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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.

Immortal, invisible, God only wise, do not stand far from us, for we need You every hour.

May our lawmakers remember that their success comes from You. Give them the wisdom to seek justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with You. Lord, free them from any entanglements that dishonor You. Protect them from dangers, seen and unseen, as they strive to return good for evil. When they feel overwhelmed, remind them that, in everything, You are working for the good of those who love You.

Help us all to strive to glorify You in every action, both large and small.

We pray in Your strong 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.

HEARING ON THE PRESIDENT'S POWER PLAN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit will hear arguments in the case challenging the merits of the President's so-called Clean Power Plan.

My home State of Kentucky is one of more than two dozen States that have signed on to that suit, and I have been proud to lead efforts in support of the Commonwealth on this issue. In fact, I joined Chairman INHOFE, more than 30 other Senators, and more than 170 Representatives in filing an amicus brief to push back on the President's power grab.

I was pleased that the Supreme Court stepped in earlier this year to issue an unprecedented stay of this plan until the Federal courts review it.

In light of the court's hold on the plan, I wrote a letter encouraging the Governors of all 50 States to take advantage of this much-needed reprieve and to adopt a wait-and-see approach before complying with the plan's standards.

As I noted then, the President's plan is yet another example of Executive overreach patterned after this administration's political and ideological agenda, rather than scientific evidence.

This massive regulatory overreach would cause energy bills to skyrocket. It would strike at the most vulnerable. It would ship middle class jobs overseas. It would bring further harm to families like those in Kentucky who have been devastated by this administration's anticonal policies. And it would do little to nothing to actually achieve its intended purpose—reducing global emissions.

This plan, which I have long believed may not be upheld in court, could place significant legal and economic burdens on our States. That is why I have encouraged them to take advantage of the court's stay as we await a final ruling.

I look forward to today's hearing, which is an important step in determining whether the President's misguided plan will survive legal scrutiny.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to bring a little perspective to to-

day's vote on the clean CR-Zika package. Remember, this is a 10-week funding bill. Its contents command broad support. It contains zero controversial riders from either party.

Can it really be that Democratic leaders have embraced dysfunction so thoroughly that they attack a non-controversial 10-week funding bill over—what exactly? Now, remember, the reason we are in this position is that our friends on the other side didn't want to have a regular appropriations process. Does anybody know what the issue is? Do they even know?

The rationale seems to change by the hour. What we do know is it has almost nothing to do with what is actually in the bill. They have agreed to its spending levels, so it isn't that. They have agreed to its compromise Zika package, so it can't be that. They have agreed with us to help veterans and those hurt by floods and the heroin and prescription opioid crisis, too, so it can't be that either.

We also know that the Senate has already voted to pass assistance for families affected by lead poisoning in Flint—in its proper vehicle—the Water Resources Development Act, with Chairman INHOFE pledging to continue to pursue resources for Flint once the bill goes to conference. So Flint can't really be an issue either. And the White House said yesterday that the WRDA bill is an appropriate vehicle for the Flint funding.

It is almost as if a few Democratic leaders decided long ago that bringing our country to the brink would make for good election-year politics, and then they have just made up a rationale as they go along. But that couldn't really be true, could it? Could it be true?

That would mean Democrats have been playing politics with the lives of expectant mothers and babies suffering from Zika after a few months ago demanding immediate action. That would mean Democrats have been playing

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



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