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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 Father, the source of light and life, we praise Your Holy Name. Because of You, we live and move and have our being. Remind us that we are not adequate for our daily task without Your strength and abiding presence.

Lord, empower our Senators this day to think clearly, speak wisely, and live faithfully. May they strive to do their best and then leave the results to You.

Eternal God, we are trusting You to fulfill Your purposes for our Nation and world.

We pray in Your powerful 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 for 1 minute as in morning business.

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

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, a 5-year decline in farm income, retaliatory tariffs on U.S. ag commodities, disrupted renewable biofuel policies, devastating natural disasters, and now shortages of LP gas needed to dry harvested grain add to the growing burdens weighing heavily on the minds of Iowans and American farmers.

Mounting pressure to pay the bills, to get the crops out, and to make ends meet can be overwhelming. We have lately expressed lots of worries and pressures that come from the increase in farm bankruptcies and the increase in rural and farm suicides.

There are many uncertainties in farming that are beyond human control, but there are other areas where Congress can help. As a farmer and as a Senator representing the No. 1 agricultural State, I am fighting to build mental health resources—as an example, there is the Grassley-Tester bill to help preempt suicides—to uphold the RFS by fighting with the EPA, and to pass the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

These are issues that are tops on the minds of Iowans and not just the farmers.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, while our Senate Democratic colleagues continue blocking this body from considering funding for our Armed Forces, the Senate has taken advantage of the time to confirm more of President Trump's well-qualified nominees for Federal service, as well as the judiciary.

Yesterday, we confirmed Chad Wolf to serve at the Department of Homeland Security. Following President Trump's decision to designate him Acting Secretary, he is now heading up the Department.

I want to take a moment to thank the outgoing Acting DHS Secretary, Kevin McAleenan. His tenure leading the Department of Homeland Security capped off a distinguished career in

public service, including nearly two decades rising through the ranks of the Customs and Border Patrol.

His leadership at DHS saw significant progress in mitigating major aspects of our border security and humanitarian crisis, a strong focus on cyber security, and hard work to strengthen the Department all across the board. So I thank the outgoing Acting Secretary for his years in public service and, particularly, for his leadership in this recent chapter.

Now, today, we will vote on the confirmation of Steven Menashi to the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. Mr. Menashi won majority support on the Judiciary Committee on the basis of strong academic and legal qualifications—degrees from Dartmouth and Stanford, clerkships on the appellate level and the Supreme Court, and experience in both teaching and practicing law.

I would urge all of our colleagues to vote to confirm this impressive nominee this afternoon.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, as my colleagues know, I have no qualms about spending floor time on the personnel business. Our Democratic colleagues have made it necessary by subjecting this President's nominees to unprecedented, systematic delays and obstruction. The majority has been willing to do things the hard way. We are giving the American people the government they voted for, as chosen by the President they elected.

My Republican colleagues and I wish that we could also be spending floor time on productive, bipartisan legislation that the American people need to actually become law. We want to pass the USMCA and the 176,000 new American jobs it would create, but Speaker PELOSI continues to block it. The far left objects to their passing anything—anything—that the President likes.

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



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