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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.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.

Almighty God, we praise Your greatness, might, and majesty, for You are exalted above all. We receive power because of Your presence, and Your compassion never fails.

Today, guide our lawmakers as they strive to do Your will. Deliver them from the strain and stress of the demands of daily duties. Give them wisdom and courage for the living of these days.

Lord, unite them in the common endeavor to make America a beacon of freedom for our world. May all they think, say, and do truly honor You.

We pray in Your powerful 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. HAWLEY). 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 proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Allison Jones Rushing, of North Carolina, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

NOMINATION OF CHAD A. READLER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, this week the Senate will vote on another of President Trump's hard-right judicial nominees, Chad Readler, of the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Ohio.

Let me just say, anyone who thinks the Republican Party has abandoned their embrace of eliminating protections for preexisting conditions ought to see how everyone votes on Chad Readler. It will be a surprise to no one that this nomination is proceeding over the objection of Senator BROWN, yet another example of Republicans discarding the blue slip. Mr. Readler stands out in his own way. A vote to confirm this nomination is a vote to end protections for Americans with preexisting conditions.

Mr. Readler is behind the Trump administration's decision last year to side with Texas and 19 other States with Republican attorneys general suing to repeal our healthcare law. Mr. Readler was not just somebody who worked on the case; he was the lead lawyer, filing the Department of Justice brief declaring that the administration refused to defend the laws of our country.

In a brief so outlandish that career Justice Department attorneys refused to sign, Mr. Readler argued that protections for people with preexisting conditions should be eliminated. Mark

my words. When this vote is cast, we will see how every Republican feels about preexisting conditions, their protestations to the contrary.

Listen to this, folks. On the very next day after the brief was submitted, Mr. Readler was rewarded for his efforts by President Trump with a nomination for a lifetime appointment. On day one, Readler files the lead suit to eliminate protections for those with preexisting conditions, and on day two, he is nominated to the bench—a lifetime appointment.

All 47 of us Senate Democrats are united in opposing this nomination, and we urge our Republican colleagues who claim to support protections for preexisting conditions to join us in voting to reject his nomination.

He is not just some lawyer who participated. He is the chief cook and bottle washer of the case that hurts hundreds of millions of Americans. If you have a daughter with cancer, and you can't get insurance, if you have a wife or a husband who has a serious condition, and the insurance company pulls back, you are losing your protection if Readler has his way. Now he is going to get on the bench with a lifetime appointment unless our Republican colleagues have the sense and the courage to block him.

On this vote, every Republican will be forced to show their constituents and the American people whether they stand for preexisting condition protections, for more Americans having healthcare coverage, protecting Medicaid, and all insurance plans covering maternity care and prescription drugs. Having failed in Congress to repeal these vital healthcare protections that American families count on each day, President Trump has turned to the courts. The decision by Mr. Readler, President Trump, and others in the Trump administration to side with Republican attorneys general who have declared our healthcare law unconstitutional is the latest example of 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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