



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 165

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2019

No. 176

## 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.

Eternal God, You look down from Heaven upon humanity's children, seeking for those to use for Your glory. May our lawmakers live with such faithfulness that they will be Your redemptive instruments at a time when truth seems a rare commodity.

May You find delight in those who by faith trust You to make the crooked places straight and the rough places smooth. Lead our Senators to a fresh dedication in their service to You and humanity. Grant that justice will roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

We pray in Your great 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 (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 30 seconds.

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

### NATIONAL VETERANS SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, veterans, meaning our veterans of war or veterans in uniform who have not been in a war environment, have a big impact on the American economy. There are 2.5 million veteran-owned businesses in the United States that

account for more than \$1.1 trillion in revenue. In Iowa, there are 26,119 veteran-owned businesses that employ 51,801 people and bring in \$10.9 million.

Iowa is working hard to attract veterans and help them start and expand their businesses. I honor these hard-working entrepreneurs who have served our country by joining my colleagues in recognizing this week, the week of November 4, as National Veterans Small Business Week.

I yield the floor.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

### JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, this week, the Senate will continue its work in the personnel business and confirm more of the President's outstanding nominees to the Federal judiciary.

Since our Democratic colleagues chose last week to filibuster defense funding and block the Senate from even considering legislation to fund our Armed Forces, we will turn our focus to confirmations while we wait for progress from them on appropriations.

Leading off the week, the Senate will have the opportunity to confirm another standout Kentuckian to the Federal bench, this time to the U.S. Court of Federal Claims.

Judge David Tapp has just about done it all since he first became a State judge nearly 15 years ago. He has heard cases at multiple levels of the State's judiciary, ruling on a wide

range of issues. As a volunteer drug court judge, Judge Tapp has earned national praise for promoting long-term recovery in the courtroom. He has also developed a sterling reputation for fairness throughout Kentucky and around the country.

Now David will bring a lifetime of public service and achievement to the Court of Federal Claims, where I am confident he will continue making us all proud. I look forward to voting to confirm him later today and hope our colleagues will join me.

### DEMOCRATIC LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, now, on another matter, last week the Nation saw several pivotal moments that shed light on the current state of the Democratic Party. Here in the Senate, as I mentioned, Democrats chose to filibuster funding for our national defense for the second time in 2 months. This funding was agreed to in the bipartisan, bicameral deal that Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader signed onto just a few months ago, but now they have walked away from the agreement they signed and filibustered funding for our military commanders.

Yesterday, we saw the Iranian regime celebrate—celebrate—the 40th anniversary of the taking of the American Embassy and the beginning of the Iranian hostage crisis. The familiar slogan, “Death to America,” was on full display. It was especially sobering to watch this display and remember that our own U.S. military commanders do not have the certainty they need for strategic planning because Democrats here in Washington found it politically advantageous to block it.

Over in the House, Speaker PELOSI continues to stall the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement. USMCA would bring tens of billions in new commerce and create 176,000 new American jobs, but House Democrats would rather pursue

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S6365

political theater. So American workers and farmers are still waiting.

However, while our Democratic colleagues block these bipartisan priorities, at least they are not shy about what they do support. We have seen what Democrats prioritize. We remember the Green New Deal, an effort to grab unprecedented control over American families' daily lives. Designing, building, or furnishing a home or business? Democrats want Washington to dictate how you do that. Commuting, traveling for vacation, mowing your lawn? They would like you to do that without gasoline or jet fuel sooner rather than later. Make a living producing, refining, or delivering affordable American energy? They want you to find another line of work whether you like it or not. That is the Green New Deal.

There is also the matter of Medicare for None. That is the scheme that would take the program that millions of American seniors rely on, throw away everything except the label, and paste that onto a new, one-size-fits-all, Washington-run insurance plan that would be mandatory for every American. Medicare, gone. Private plans and the popular Medicare Advantage Program, gone. Every health insurance plan that Americans get on the job, which over 180 million people depend on, gone.

This is literally what several of the leading Democratic Presidential contenders have endorsed—a new nationwide experiment in socialism. And every single American—man, woman, and child—would be the subject of this experiment, whether that is what we want for our families or not. From this mandatory one-size-fits-all insurance plan to new price controls that would limit lifesaving cures, our Democratic colleagues are rallying around policies that would leave American families paying more to wait longer for worse care. That is their prescription—paying more to wait longer for worse care.

