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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, March 17, 2023, at 11 a.m.

Senate

THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2023

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, who made us in Your image, thank You for Your sustaining power. Because of You, we receive the gift of heartbeats each day. Great is Your faithfulness. Lord, enable us to see Your divine image in every human being.

Bless our lawmakers. Bring to the surface the goodness within each of them. Keep them safe as You give them the wisdom to do Your will on Earth, even as it is done in Heaven.

Lord, give us all insights into Your will and the courage to do it.

We pray in Your matchless 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 Jessica G. L. Clarke, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now, almost 20 years to the day that U.S. military operations began in Iraq, the U.S. Senate begins the process of repealing the Iraq AUMFs—the ones of 2002 and 1991—putting the final remnants of those conflicts squarely behind us.

The United States, the Nation of Iraq, and the entire world have changed dramatically since 2002, and it is time the laws on the books catch up with these changes. The Iraq war has itself been long over. This AUMF has outlived its purpose, and we can no longer justify keeping it in effect.

While the Iraq war was the cause of so much bitterness in the past, I am glad that repealing these AUMFs has been a genuinely bipartisan effort. I expect we will have a number of amendment votes on the floor once this amendment is before us, and I want to thank Senators KAINE and YOUNG, Chairman MENENDEZ, Ranking Member RISCH, and all the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the cosponsors of this legislation.

Again, this is a bipartisan process. Both parties in this Chamber have voiced support for repeal. President Biden has voiced support for repealing this AUMF, and in June of 2021, our House colleagues voted 268 to 168 to repeal, with 49 Republicans in support.

I hope this year, on the 20th anniversary of the start of the Iraq war, both Chambers will finally speak in one voice and send an AUMF repeal to the President's desk.

Americans are tired of endless wars in the Middle East. Many Americans have come of age without even remembering the early years of the Iraq war. Every year we leave these AUMFs on the books is another year that a future administration can abuse them, and Congress—the rightful dispenser of war powers—cannot allow this to continue.

I want to make this clear: Repealing this AUMF will not in any way hinder our national defense, nor will it hurt the efforts of our troops deployed overseas. In fact, the repeal is an important step for strengthening our relationship with Iraq.

So once again, thank you to all my colleagues for their good work on this resolution, and I urge everyone on both sides to vote ''yes'' on cloture on the motion to proceed in a few hours.

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

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