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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, every good and perfect gift comes from You alone, for with You there is no variation or shadow of turning. Help us to remember that the function of prayer is not to influence You, Almighty God, but to change us. We, therefore, do not pray for an easy life but for the strength to endure a difficult one.

Give our Senators the wisdom to trust You in the small things, realizing that faithfulness with the least prepares them for fidelity with the much. May they trust You to do what is best for America in good times and in bad. May we place our hope in You and never forget how You have sustained us in the past.

We pray in Your sacred 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. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, Senators have been continuing their work across the aisle to reach an agreement on a continuing resolution that will help keep Americans safer from Zika, provide critical funding for veterans, and keep the government open.

I have been encouraged by the progress that we have made so far, and I hope to see it continue as we work toward a final bill which will extend through December 9 at last year's enacted level.

We all know how important the measure is. So let's keep working and get this done.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

THE REPUBLICAN-LED SENATE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Republican-led Senate recently returned from the longest summer recess in more than a half a century. It is depicted here in the chart I wish to share with my colleagues. The black lines are when we are not working. Where there are not black lines is when we work, keeping in mind that many of our work days are not the work days of the people we represent. Some work days are 3 or 4 hours at the most.

The Republican Senate just simply doesn't work. The chart represents the fewest working days since 1956. Our country has grown since then. But here it is. A picture is worth a thousand words. I won't say a thousand words this morning, but I will say a few more things.

We are here today when the Republican-led Senate is on track to work fewer days in 2016 than in any year since 1956, when I was in high school. Republicans owe the taxpayers who fund their paychecks an apology—and they really do—for showing up to work fewer days this year than any Senate in all those many decades.

One would think the Republicans would be embarrassed by their indolence—but apparently not. Instead of apologizing for their absenteeism, Republicans are demanding even more time off.

Today I read in the newspaper—there are news accounts all over the country—that Republicans are whining about being asked to show up to do their jobs. They are asking for more weeks of recess. They are saying that Democrats are holding up what we are doing in Congress—how about that.

We are so far down the road here that not much can be done because we are in what we call postcloture procedure in almost everything we do around here. We are going to vote in just a few hours, and it will be another time when we can't do anything because we are postcloture. But that is the calendar the Republican leader set. We didn't. That is the calendar we should stick to, I guess, is what we are being told. Let's black off a few more days. It is scary, but that is what they want. If we take more time off, the Senate will not have just worked fewer days in any year since 1956, but we may have to go back further in history to find a Senate that worked as few days as this one—a long time back.

So I have a short answer for the Republicans who complain about being asked to earn their paychecks. Cry us all a river. Stop complaining about not having enough time off.

People out there who are watching this work different kinds of jobs. Some are retired, but they worked. They know what it is like to work. They never gave themselves extra weeks of vacation whenever they felt like it and neither should Senate Republicans.

DONALD TRUMP

Mr. REID. Mr. President, working people in our great country are tired of being ripped off by really rich people—some who are billionaires and some who claim they are billionaires. During the financial crisis, Wall Street took

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

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