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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.

Eternal God, our hearts are steadfast toward You. Lead us safely to the refuge of Your choosing, for You desire to give us a future and a hope.

Lord, provide us with grateful hearts to appreciate Your mercies that are new each day. Today, give our Senators the power to do Your will as they realize more fully that they are servants of Heaven and stewards of Your mysteries. Give them perspectives on their daily tasks and every decision they must make. Remind them that people usually don't care how much You know until they know how much You care.

May faithfulness to You become the litmus test by which our lawmakers evaluate each action.

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 (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Iowa.

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

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

IOWA GRADUATIONS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, once again, I am proud to come to tell you something about the history of

Iowa, and I do this during a hectic time of the COVID-19 crisis. That crisis has had, for American educational systems, quite an impact. So, at this time, it is important to highlight some successes.

The 2018-2019 school year saw the highest 4-year graduation rate in Iowa's history, and that percentage was at 91.6 percent. In 2017, Iowa had the highest graduation rate in the entire country, and with this achievement, we appear ready to do it again.

During my time representing Iowa in the U.S. Senate, I had been in many of our State's classrooms and have seen firsthand the dedication of Iowa's educators. I congratulate all of those involved with Iowa schools on their fantastic work and congratulate them for doing it at all times, even over the past few months, in particular, because of all the situations they have run into because of the virus pandemic.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

ISSUES FACING AMERICA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, the Senate has been confronting issues of historic importance on the homefront.

Just since March, we sent historic resources to the healthcare fight against COVID-19 on an overwhelming bipartisan basis. We passed the largest rescue package in American history on a bipartisan basis. We just passed a generational bill for our public lands, also on a bipartisan basis.

Yesterday, the junior Senator from South Carolina introduced a major proposal to reform policing and promote racial justice. If our colleagues across the aisle can put politics aside and join us in a real discussion, then on this issue, too, we should be able to make law on a bipartisan basis.

The Senate has led and is leading the way toward serious solutions. At the same time, developments around the world continue to remind us that the safety and interests of the American people are also threatened from beyond our shores. Just 2 weeks ago, I explained how the Chinese Communist Party has used the pandemic they helped worsen as a smokescreen for ratcheting up their oppression in Hong Kong and advancing their control and influence throughout the region. It hasn't stopped.

At sea, they have stepped up their menacing of Japan near the Senkaku Islands. In the skies, Chinese jets have intruded into Taiwanese airspace four separate times in a matter of days. On land, for the sake of grabbing territory, the PLA appears to have instigated the worst violent clash between China and India since those nations went to war way back in 1962.

Needless to say, the rest of the world has watched with grave concern this violent exchange between two nuclear states. We are encouraging deescalation and hoping for peace. The world could not have received a clearer reminder that the PRC is dead set on brutalizing people within their own borders—challenging and remaking the international order anew in their image, to include literally redrawing world maps. Of course, this is not exactly breaking news to any of us who have been paying attention.

Earlier this year, the Senate passed legislation to give the administration new tools to directly punish the CCP for its egregious—egregious treatment of the Uighur people and the modern-day gulags it has constructed there in the Xinjiang Province. The President signed it into law yesterday.

Going back to the United States-Hong Kong Policy Act, which I wrote back in 1992, the Senate has maintained a keen interest in the freedom and autonomy of our friends in that city. Unfortunately, Beijing has continued to tighten its grip there as well.

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



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