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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.

Eternal King, unto whom all hearts are open, come to us in the purity of Your presence, and make us what we ought to be.

Guide our lawmakers. Show them what needs to be changed, and give them the courage and wisdom to make the appropriate adjustments. Lord, in all their labors, help them to yield themselves to Your will so that this legislative branch may fulfill Your purposes for humanity. Quicken their thinking and reinforce their judgment until their decisions bring glory to Your Name. May Your grace be sufficient for all their needs.

We pray in Your wonderful 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAWLEY). The majority leader is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. McCONNELL and Mr. KAINE pertaining to the introduction of S. 1541 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

With that, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak about two different subjects. One of them will be just 1 minute, and that deals with the fact that May is National Foster Care Month. I want to mention a couple of things about foster care because of my work in that area for the last 25 years.

I have often heard from young people that they wish someone had helped their parents so that they could have stayed together as a family. We can work in Congress to improve the foster care system, but, ultimately, kids need a family.

That is why I was proud to support the Family First Prevention Services Act. This bill will help families to stay together by funding proven services and support for parents. As the implementation process continues on this new piece of legislation, I will work to ensure that this legislation succeeds for families across the country, because for two-and-a-half decades I have been hearing from these young people in foster care: I would like to have a home, and I would like to have a mom and dad.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, besides May being National Foster Care

Month, it is also Mental Health Awareness Month. This month of May gives us an opportunity to increase public awareness about the challenges faced by those struggling with mental illness. It also encourages us to consider reforms to policies that affect these individuals as well as their friends and family members.

Almost one in five adults in the United States copes with mental illness in any given year, and roughly 20 million Americans struggle with substance abuse disorder, and less than half will get the treatment that they need.

In the 114th Congress, the previous one, I cosponsored and led the Judiciary Committee in approving legislation to update and extend the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act. Up to half of our Nation's prison population may suffer from mental illness. Jails and prisons hold 10 times as many people with mental illness than hospitals do, according to the National Sheriffs' Association.

In the 115th Congress, I introduced and led the Senate in adopting reforms to tackle substance abuse, mental health, and other issues that may drive children and teenagers into the juvenile justice system. These reforms, which recently were enacted as part of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act, encourages States to devote Federal grants to improving treatment of juvenile offenders with mental illness and substance abuse. The enactment of these two measures is very important, but even saying that, we still have lots of work to do in the area of substance abuse and mental illness.

First, lack of mental health resources poses a huge challenge. Now I am chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. I intend to be committed to this area and explore new options for increasing access to quality mental healthcare.

Second, we still have a long way to go to promote parity in mental health

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



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