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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.

Sovereign God, You are wisdom without end and mercy without limit. We worship You.

Lord, have compassion on our Nation. Heal our physical, mental, and spiritual wounds. We are worn out from this challenging season. Restore us to the vision of a liberating freedom that enables justice to flourish. Hear the prayers of our Senators, and give them Your peace. And, Lord, thank You for the degree of resolution that has occurred in our Nation's election process. Remind us all of the wisdom of Mark 3:25 that says, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

We pray in Your sovereign 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. BOOZMAN). 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.

PFIZER VACCINE TRIAL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this morning, Pfizer announced positive results from its eagerly awaited coronavirus vaccine trial, with early data suggesting the vaccine is 90 percent effective.

This trial is taking place at over 120 sites, including at the University of Iowa's medical school. The University of Iowa's portion is being led by Dr. Patricia Winokur, an infectious disease expert and associate dean. The trial involves about 250 Iowans who have volunteered to participate. The trial is not yet complete, but this is exciting news and an important step to halting the virus.

I am proud of Iowa's role in making sure the vaccine will be safe and effective.

I yield the floor.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, November is National Adoption Month.

Each November, families across the country finalize adoptions and celebrate the creation of new families and connections. On National Adoption Day, which is celebrated on the Saturday before Thanksgiving, a special effort is made to finalize as many pending adoptions as possible. Last year, over 4,000 adoptions were finalized on that day. While I am sure that this day will look a little different this year due to the coronavirus, I am confident that family courts and child welfare agencies will still make it a special day for many, many families—happy families—because they will be able to bring new ones into their families.

The pandemic has created significant challenges for the children and families in our child welfare system. With travel restrictions and limits on visitors in hospitals, adoptive parents are meeting

their children for the first time ever over video chat instead of in person. Kids in foster care are having to wait longer for placements, and foster parents are facing the added stress of school closures. Court proceedings are taking place over Zoom. Despite the challenges, both new challenges and old challenges that can accompany adoption, parents in Iowa and across the country are still making the choice to open their hearts and homes to children in need.

Congress has worked in the past to reduce barriers that would-be adoptive parents face. I will continue my efforts of making sure adoption remains an option for children in foster care who can't be reunited with their families, women who are facing unexpected pregnancies, and all parents who are willing and able to provide safe and loving homes for kids in need. There were over 100,000 children in the foster care system who were waiting for adoption in 2019. That 100,000 was approximately one-fourth of the number of kids in foster care. Congress must work in a bipartisan way, as it has for many years, to make sure adoption can become a reality, not just a dream, for all of these kids. We must also make sure that child welfare agencies have the tools and flexibilities they need to serve the families in their communities.

For years in the Senate, I have worked to elevate the voices of youth in the foster care system. These young people are their own best advocates, and they can tell you that the thing they want the most is a caring and loving family and a permanent home. What would you expect from any of these young people who are moved from home to home maybe two or three times in a given year?

As I continue to work in Congress toward the goal of helping all children find their forever families, I will always keep the best interests of children at the forefront.

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



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