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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Lord God Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth, thank You for not leaving us solely to our own resources. Lord, You have provided us with the witness of nature and the testimony of sacred Scripture to navigate us toward certainty. You protect us from dangers, seen and unseen, empowering us to run without weariness and to walk without fainting.

Today, strengthen our lawmakers for their work. Guide them to the road that fulfills Your plans. Bless them with productivity and progress for Your glory as You help them to learn how to better serve You by serving others.

We pray in Your merciful 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Graham Scott Steele, of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO PATRICK LEAHY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, I know you will be taking the floor in a few minutes. I spoke about the bittersweet mood we all have of your departure—bitter in the sense that you have done so much for the Senate, for Vermont, and for America over the years that we will badly miss you; sweet because you will get to spend more time with Marcelle, your children, your lovely grandchildren. And you deserve it, after all these great years of service.

It is one of the most extraordinary records any Senator has compiled in the history of this country. So thank you for your service and your continued service through January of 2022.

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT

Mr. President, now on infrastructure, yesterday, our country took a major step forward to prepare our economy for the challenges of the 21st century.

As we all know, the American people have been told for years—for years—that another infrastructure bill was coming, one infrastructure week after another. But, after yesterday, we can now tell the American people that an infrastructure law is here. The President signed it yesterday.

The enactment of bipartisan infrastructure legislation is so long overdue. There isn't a community in America that doesn't have some glaring need. Crumbling roads; dilapidated schools; untrustworthy bridges; overburdened airports, seaports, and railways—the new infrastructure law will tackle these challenges head-on.

I thank the President and my colleagues from both sides of the aisle—both sides of the aisle—for making yesterday possible.

The President's infrastructure bill can be summarized with a four-letter word: J-o-b-s. Jobs, jobs, jobs—more local jobs, more good-paying jobs, more union jobs. Unions, as we know, have been a ladder up through the decades, and they will continue to be under this bill, as there will be more of them.

And the jobs will put people to work on projects in every State and every community. In New York, my State, dependent on good transportation, major undertakings like Gateway, the Cross Bronx Expressway, the Second Avenue Subway, I–81 in Syracuse, and the north inner loop in Rochester. The list could go on and on and on. All of them will finally get going again. We have a great chance of that happening after years of paralysis.

And the Federal dollars that the government is sending to the States is already having an effect in my State. Yesterday, our Governor announced that, because of the Federal dollars, there won't be fare increases or cutbacks in services on the MTA and the commuter rail. That is really good news.

Well, what is happening in New York holds true in every other State in the Nation. Major projects that have been long awaited have a real good possibility of getting going. So there is great news, and jobs, jobs, jobs will rain down on every State.

So there is much to celebrate with yesterday's signing, and in the weeks and months and years to come, the American people will see the benefits with their own eyes. So I want to

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

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