



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2020

No. 47

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.

Arise, O Judge of the Earth, and bring healing and help to our Nation and world. We praise You that Your plans succeed and Your precepts are sure.

Lord, You know our thoughts before we think them. Encourage our lawmakers to do Your will. Give them the wisdom to totally depend upon Your unfailing love, remembering that unless You help them, they labor in vain.

Lord, when doubts fill their minds, provide them with the renewed hope in the ultimate triumph of Your purposes.

We pray in Your strong 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. LOEFFLER). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute in morning business.

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

LITHUANIA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, 30 years ago today, the freely elected Parliament of Lithuania declared the restoration of that country's independence. Lithuania's brave actions began the breakup of the Soviet Union, something all freedom-loving Americans ought to be celebrating.

The modern Republic of Lithuania is 102 years old as of last month, and the

United States has maintained continuous diplomatic relations with Lithuania since 1992—in other words, since the period of time that the Soviet Union had jurisdiction over it. In these last 30 years, since the return of freedom, we have seen the partnership between our two countries become stronger than ever.

Lithuania is a close U.S. ally, a beacon of Western values, and very much on the frontlines of freedom. I thank Lithuania for its friendship, for its important contributions to our North Atlantic Treaty Organization alliance, and for its vocal defense of our shared values.

I yield the floor.

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. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, yesterday President Trump visited the Capitol to discuss the ongoing efforts to fight the new coronavirus and its growing footprint here in the United States.

As Vice President PENCE, Dr. Anthony Fauci, and the other administration experts related in their briefing yesterday, we should expect a number of cases to continue to climb throughout our country. Fortunately, our Nation was rated the best prepared in the world for this kind of outbreak, and we are continuing to scale up our response every day.

My home State of Kentucky currently has eight confirmed cases. I applaud the efforts of State and local leaders who are working together with Federal officials to proceed carefully and intelligently.

Our public health experts are compiling the best guidance for individuals, families, businesses, schools, and healthcare professionals in one place, and www.coronavirus.gov is the place to go. I encourage every American to read through the information, particularly anyone whose personal circumstances make additional precautions a wise idea.

President Trump and Senators also discussed potential policies to soften the economic impact of the virus. Over the last 3 years, we have built a historically strong economy of American workers and middle-class families. We should take sensible steps to help that momentum continue, notwithstanding this new challenge.

I am glad the Secretary of the Treasury and the Speaker of the House are engaging in direct bipartisan talks on this subject. Congress has already provided billions in new funding to Federal, State, and local health leaders. I hope we can bring the same bipartisan energy to any steps that prove necessary to support our strong U.S. economy.

Now, it has been sad but not surprising to see some of President Trump's Democratic critics here in Washington fall back on the same old predictable partisan attacks, even at a time like this, but across the country, where leaders are working together on the frontlines, we have seen something different. I want to commend the Democratic Governor of California, who stated on Monday that he had been in close touch with the President and Vice President and appreciated their attention and support.

Here is what he said:

He said everything I could have hoped for. . . . We had a very long conversation, and

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S1677