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Senate

The Senate met at 10 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.

King of our lives, we acknowledge Your sovereignty, believing because of You we live and move and have our being.

Show our lawmakers how to use this day's fleeting minutes to accomplish Your purposes on Earth. Make our Senators Your instruments of deliverance, causing justice to roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream. Sanctify their thoughts, words, and deeds throughout this day and all of their tomorrows. Lord, provide them with goodness, grace, and wisdom for the living of these days.

We pray in Your Holy 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 (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FLOODING IN IOWA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, Governor Reynolds designated this week as "Severe Weather Awareness

Week" in Iowa. That goes beyond just a flooding situation; it is because of the catastrophic flooding throughout our State and to tell everybody that it is not over. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has warned of significant spring flooding yet to come.

We are seeing increased flows in the Missouri River, the Mississippi River, and their tributaries. Iowans should review their insurance policies for gaps and consider flood insurance. That is one of the things Governor Reynolds is suggesting. Also, it would be good to have a plan in case it is necessary to evacuate, including important personal belongings and pets. FEMA's website, ready.gov, can help you with that information.

Iowans know severe weather, including massive snowstorms, flooding, tornadoes, and heavy winds. The key is that we prepare, help our neighbors, and stay vigilant.

I thank Governor Reynolds for alerting people to the future, as well as worrying about the past.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

DISASTER FUNDING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, in recent months, my home State of Kentucky has been hit by severe weather. Over half of our 120 counties have reported flood damage. Governor Bevin has placed the entire Commonwealth under a state of emergency and mobilized resources to help with recovery. Local, State, and Federal emergency officials have started assessing the flood damage. My staff and I are monitoring the progress to provide assistance wherever we can. I look for-

ward to meeting with the Kentucky emergency management director later today to get the latest updates.

Unfortunately, my State is not alone—far from it. Many States are currently bearing heavy burdens in the wake of powerful natural disasters. Families in Florida and the Carolinas are still picking up the pieces from a damaging hurricane season. In Alabama and Georgia, recovery is just beginning after vicious tornadoes. The effects of serious flooding remain across the Southeast. In places in the Midwest, such as Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska, many Americans are still waiting, praying, and working to mitigate the destruction from devastating flooding. Many communities are still literally under water.

I know right now the entire Senate is especially mindful of the destruction in America's heartland, so I am grateful for the efforts of several colleagues to bring forward a package of supplemental disaster relief funds to address the most urgent needs.

The legislation we are considering this week would help growers and producers with storm-related crop losses. It would help local infrastructure—from roads to schools and hospitals—resume full operation. It would help our Nation's military restore readiness at bases and installations that were caught in harm's way.

Thanks to Chairman SHELBY, Senators ISAKSON, PERDUE, SCOTT, RUBIO, and others, we will have the opportunity to deliver critical resources to the communities facing the long road back to normal. I hope each of our colleagues will join me in supporting this measure, which will do just that.

THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Now, Madam President, on an entirely different matter, this week, the American people saw our Democratic colleagues go on

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



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the record on a truly astonishing policy proposal—a truly astonishing policy proposal.

After months of enthusiastic declarations of support, after tripping over one another to prove their devotion to the far-left core of the new Democratic Party, the vast majority of our colleagues across the aisle were unable to vote against even an obviously ludicrous proposal to tank the U.S. economy and to leave American workers out in the cold.

You might think that after their radical proposal met with such an inglorious end, my colleagues might choose to pause and take stock. Well, think again. Just yesterday, our Democratic colleagues introduced a Senate version of Speaker PELOSI's sweeping legislation to rewrite the rules of American politics to benefit one side—new Washington rules for how citizens can exercise political speech, new Washington systems to funnel taxpayer dollars into the pockets of political campaigns, and an unprecedented Washington intrusion into State and local election law all across our country.

As I have argued before, it conveniently turns out that the vast majority of their proposed changes seem tailored to help more Democrats get elected and stay elected; hence my name for this legislation: the Democratic politician protection act.

Apparently, our friends are under the impression that if Democrats aren't winning as many elections as they would like, then the entire process by which we elect our representatives must certainly be broken. If Democrats don't like an outcome, then the rules themselves need to be tossed aside. This seems to be emerging as a kind of pattern on the other side of the aisle.

When our Constitution, our institutions, or the American people disappoint our Democratic colleagues, instead of taking the hint and perhaps making their own positions more mainstream, they instead look to change the rules.

After they failed to defeat the nomination of Justice Kavanaugh last year, liberal leaders decided the underlying structure of the American judiciary needed to be radically overhauled to suit their whims.

They set out to rehabilitate the absurd notion of "court-packing"—a term that since the 1930s has been synonymous in American history with the idea of an unprincipled power grab.

The idea that Democrats sometimes lose Presidential elections and that Republican Presidents sometimes subsequently appoint Supreme Court Justices is apparently no longer tolerated. Instead of filling the existing vacancies, why shouldn't the next Democratic President just make up a bunch of new ones—create a bunch of new ones—so the far left can stack the Court? Forget about nine Justices. Forget about judges who don't wear red robes or blue robes but black robes. Forget about interpreting and applying

our laws and Constitution the way they are written instead of how partisans might wish they were written. The far left wants to forget about all of that because Democrats would rather rewrite the rules.

So out of the ash heap of history came this talk of "court-packing"—a notion that would threaten the rule of law and our American judicial system as we have long understood it. It is a truly radical proposal that has been dead and buried by bipartisan consensus for almost a century. But now President Obama's Attorney General, Eric Holder, says: "We should be talking even about expanding the number of people who serve on the Supreme Court, if there is a Democratic president." One of our Senate colleagues, who is currently running for President, called this an "interesting idea that I would have to think more about." The New York Times reported that at a recent campaign event, another Democratic candidate said that he is open to the idea after being asked about it by a member of a new far-left group that is literally named—this is their name; listen to this—"Pack the Courts."

I hope the lion's share of our Democratic colleagues will speak out forcefully against exhuming this thoroughly discredited idea. I hope my colleagues will have the courage to look these far-left agitators in the eye and tell them that some traditions and some institutions are more important than partisan point-scoring. But given that we have already seen Democrats rush headlong to embrace schemes like the Democratic politician protection act, Medicare for None, and the so-called Green New Deal, I have to say, at this point, that kind of courageous statement would come as a pleasant surprise.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 297

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the title of the bill for the second time.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 297) to extend the Federal recognition to the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana, and for other purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019—MOTION TO PROCEED— Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 268, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 15, H.R. 268, a bill making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All postcloture time has expired.

The question is on the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 268) making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell (for Shelby) Amendment No. 5, of a perfecting nature.

Schumer Amendment No. 6, of a perfecting nature.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw Amendment Nos. 5 and 6.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendments were withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

AMENDMENT NO. 201

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 201.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alabama [Mr. SHELBY] proposes an amendment numbered 201.

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Senate amendment No. 201 to H.R. 268, making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal