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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, May 22, 2020, at 11 a.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 2020

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.

Heavenly Father, today, restore in our lawmakers faith in the ultimate triumph of Your plan for our Nation and world. Help them to realize that the power of Your providence will enable them to navigate every challenge and tragedy. Trusting in Your might, may they embrace Your promise to do more for them than they can ask or imagine.

Lord, in spite of difficulties, disappointments, and despair, reassure them that You are still in control. Remind us all that in everything You are working for the good of those who love You, who are called according to Your purposes.

We pray in Your loving 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.

RECOGNIZING THE DAILY IOWAN

Mr. GRASSLEY. Journalists, as we all know, serve as the watchdog for accountability, particularly to keep government responsible. These journalists inform and investigate issues important to their readers, from human interests to public interests. Right now, a lot of focus is upon the COVID-19 pandemic.

The University of Iowa's independent newspaper, the Daily Iowan, has been named the "Best All-Around Daily Student Newspaper" by the Society of Professional Journalists. This prestigious honor follows its recognition as the 2020 "Newspaper of the Year" by the Iowa Newspaper Association.

I come to the floor to commend the team of collegiate journalists in the student-run newsroom at the Daily Iowan. These awards show that the staff's hard work and commitment to their craft rise above the rest.

You are the cream of the crop. Congratulations and keep up the good work.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, week after week, this Capitol has been a study in contrasts. Call it the tale of two Chambers. Over here in the Senate, the lights are on, the doors are open,

and we are working for the American people. All month, we have been in session, passing national security legislation, confirming key nominees, and holding hearings on the coronavirus crisis and the effectiveness of the historic rescue package the Senate wrote and the Senate passed.

We are heeding medical guidance and taking new precautions, but we are showing up and getting things done.

Over across the Rotunda, in the House, crickets—their lights are off. The doors are locked. The people's House has shown up for a grand total of 2 legislative session days since March. Well, 2 days in 8 weeks is a blistering pace.

Last week, they flew into town to pass Speaker PELOSI's latest 1,800-page liberal wish list. Diversity and inclusion in the marijuana industry wasn't going to study itself, after all. That had to be an A-1 priority during this crisis. The Speaker's proposal was so unserious and so far left that it could not even unite her own conference. Even after a 2-month sabbatical, House Democrats could not contribute anything serious.

Yet they did find the time to keep fishing for another impeachment. More than a year after the Mueller report thoroughly debunked the collusion conspiracy theory, Democrats are still pursuing the administration in court over that document. In a new Supreme Court brief the day before yesterday, House Democrats said they have the right to continue because—listen to this—the President's impeachment did not actually end with his acquittal.

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



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The House Democrats are now claiming the impeachment that ended in February is not really over. Their brief says they are weighing “whether to recommend new articles of impeachment.” And referring to Chairman NADLER’s Judiciary Committee, “the Committee’s investigation did not cease with the conclusion of the impeachment trial.” That is Chairman NADLER’s argument in a court case.

Perpetual investigation and perpetual impeachment—if only someone could have predicted this. If only anyone had warned that House Democrats’ opening the Pandora’s box of weak impeachments would affect our country into the future. Of course, Senate and House Republicans warned precisely that, and here we are.

It is a suitable complement to the other ongoing incident, where a Federal judge has taken it upon himself to prolong a case that the actual prosecutors want to drop.

These are fascinating legal standards. Investigations no longer end when a jury acquits someone and prosecutions no longer end when charges are dropped. The House Democrats would rather spend a fourth consecutive year trying to cram their politics into the legal system than actually govern the country during a pandemic.

Fortunately, as I laid out, the Senate is up to the job. Every single day, the historic CARES Act that we wrote and passed to fight this pandemic continues to come online. Direct payments hit families’ accounts. Support for major industries helps to prevent mass layoffs. Resources for doctors, nurses, hospitals, and healthcare providers help to stabilize the system from coast to coast.

The Paycheck Protection Program has saved tens of millions of jobs for American workers. From big cities to small towns, to industrial suburbs, to farm country, Senate Republicans’ bold program is turning potential pink slips into paychecks every single day.

To be sure, the program is imperfect. That was guaranteed when banks had to cram multiple years’ worth of lending into a few weeks. Yesterday, we saw a glaring example of that imperfection. The legislation we passed contains specific eligibility requirements. One rule said affiliates of national nonprofits could not pose as small nonprofits and ask for money. But because time was and is of the essence, the legislation set up a process of initial self-certification with review to follow, rather than lengthy vetting upfront that would have slowed the emergency money for rightful recipients.

