United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 168 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2022 No. 3

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 6, 2022, at 12 p.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2022

The Senate met at 11 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.

Eternal God, thank You for Your presence and blessings. We cling to Your promise to always be with us, keeping us secure in spite of life's dangers.

As we recall January 6, 2021, we ask You to stay close to our lawmakers. Use them to keep the enemies of freedom from succeeding.

Mighty God, have mercy upon this great Nation. Because of Your constant love and great mercy, wipe away our sins. Give us the wisdom to recognize our faults, particularly when we seem to forget that eternal vigilance is still the price we pay for freedom.

We pray in Your loving 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 to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Anne A. Witkowsky, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Conflict and Stabilization Operations).

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Mexico.

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

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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 (Mr. LUJÁN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

ELECTIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as 2022 gets underway, working Americans and their families are facing a steady stream of significant challenges: the fastest growing inflation in almost 40 years; violent crime rates continue to rise, with many of our largest cities setting new alltime records for murders; a southern border that remains in crisis; a new highly contagious variant of the virus that President Biden promised he would personally crush; too few tests and too slow new treatments on this administration's watch; and another rolling wave of school shutdowns, as Big Labor bosses continue to make hostages out of children's futures over a virus that leaves children largely—largely—unharmed.

Late last year, one poll asked Americans about the most important problems facing the country. Some were most worried about the high cost of living. Others said, not surprisingly, the pandemic. One-fifth of respondents, the most by far, said the biggest issue was poor leadership—at a time when the Democratic Party controls the entire government.

But do you know what wasn't on the list of concerns? It wasn't there at all—the fictional, scary stories the liberal activists keep repeating about how democracy is at death's door. The November 2020 election had the highest turnout in 120 years. Ninety-four percent of voters said voting was easy. Only 33 percent of Americans say it is currently too hard for eligible voters to vote. And a larger number than that actually say current laws are too loose—too loose.

The American people are not buying this nonsensical talk of ''Jim Crow 2.0'' or a voting rights crisis. Everybody, apart from leftwing activists and the press, understands this emperor has no clothes at all.

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

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