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Senate

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

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's prayer will be offered by the Reverend Kathryn Pocalyko, Pastor of the Lutheran Church of Our Saviour in North Chesterfield, VA.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God most mighty, O God most merciful, O God our strength and our song, You call these leaders to serve the public, promote justice, and establish peace in our land. We lift before You all who govern and serve our Nation through this body, its Senators, its staff, and its pages. Bless Members with collaboration in this Holy experiment. Give to those whom we entrust with authority the spirit of wisdom and understanding. Guide them with the spirit of counsel and insight. Grant them a spirit of knowledge. Grace them with Your presence. For You show us a vision of a tree whose leaves are for the healing of the Nation. May that tree take root here, bearing fruit in the hearts and work of these servants.

We pray this through Your Holy 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The majority leader is recognized.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, President Obama regularly calls on Republicans and Democrats to work together to advance the priorities of our Nation, and we certainly agree.

Our top priority is our national security, and Congress worked together on an overwhelmingly bipartisan basis to pass the National Defense Authorization Act. So while Americans were surprised to learn the President announced he would veto that bipartisan bill, they must be shaking their heads in disbelief now that they have learned the President will not only veto the bill, he is going to brag about it—not only going to veto the bill, but he is going to brag about it in a photo op today down at the White House.

Remember what it is the President will veto today. This bipartisan bill will attack bureaucratic waste and authorize pay raises and improved quality-of-life programs for our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines; it will strengthen sexual assault prevention and response; it will help wounded warriors and heroes who struggle with mental health challenges; and it will equip the men and women who serve with what they need to defend this Nation.

This is the worst possible time for an American President to veto a national defense bill and especially to do so for arbitrary partisan reasons. Republicans and Democrats in Congress worked so hard to pass this important legislation, legislation that authorizes the exact amount—the exact amount—the Commander in Chief requested. So now we will have to work together again, this time hopefully to override the President's veto.

The President should be highlighting his signature on this bipartisan legislation that supports the men and women who defend our Nation. Instead, with our servicemembers facing threats and instability in several theaters, he will

be bragging—bragging—about using his veto pen. Our allies are seeking leadership and stability, not indecision. A partisan veto of this bipartisan bill is simply unacceptable.

CYBERSECURITY INFORMATION SHARING BILL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, Americans know that cyber attacks are attacks on their privacy and their property. No one wants to think about a stranger riffling through their medical records. No one wants to think about a criminal stealing their credit card information. That is why we have this bipartisan cyber security bill before us in the Senate.

This bipartisan legislation will help protect Americans' most private and personal information by sharing information between the private and public sector on cyber threats. Experts say the tools in this bill can help prevent future attacks in both the public and private sectors. It contains important measures to protect civil liberties and individual privacy, and it has been carefully vetted and scrutinized by Senators of both parties. No wonder this bill passed through committee with nearly unanimous bipartisan support, 14 to 1.

The House already voted to protect the privacy of Americans by passing cyber legislation. With a little cooperation, the Senate can as well. That is why I urge all Members to vote today to move forward on this bipartisan bill, which will set up votes on amendments from both parties. With continuing cooperation, we can take an important step toward protecting the privacy of our constituents.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

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



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