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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, August 2, 2019, at 11 a.m.

Senate

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2019

The Senate met at 9:30 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 God, who has created humanity in Your image, look upon us and hear our prayers.

Today, give our lawmakers the desire to do Your will and the energy to complete the tasks that will glorify Your Name. That which they don't know, reveal it; that which they lack, supply it; and that which they doubt, confirm it. Keep them blameless in Your service so that their lives will be living letters causing people to exalt Your Name. Lord, strengthen their minds for Your service so that Your wisdom will permeate their endeavors.

We pray in Your mighty 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate for 1 minute in morning business.

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

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I think we should save the taxpayers a lot of money by giving States more options under Medicaid.

Unlike Medicare and private insurance, Medicaid doesn't incentivize bundled payments. This prevents States from testing a method that could potentially save money.

The bipartisan prescription drug pricing reform legislation I introduced with Senator WYDEN allows States to collect rebates from drugs in outpatient settings. This removes an existing exemption in statute for some outpatient drugs and allows States to more completely utilize and test bundled payments to possibly save money.

Giving States flexibility allows them to focus on the best care for different populations. Encouraging bundled payments in Medicaid would do just that.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

LINCOLN COUNTY GAS LEAK

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, my office and I are closely monitoring a significant explosion of a natural gas transmission pipeline early this morning near Danville, in my home State of Kentucky.

As of this morning, one fatality and five more injuries have been reported, and others may be unaccounted for. We

hope and pray that these figures do not increase. Several structures have been damaged or destroyed.

The Lincoln County emergency manager reported: "The part of the area that has been compromised, there is just nothing left." The fiery explosion was so large that it was picked up by weather satellites, and witnesses report the smoke can be seen from my hometown of Louisville, almost 70 miles away.

Obviously, the investigation is just beginning. My staff and I will continue to stay on top of this and be a resource for everyone affected.

This morning, our prayers are with the families whom this disaster has touched, and our gratitude is with all the first responders who rushed toward the towering flames to protect their neighbors and communities.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, now on a completely different matter, the Senate has accomplished a significant amount of business this week for the American people.

We have made a big dent in the backlog of President Trump's well-qualified nominees for Federal office. With respect to the judiciary, we have confirmed 13 impressive individuals to lifetime seats on the Federal bench. We have also ensured that two more key components of the President's foreign policy team will be on the job before the Senate adjourns for the August work period.

We confirmed the Deputy Secretary of Defense and a new ambassador to

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



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