



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

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

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, JUNE 1, 2020

No. 101

## Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.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, who has placed our tears in a bottle, today we weep. We weep because every death diminishes us. We weep because of the grief of George Floyd's family. We weep because of the explosive impact of deferred dreams. We weep because of the potentially catastrophic consequences of peaceful protesting during a pandemic. We weep because justice delayed is justice denied. We weep because of the paralysis of analysis that often impedes Your prevailing providence. We weep because of our personal culpability during these tragic times. We weep because of our sins of commission and omission. We weep because we know You are weeping.

Today, use Your lawmakers for Your glory. May they strive to find a vaccine to inoculate our Nation against hate, sin, and despair.

We pray in Your merciful 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 (Mr. HAWLEY). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate for 1 minute.

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

### REMEMBERING GEORGE FLOYD

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, our Nation is hurting. George Floyd's

death was horrific, and justice must be served. The Justice Department has opened an investigation, and the officer has been charged with murder.

A single act of violence at the hands of an officer is one too many. George Floyd deserved better. All Black Americans do. Indeed, all Americans do. The last thing we need is more pain, more devastation, and more injustice.

As a country, let's strive for compassion and listening to others. The best way to honor George Floyd is to engage with all members of our community, including Members of this body, on how to heal these wounds. This is an opportunity for Congress to discuss what reforms can and should be made to address police use of force. Let's move forward and protect our communities together.

I yield the floor.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

### PROTESTS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, this is an hour of great pain and unrest in our country. Americans from coast to coast have been grieved and horrified by the killings of three African-American citizens: Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia, Breonna Taylor in my hometown of Louisville, KY, and George Floyd in Minneapolis.

In each disturbing situation, investigations and reviews are ongoing. In Kentucky, I am glad that local authorities are investigating, I am glad the FBI is involved, and I am glad our attorney general is committed to taking any necessary action. We need the truth, and we need swift justice under law. But here is something that requires no investigation: In no world whatsoever should arresting a man for an alleged minor infraction involve a

police officer putting his knee on a man's neck for 9 minutes while he cries out "I can't breathe" and then goes silent.

To me, to a great many of my fellow Kentuckians, and to millions of outraged Americans, these disturbing events do not look like three isolated incidents. They look more like the latest chapter in our national struggle to make equal justice and equal protection of the law into facts of life for all Americans, rather than contingencies that sometimes depend on the color of one's skin. Obviously, this struggle remains incomplete.

I have spent decades in the Senate not only as an advocate for civil rights but as a First Amendment purist. So I completely support and fully defend citizens' constitutional rights to speak their minds and engage in peaceful protests. Our Nation cannot deafen itself to the anger, pain, or the frustration of Black Americans. Our Nation needs to hear this.

Yet, over the last several days, citizens have watched with horror as cities across America have convulsed with looting, riots, and destruction. On a nightly basis, initially peaceful demonstrations have been hijacked. Americans have watched protests dedicated to ending unjust violence mutate into riots that inflict unjust violence themselves. We have seen small businesses destroyed and public property defaced. We have seen the men and women of law enforcement—the vast majority of whom are not bad actors but brave public servants—threatened and assaulted on our streets.

Free speech and peaceful protest are central American liberties. Looting, rioting, assault, and arson are violent crimes that have no place—no place—whatsoever in our society. It is not a display of courageous citizenship to smash and destroy small businesses that had just barely hung on through the pandemic. It is not an act of principled protest to grab expensive merchandise or set fire to a church. It does

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S2623