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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, sovereign of our Nation and Lord of our lives, thank You for infusing us with the confidence that You order our steps each day.

Give our lawmakers courage and a strong resolve to glorify Your Name, as they trust the unfolding of Your providence. As they remember what You have already done to bless this Nation, inspire them to march confidently toward tomorrow's difficulties with total dependence on Your power. May they recommit themselves each day to faithfully fulfilling the awesome responsibility You have entrusted to them. Lord, be their strength and shield this day and always.

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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

TRIBUTE TO JOHNNY ISAKSON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I welcome my colleagues back to the Senate. I hope all of us took advantage of the past weeks that we spent in our home States and with our constituents.

Washington is where we come to work. We come here to fight for our neighbors and for the places we love and are proud to hail from.

The American people know this is a highly charged political moment. They haven't sent us here to stage pitched battles or score political points. They elected us to make a difference for them and their families. We do that by taking care of the people's business and by collaborating in good faith to complete our work and attend to the pressing matters that are before us.

While we were spread out across the country, we heard an unwelcome announcement from our dear friend and colleague, the senior Senator from Georgia. Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON has determined that his health challenges will lead him to conclude his distinguished 15-year Senate career at the end of December, putting Georgians first, like always.

His departure will be a significant loss for the people of Georgia and for the 99 of us here in this Chamber. Senator ISAKSON is a tireless legislator. In particular, he is a dogged advocate for our Nation's veterans. But he is even more than that. JOHNNY is universally seen as one of the warmest, friendliest, most respectful, and most collaborative Members of this body. He has strong views and solid principles, but he knows that broad, often bipartisan cooperation is the way to advance those very goals.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL. I hope that as the Senate tackles the important matters before us in the weeks and months ahead, we will not only make sure to savor our last few months working alongside this great friend and colleague but also to embody his example in our work. Here is what that work will need to include:

Right off the bat this week, the Senate will begin working through a slate

of nominations to important Federal offices. The American people deserve to be governed by the government they voted for, and every time we confirm another one of the uncontroversial, amply qualified public servants whom President Trump has selected for these executive branch posts, we fulfill a constitutional responsibility and make manifest the people's decision.

Of course, in the days and weeks ahead, another major duty before us will be the appropriations process. Just like last year, under the leadership of Chairman SHELBY and Ranking Member LEAHY, I am confident we can make significant progress on regular appropriations this month and then pass an interim continuing resolution to prevent any funding lapse while that work continues.

Let me say that again. A major focus of the Senate this month will be moving forward as many of the regular appropriations bills as possible and then passing a temporary continuing resolution for the outstanding parts of the government before the end of September.

We have the parameters in place, thanks to the bipartisan funding agreement President Trump signed last month. Now it is time for the rubber to meet the road and for the Senate to pass appropriations bills this month.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUNT). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

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



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