



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2020

No. 116

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 Father, our souls long for You, for we find strength and joy in Your presence.

Guide our lawmakers to put their trust in You, seeking in every undertaking to know and do Your will. When they go through difficulties, may they remember that, with Your help, they can accomplish the seemingly impossible. Lord, give them a faith that will trust you even when the darkness is blacker than a thousand midnights. May they always find strength in Your providential meaning.

We pray in Your strong 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. BLACKBURN). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 30 seconds in morning business.

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

JUDICIAL CONFIRMATIONS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, the Senate will soon cross the milestone of 200 judicial confirmations since President Trump came to the Presidency in 2017. These have been nominees in the molds of Justice Scalia, just as the President promised nearly 4 years ago. They will strictly interpret the Constitution and Federal

statutes. Their decisions will be driven by what the law actually says, not their own personal policy preferences.

This landmark achievement is the result of the President keeping his word and the unwavering determination of Leader McCONNELL, Chairman GRAHAM, and the Republican conference.

In the hands of these many strict constructionist judges, the future of American jurisprudence is very, very bright.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

JUDICIAL CONFIRMATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, in a few hours, the Senate will confirm Judge Cory T. Wilson to join the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Yet again, President Trump has sent up an outstanding nominee for this important vacancy. Judge Wilson holds degrees from the University of Mississippi and Yale Law School. He has held a prestigious clerkship, found success in private practice, and spent years in public service as a lawyer and a judge. The American Bar Association rates Mr. Wilson "well qualified."

Once we confirm Judge Wilson today, the Senate will have confirmed 200—200—of President Trump's nominees to lifetime appointments on the Federal bench. Following No. 200, when we depart this Chamber today, there will not be a single circuit court vacancy anywhere in the Nation for the first time in at least 40 years. There will not be a single circuit court vacancy anywhere in the Nation for the first time in at least 40 years.

As I have said many times, our work with the administration to renew our Federal courts is not a partisan or political victory; it is a victory for the

rule of law and for the Constitution itself.

If judges applying the law and the Constitution as they are written strikes any of our colleagues as a threat to their political agenda, then the problem, I would argue, is with their agenda.

THE JUSTICE ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on another matter, today was supposed to bring progress for an issue that is weighing heavily on the minds of Americans. In the wake of the killings of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, following weeks of passionate protests from coast to coast, the Senate was supposed to officially take up police reform on the floor today. Instead, our Democratic colleagues are poised to turn this routine step into a partisan impasse.

Frankly, to most Americans, the situation would sound like a satire of what goes on in the Senate: a heated argument over whether to invoke cloture on a motion to proceed to a proposal—a heated argument over whether to invoke cloture on a motion to proceed to a proposal. We are literally arguing about whether to stop arguing about whether to start arguing about something else.

I can stand here for an hour and extol the virtues of Senator TIM SCOTT's JUSTICE Act. His legislation has already earned 48 cosponsors because it is a straightforward plan based on facts, based on data, and based on lived experience. It focuses on improving accountability and restoring trust. It addresses key issues like choke holds and no-knock warrants. It expands reporting, transparency in hiring, and training for deescalation.

I am proud to stand with this legislation, but the reality is that nobody thought the first offer from the Republican side was going to be the final product that traveled out of the Senate. What is supposed to happen in this

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S3161