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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, amid these challenging times, use our lawmakers to do the work of freedom. May they strive to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States to the best of their abilities. Inspire our Senators to find creative ways to mitigate the effects of the painful blows that have hit this land we love.

As our legislators strive to become instruments for Your glory, sustain them with Your Grace. Lord, give them wisdom to seek to understand and help one another to seize the opportunities that accompany nearly every crisis. Provide them with clear minds, clean hands, and courageous hearts in this grand and difficult time.

We pray in Your powerful 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 speak for 1 minute in morning business.

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

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICING REDUCTION ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, it is no longer business as usual in America, so let's end business as usual in Washington.

We are experiencing a deadly pandemic. The United States is firing on all cylinders to fight it and to find a vaccine, but it does us no good if Americans can't even afford the vaccine or related treatments. Even before the coronavirus outbreak reached our shores, President Trump called upon Congress to deliver a bill to his desk that lowered drug prices for Americans. He mentioned that in his State of the Union message. The Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act does just that. It is time for Congress to support the American people.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

PROTESTS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, all across our Nation, the past few days have seemed to mark a turn for the better.

On Friday morning, new data showed that the economic fallout from this pandemic may have bottomed out and begun to turn around weeks earlier than had been predicted. Instead of losing millions more jobs in the month of May, our Nation had already begun adding back millions of jobs. Lockdowns are easing, and businesses are reopening. The greatest country in world history is coming back online, and our citizens are getting their jobs back by the millions.

Now, there is no question our national comeback is just beginning. The coronavirus is still with us. We have a long way to go to rebuild and recover from the historic layoffs of this spring, but already, even in these early days of our careful reopening, the American people are trouncing the predictions and starting to come back strong.

What is more, this weekend saw millions of Americans, once again, take to the streets and town squares to protest the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and other Black Americans at the hands of law enforcement. Yet, unlike what our Nation faced about a week ago, this weekend's demonstrations seemed to have been almost entirely peaceful—no more rampant looting, no more police precincts set on fire. By and large, there had been just peaceful protests in our great American tradition.

In my home State of Kentucky, in Louisville, just like around the Nation, hundreds gathered to remember Breonna Taylor on what would have been her 27th birthday and to continue to call for answers. In Lexington, a moment of silence was held at an historic former slave market. Then a group marched to police headquarters. Police officers, including the chief, came out and met them in civil discourse. And, while a lot of ink has been spilled recently about our big cities, we cannot miss that this moment is echoing throughout smalltown America as well.

In Henderson, in western Kentucky, 200 people—protesters, law enforcement, and local leaders alike—gathered for an interfaith prayer vigil. In southeastern Kentucky, in Corbin, more than 100 gathered for a peaceful demonstration that included a prayerful moment of silence. The police officers keeping watch joined in. In Hazard, a town of about 5,000 people in eastern Kentucky, citizens gathered for what they called a "march of love." It was the same story in Benton, in Danville, in Morehead—all around the Commonwealth and all around the country. Our

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



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country has remembered that peace and protest can and must coexist.

The vast majority of the men and women in law enforcement across our country are not evil, are not racist, do not wake up every morning looking for violence. We are reminded of their bravery every time a citizen needs to dial 9-1-1, and they rush toward danger. We were all reminded again this past weekend, as these professionals bravely kept watch over demonstrations, including ones where they themselves had been called racist or evil or were denigrated in the worst ways because of their uniforms and their badges.

So, if peaceful protesters rightly do not want to be lumped in with a subset of looters and rioters who seek destruction, then the vast majority of brave police officers cannot be lumped in with the very worst examples of heinous behavior. It is that simple. But, instead, we are already seeing outlandish calls to defund the police or to abolish the police take root within the leftwing leadership class. The president of the City Council in Minneapolis has proclaimed she can “imagine a future without police.” One of her fellow council members put it even more clearly: “This council is going to dismantle this police department.”

To be clear as to what this effort is about, one of the local groups informing this push in Minnesota has literally stated that arts programs and mental health resources will be more effective at stopping crime than will be armed cops. Instead of “strangers armed with guns,” they say other professionals like social workers should be the ones to “respond to crises in our community.”