Then, if these plans weren't bad enough on the merits, there is the small issue of the crushing new tax burden you would have to pile onto the U.S. economy in order to make some effort to pay for all of this. One leading Democrat released a breathtaking proposal last week that illustrates the road they would like to head down. This candidate's Medicare for None plan on its own, notwithstanding all the other socialist plans—just the healthcare plan—would cost \$52 trillion over the first 10 years alone. That is the candidate's own estimate—\$52 trillion over 10 years.

Even after cannibalizing everything the government currently spends on healthcare, the plan's author admits there would still be a staggering \$20-plus trillion left over to finance. Other experts say it would be more. For some perspective, if you add up every cent that is deposited in every commercial bank across the United States of America, that is about \$13 trillion. So you

could literally seize—seize—every dollar that Americans have deposited in banks and you would have nowhere near enough money to pay for even the first decade of this crazy experiment. Democrats are confident they can produce this huge sum of money through historic tax increases on job creators and on the American people. It would be an enormous—enormous—new tax burden dumped on the U.S. economy that would kill jobs, depress workers' wages, and make America less competitive literally for generations to come.

At the exact time when Republican tax reform has made the United States more competitive and boosted prosperity here at home, Democrats want to take us backward and make our Nation a less attractive place to create jobs.

Here is what Larry Summers, a former Treasury Secretary under President Clinton, wrote about this far-left plan in the Washington Post:

[It] will discourage hiring, particularly of low-skilled workers. . . . There is . . . the real risk of an economic contraction following a sharp market decline.

That is Larry Summers, the Clinton Treasury Secretary. Particularly, it would discourage hiring, particularly of low-skilled workers, and a sharp market decline. So in order to take away employer-sponsored insurance from 180 million Americans, Democrats want to kill American jobs and bring the economy to a screeching halt.

Look, I would implore my friends across the aisle to put aside this destructive socialism and join us in the current work that needs doing right now for the American people. We have a landmark trade agreement that needs passing. We have U.S. Armed Forces that need funding. We are just waiting on our Democratic colleagues to show up.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of David Austin Tapp, of Kentucky, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, let me begin by echoing what the leader said earlier about the importance of passing the Defense appropriations bill.

I just came from a meeting with members of our Defense Department where we talked about how important it is that the appropriations process moves forward. The Defense authorization bill, the broader bill that sets the priorities for military spending, is also stalled out here. That is something that both sides have agreed to for 58 years. It sets out how we are going to make sure that we take care of our men and women in uniform and that they have the equipment, the weaponry, and the training they need to do their jobs and to keep America safe. The authorization bill is stalled right now. That is the priority bill.

The appropriations bill, the part that funds all of that—that, too, has been blocked last week, most recently by the Senate Democrats, who filibustered the Defense appropriations bill.

So both the authorization bill and the funding bill are now both stalled out here in the Senate because of obstruction and delays by the Senate Democrats. That is unfortunate for the men and women in uniform in this country because in that Defense appropriations bill is the largest pay increase in a decade for our men and women in uniform, not to mention all of the important priorities that are funded when it comes to the weapons systems and the most sophisticated technology that is necessary, again, to keep Americans safe both here at home and around the world.

I can't emphasize enough how important it is for our Democratic colleagues to come to their senses and conclude that taking care of America's military is job No. 1. If we don't get national security right, the rest is conversation. It really is. All these other things that we talk about are secondary and pale in comparison to making sure that we are taking the steps necessary to protect Americans, as I said, both here at home and around the world.

The Defense appropriations bill funds all of those priorities, all those things that are important, from pay and benefits for our men and women in uniform to, again, all the things that are necessary for them when it comes to training, equipment, and weaponry to do their jobs and to do them well, to continue to keep Americans safe both here at home and around the world, and to be able to project American power where necessary in a world that is increasingly dangerous.

I would just urge the Democrats here in the Senate to allow this appropriations process to move forward. Give us a vote. Let's vote on it. Let's get the military funded. Every day that goes by where it is not funded is lost time, and there are resources that can't be put into those important priorities