Federal employees. Every American deserves a fully operational government. Taxpayers aren't getting special tax refunds for these weeks when services and Agencies have been diminished or are unavailable.

The President has been at the negotiating table, ready to talk and to fix it. Democrats have made the opposite political calculation, and our Nation is paying the price.

The way forward is simple. We all know the ground rules. We need a compromise that can pass both Chambers and earn the Presidential signature. That is the way you make a law in this country. The first proposal we will vote on today is the only legislation that exists with any chance of checking those boxes—getting the President's signature and making a law.

On immigration and border security, this legislation provides the resources the men and women who risk their own safety to defend our border tell us are necessary. In the past year, we have watched as apprehensions of family units at the borders have risen—more young people brought into danger.

They have seen more interdiction of illicit substances like heroin, methamphetamine, and fentanyl and higher rates of attempted crossings by gang members and criminals.

The need for more security on our border is not a partisan invention. It is a fact. It is a reality most Senate Democrats readily admit.

One Senate Democrat said: "I'm willing to support more border security."

Another said: "Certainly, you need barriers. And we support barriers."

Not to be outdone, a third said: "I'm a huge advocate of border security."

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



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