I am all for social work and mental health, but call me old-fashioned—I think you may actually want a police officer to stop a criminal and arrest him before we try to work through his feelings.

Well, even if some leftwing leaders fall for this nonsense, I have a feeling the American people are too smart for that. They know that what happened to George Floyd was totally abhorrent. They also know that riots and looting are unacceptable. They also know that well-trained law enforcement officers are an important part of creating safe communities, not something to defund or abolish.

So I am proud that Americans across the country can protest in safety and peace. I am proud that their neighbors continue to answer the call to protect and to serve, and I am hopeful that, with unity and mutual respect, we can continue this important national discussion to ensure justice and equal protection under the law.

GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOORS ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on an entirely different subject, while the Senate remains the only Chamber in this Capitol with its lights on, we are

going to continue with legislative work for the country. We will take our first vote today to advance the Great American Outdoors Act—a generational bill from Senator DAINES and Senator GARDNER—that will secure the future of our Nation’s natural treasures.

America is home to 419 national park sites, 567 national wildlife refuges, and hundreds of millions of acres of public lands. Every year, millions of Americans turn to these lands for recreation, inspiration, and for their livelihoods. These resources exist because of the visionary actions of prior Congresses. Now it is our turn to secure them for generations yet to come.

Our colleagues’ legislation does two big things: It improves access to parks and public lands by investing in maintenance and upkeep, and it secures permanent support for the missions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Their legislation has already persuaded 59 cosponsors here in the Senate. It has earned the bipartisan endorsement of the last six former Secretaries of the Interior, and a diverse coalition of independent advocates—from The Nature Conservancy to the Outdoor Industry Association to the American Battlefield Trust—have called on us to pass this bill.

This bill has unusually broad, bipartisan, and vocal support because the issues at hand affect so many different communities so concretely. Every year, visitors to America’s national parks bring more than \$40 billion in economic impact to the gateway towns that surround them. The State and local parks, stewarded by the LWCF, help to generate another \$166 billion in local economic activity and support more than 1.1 million jobs.

My fellow Kentuckians and I know this firsthand. At least 120,000 jobs are supported by active outdoor recreation in the Commonwealth. From hunters and anglers in the Daniel Boone National Forest to tourists visiting Mammoth Cave, our State’s natural treasures occasion nearly \$13 billion in annual consumer spending. Yet Kentuckians also know that tight budgets for maintenance often mean that historic sites go without important repairs and upgrades that would ensure safe access and smooth operations. So we are acutely aware of the need to address the deferred maintenance backlog, which this legislation tackles head-on.

So I am very grateful to our colleagues from Montana and Colorado for shepherding this legislation. I am proud of the stand they have taken in support of our Nation’s natural wonders and the millions of American livelihoods that depend on them. I look forward to discussing this landmark legislation more in the days ahead, to supporting it here on the floor, and to urging every one of my colleagues to join in.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

TAXPAYER FIRST ACT OF 2019—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 1957, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 75, H.R. 1957, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modernize and improve the Internal Revenue Service, and for other purposes.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. 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 DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

PROTESTS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now, “Equal Justice Under Law”—those words are etched in stone above the doors of the Supreme Court, a bedrock principle of the American system. These past few weeks have been a searing reminder of how that principle does not reflect the lived experience for many Americans.

For Black Americans, confrontations with the police are not the same as for White Americans. You can be standing on a street corner like Eric Garner or asleep in your bed like Breonna Taylor and have your life ended by police. George Floyd’s brutal death at the hands of a White police officer in Minneapolis sparked peaceful protests across this country because as singular and tragic as the death of George Floyd was, his experience was one that resonated with far too many Black Americans.

That is why hundreds of thousands of Americans have engaged in peaceful demonstrations against police violence and systemic racism. From Los Angeles to Washington, DC, and from Seattle to New York City, where I joined shoulder to shoulder with my fellow New Yorkers on Saturday, Americans from all walks of life have marched, sang, prayed, cried, and spoken out that Black lives matter; that our country promises justice for all but too often only delivers it for some.