We learned yesterday that the Nation’s largest abortion provider, Planned Parenthood, abused this emergency process and grabbed tens of millions of dollars of taxpayer money for which they were completely ineligible. This is the organization that fired its new president last year because she was too focused on broader health issues and not sufficiently fixated on

abortion above all else. Disrespecting human life is their central mission, and they just took advantage of a national crisis and helped themselves to tens of millions of taxpayer dollars they were clearly forbidden from taking.

It goes without saying that the money must be sent back immediately—right now. As we shine a light on Planned Parenthood’s misrepresentations, we cannot let their actions jeopardize this important program with the tens of millions of Americans who are benefitting from it rightly.

Remember, the PPP has pushed \$500 billion into the economy across more than 4 million loans. The average loan size is just \$118,000, giving paychecks instead of pink slips for tens of millions of Americans.

My hometown of Louisville, KY, is home to the baseball bat factory that makes the world-famous Louisville Slugger. For a few months, the bat factory was a temporary casualty of COVID-19. This month, the manufacturer secured a PPP loan, and 171 employees were pulled off furlough and put right back on the payroll. So 171 family stories went from pain and chaos back to stability because of this program. That is just one business in one city in one State.

There is also an automotive parts supplier and a hoagie shop in Michigan, a fresh flower shop in Arizona, a burger joint and a community nonprofit in North Carolina, and on and on and on. Four million loans across all 50 States and new loans are still being issued as we speak. This is what serious legislation looks like. This is what serious solutions can accomplish.

Every day, the Senate’s work is paying dividends to working families all across our country.

The pandemic is not all we are working on. The Senate is also staying on top of foreign relations, national security, and the personnel business.

Yesterday, the Intelligence Committee reported out the nomination of the next Director of the National Intelligence. The Armed Services Committee reported out nominations for Secretary of the Navy, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy.

I hope our Democratic colleagues will not block the Senate from filling these key national security vacancies before we adjourn later this week.

TRIBUTE TO DR. BRIAN MONAHAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, throughout this health crisis, the Senate, its Members, and our staffs have been lucky to have the steady leadership of Dr. Brian Monahan in our corner. Our Attending Physician has responded with the same ability and professionalism that have benefited Congress and the Supreme Court for more than a decade. His continued guidance is making it possible for the Senate to smartly and safely fulfill our constitutional duty to the American people.

The last time our Nation faced a pandemic on this scale, the 1918 Spanish flu, the Attending Physician’s office was still more than a decade away from even existing. Dr. Monahan has had to break unprecedented ground in his crucial role on multiple levels, but, true to form, he has adapted on the fly to serve his country.

Dr. Monahan has developed detailed advice for Members and committees. His team is working around the clock to answer questions and to keep us healthy. Expertise and attention to detail are nothing new from our Attending Physician, who has spent a proud career in military service. The Senate is lucky that the public service of this decorated rear admiral and celebrated instructor has brought him to us. We certainly are grateful to him and his entire team.

I am happy to report that we aren’t the only ones taking notice.

Mr. President, as a measure of our collective gratitude, I ask unanimous consent that this recent New York Times feature profile of Dr. Monahan be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, May 16, 2020]

DOCTOR TO CONGRESS AND SUPREME COURT
TOILS TO SIDESTEP POLITICS AMID PANDEMIC
(By Emily Cochrane)

WASHINGTON—When Senator John Barrasso, Republican of Wyoming, sought guidance on how to protect his family, including his 94-year-old father-in-law, when he returned home from the nation’s capital amid the coronavirus pandemic, a doctor offered him some blunt advice.

Don’t go home just yet, Dr. Brian P. Monahan, the attending physician of Congress, told Mr. Barrasso, directing him to quarantine for 14 days before rejoining his family. “You’re a visitor,” Dr. Monahan said.

But when House Democratic leaders wanted counsel on whether they could safely reconvene in the Capitol with Covid-19 still spreading—a debate with political dimensions as a partisan divide was emerging across the country over how quickly to reopen—Dr. Monahan was less absolute. Returning to Washington carried health risks he would not recommend taking, he told Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California and Representative Steny H. Hoyer of Maryland, the majority leader. But it was up to them to decide what to do.

They opted to delay their return, and on Friday, partly because of Dr. Monahan’s warnings, moved forward with plans to institute remote voting in the future.

It was typical of Dr. Monahan, the 59-year-old Navy rear admiral who is known in the halls of the Capitol as much for his meticulous attention to medical detail as he is for his efforts to stay completely out of politics.

“He is both an executive with lots of health care responsibilities—particularly now—and also has the unique relationship with members that a small-town doctor would have with the patients he knows and sees,” said Senator Roy Blunt, Republican of Missouri and chairman of the Senate Rules Committee. “He’s in a unique role at a unique time.”

As government doctors have emerged as trusted public voices and political figures in the face of a fearsome pandemic—appearing