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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 PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Msgr. Anthony J. Marcaccio, of St. Pius X, from Greensboro, NC.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Blessed are You Lord, God of all creation. You are the giver of every good gift, of life and liberty, of peace and prosperity, of wisdom, understanding, and right judgment.

We ask that in Your divine mercy, You would bless our Republic and especially the work of our Senators, that they may discern "all that is true, all that is honorable, all that is right, all that is excellent and worthy of praise" for our Nation.

In this moment, make us mindful of all that has brought us together as a country, and how it far surpasses that which can divide us, so in all things deliberated and done here, we may be preserved as one Nation under God. Amen and 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. FISCHER). The President Pro Tempore.

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

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

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR RENEWABLE FUEL STANDARDS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, a whole bunch of us Midwest biofuel Senators sent a cover letter with our comments to President Trump. Those comments were in regard to the biofuel rules that are out for public comment.

The President has been a supporter of biofuels and the EPA shouldn't undercut President Trump's support of RFS. I urge the EPA and Administrator Wheeler to adjust the proposed supplemental rule to account for actual waived gallons, using hard data from past practices, to send an unambiguous signal to the marketplace.

I am glad to have the opportunity to comment, and I encourage all farmers, biofuel producers, and anybody else interested in supporting the RFS to make their comments. Those comments should be along the lines of what was agreed to in the Oval Office on September 12, which the EPA regulations don't reflect properly.

So tell the EPA that you want the September 12 agreement agreed to. Go to regulations.gov or to the Iowa Farm Bureau or Iowa Corn websites before the deadline on November 27 to tell the EPA to stand behind the President's Oval Office agreement.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, my colleagues are well familiar with my repeated calls for bipartisan progress in funding the Federal Government. For more than 2 months, as the appropriations process idled at partisan roadblocks, I pointed out just how straightforward this entire process could have been. With the road map ne-

gotiated in July by the President and the Speaker, and approved by each of the congressional leaders, we had the necessary commitments to move forward in good faith and avoid partisan riders that would stall the entire effort, but, of course, that didn't happen.

But failing to secure funding for the Federal Government before the end of the year is not an option. Chairman SHELBY continues to lead efforts to settle on subcommittee allocations that can earn bipartisan support. Today, these efforts are ongoing, and with our deadline to prevent a funding lapse rapidly approaching, I am encouraged that the House will apparently be voting today on a continuing resolution to keep the Government funded until December 20, while talks continue. These talks must continue because it is vital that we work in good faith to fund important priorities for the coming year, but what is needed in the near term is to keep the Government open for the next several weeks while this work goes on.

This is not rocket science. The House needs to send us the short-term funding bill which the Senate can pass and which the President will sign. That is the way to keep the government open while our important discussions continue to make progress toward closing out the appropriations process and getting full-year bills to the floor.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on another matter, for weeks Republicans have been trying to move forward significant bipartisan legislation for the American people. Senate Republicans are trying to get our Democratic colleagues to let us consider defense funding. House Republicans have tried to get Speaker PELOSI to finally allow a vote on the USMCA, and in both Chambers we have been asking Democrats to stop slow-walking the conference committee for the critical Defense bill, the NDAA.

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



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