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Senate

(Legislative day of Wednesday, May 22, 2019)

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable THOM TILLIS, a Senator from the State of North Carolina.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, who rules the raging of the sea, we come to You with our imperfections, depending on Your promises to keep us from stumbling or slipping. Speak to us as we seek to be Your instruments during these challenging times. Let Your infinite wisdom provide for the deepest needs of our Senators. Give them strength from Your celestial bounty to manage the minutes and hours of this day in a way that pleases You. Lord, let the presence of Your peace sustain them as they face the myriad difficulties of the work You have called for them to do. Call forth from them their best as they seek a closer walk with You.

We pray in Your Holy Name. 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. GRASSLEY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 23, 2019.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable THOM TILLIS, a Senator from the State of North Carolina, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. TILLIS 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, Monday, of course, is Memorial Day. Americans will take time out of our ordinary routine and busy lives to remember the men and women who paid the ultimate price for the security of our Nation and the liberty we cherish.

We mourn every young American whose sacrifice has furthered the cause of our founding ideals, and we acknowledge in a special way the Gold Star families they leave behind—parents, spouses, and children whose grief is only matched by the facts of a grateful Nation.

As President Reagan said one Memorial Day, across the river at Arlington: “Today is the day we put aside to remember fallen heroes and to pray that no heroes will ever have to die for us again.”

So while this day is a day for honoring and remembering, in particular, our fallen heroes, it is natural that our thoughts also turn to the brave men and women who are currently serving. I am thinking of the service men and women who are defending our country overseas and especially those engaged

in combat in Afghanistan and Syria, all those stationed in the Middle East who are threatened by Iran, and those holding the line in Asia against the threats from North Korea.

We are tremendously grateful for our military’s efforts these last 18 years to keep America safe from terrorism and their ongoing work to combat al-Qaida, fight ISIS, and to help stabilize Afghanistan.

Of course, I am particularly mindful of the members of the Kentucky National Guard and the many soldiers of Kentucky-based Active-Duty units who are deployed in harm’s way.

In light of the recent intelligence, we are also keenly aware of the critical role our military is playing at this very moment to deter Iranian aggression.

The administration engaged Members of Congress earlier this week to brief us on the growing threat and detail the steps the administration is taking to address it.

I am grateful our U.S. military has already taken proven steps to improve the posture of our forces so they are ready to defend our servicemembers, military vessels, and diplomatic facilities and deter attacks by Iran or its proxies all across the region.

Nobody wants a conflict with Iran. We have heard clearly from the President and his senior advisers that the administration’s objective is to deter Iran from engaging in threatening acts that increase the risk of such a conflict.

We all know that, particularly when dealing with hostile actors, peace is a function of strength. So it is essential that even amid other partisan political disagreements, we remain one unified Nation. America must give Iran no reason—no reason—to misjudge our resolve.

Whatever disputes my colleagues may have with the administration about other issues, I hope we can avoid politicizing any differences about this

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



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