

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Michael Pack, of Maryland, to be Chief Executive Officer of the Broadcasting Board of Governors for the term of three years. (New Position)

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, a short time ago, in conjunction with the memorial service being held today in Minnesota for George Floyd, I joined the rest of the Democratic caucus in Emancipation Hall to recognize a moment of silence in honor of his memory as well as the memory of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Aubery, and the unimaginable number of Black Americans who have had their lives ended in police custody.

Standing before the statue of Frederick Douglass, a Black American who fought his whole life for a measure of racial equality, the moment of silence lasted 8 minutes and 46 seconds, the length of time that the White police officer in Minneapolis pressed his knee on George Floyd's neck. Standing there in silence, you feel the horrifying length of George Floyd's final 9 minutes. You cannot help but imagine his horror and fear, knowing that his trauma and the trauma of his family and his friends has been felt by so many Black families and Black communities across the country and across the centuries.

Of course, a moment of silence, a moment of solidarity, is no substitute for real action. That is why Senate Democrats are working with our House colleagues on policing reform legislation.

That is why we are demanding that the Republican majority leader commit to addressing this issue on the floor of the Senate.

Leader MCCONNELL, why don't you admit that we have to do something here and not just say: Well, maybe we will take a look at it, as you did on gun control after the violent shootings and then did nothing? Make a commitment

here and now to the American people that we will put on the floor—that you will put on the floor police reform and racial justice legislation this month.

Will our Republican colleagues ever join us in this effort? I know these issues aren't easy, but we can't begin to make progress if the Republican leader and the Republican majority will not even let us try or address these issues in a legislative manner.

The Republican leader has said:

The coin of the realm in the Senate is floor time. What are you going to devote time to?

Well, it has been 5 weeks since Leader MCCONNELL called the Senate back into session during the height of a pandemic. The Republican majority has yet to put a single bill on the floor of the Senate related to COVID-19.

We passed a much needed extension of PPP reform last night, a very popular and bipartisan program, only after Democrats forced action here on the floor. I don't believe our Republican majority would have done anything.

We announced we would UC the bill, and we did, and it was blocked. Then, of course, faced with the public pressure of moving, Leader MCCONNELL came on the floor late last evening and moved the bill.

Make no mistake about it, without the pressure that we Democrats placed on the Republican majority to make these changes, it would certainly have been further delayed and might never have happened.

Now, Leader MCCONNELL has said that another emergency relief bill was likely before July 4, but then on Tuesday, when listing his priorities for the June session, Leader MCCONNELL did not mention COVID legislation.

Republican Senators are starting to say that another relief bill might—might—come in late July—shocking. This past week—just today it was announced—nearly 2 million more Americans filed for unemployment, bringing the total since the start of the pandemic to over 42 million.

The monthly jobs report tomorrow is expected to report over 20 percent unemployment, and we should wait? As people are losing their jobs, as parents are not sure they can feed their kids or stay in their homes, as small businesses, where people put their blood, sweat, and tears over the years and even decades to build them are collapsing—and we should wait? Why? Because maybe some rightwing ideologues or some of the very big leaders of the Republican Party and benefactors don't like spending money on anything?

I don't know if that is the reason. I hope it isn't. But we can't wait. We can't wait.

The economic disaster, as with so many issues in society, will disproportionately affect Black Americans. So far, 109,000 fellow Americans have died. More are dying every day, every single day, but Senate Republicans want to wait until late July to maybe—maybe do another relief bill.

The coin of the realm in the Senate is floor time. Leader MCCONNELL, every Senate Republican, what are you going to devote time to?

Today, toward the end of one of the more tumultuous and painful weeks in recent memory, marked by emotional protests about racial justice and police violence, Senate Republicans are holding sessions in the Judiciary and Homeland Security Committees related to President Trump's favorite conspiracy theories about the 2016 election.

I am not making this up. That is what they are doing, American people—not talking about COVID, not talking about racial justice but focusing on some Russian-originated theory that has been discredited by our intelligence agencies. That is what the Republican Senate is doing. No wonder they are in trouble.

The American people are looking for some kind of real help, some kind of real discussion, and the Republicans are talking about conspiracy theories.

Then the Senate Judiciary Committee is about to approve another rightwing judge, a McConnell protege, Justin Walker—seriously. At least, if you look at the record and history of Justin Walker, the chances of him being for strengthening voting rights and antidiscrimination legislation is very, very tiny. Yet they move forward on him.

By the end of the day, the two Republican-led committees will have approved up to 100 subpoenas—unprecedented in modern history. In the midst of national crises, Senate Republicans are trying to use the Senate to do opposition research for the President's reelection campaign. Seriously?

The Republican majority will approve up to 100 subpoenas to chase the President's wild conspiracy theories but has not put one bill on jobs, one bill on testing, one bill on employment on the floor of the Senate since Leader MCCONNELL called us back. They will not even commit to a debate on law enforcement reform.

You might think that an economic crisis, a public health emergency, on top of the searing reminder of racial injustice, might have put the conspiracy caucus on pause, but no—no such luck.

The American people should call their Republican Senators. They should demand action. The Republican Senate is failing to meet this important moment, and the Republican President isn't doing any better.

In a week marred by unacceptable violence and rioting in some places, the President advocates more violence, more chaos, more disorder, including appalling attacks on the constitutional rights of protesters on his front porch.

I am heartbroken by stories of peaceful protesters being injured when the protests turn ugly. I am heartbroken by reports of police officers who are doing their job the right way, striving to keep the peace, who have been gravely injured.