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## House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, July 1, 2016, at 9 a.m.

## Senate

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29, 2016

The Senate met at 9:30 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.

God, our deliverer, as the tragedy in Turkey reminds us of the dangerous, discordant, and demonic forces in our world, we look to You, our light and salvation. Show us how to please You as we remember that righteousness exalts a nation, and sin destroys.

May our lawmakers make obedience to You the bottom line in their labors. Teach them to know and comply with Your commands as they never forget that obedience brings blessings. Lord, give them the wisdom to make an absolute commitment to honor You above all else. Provide them with the strength to defeat temptation as they remember that You provide a way of escape from every test. Equip them for whatever task and challenges they must tackle.

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. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

### TERROR ATTACK IN ISTANBUL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday our NATO ally Turkey suffered a devastating terror attack at Istanbul's main airport that quickly brought to mind ISIL's attack in Brussels earlier this year.

We do not know yet if this attack was launched by ISIL or the PKK, but we do know that our intelligence community will do all it can to help the Turks combat terrorism and defeat this threat. As CIA Director John Brennan reminded us all earlier this month, "[D]espite all of our progress against ISIL on the battlefield and in the financial realm, our efforts have not reduced the group's terrorism capability and its global reach."

In recent days Turkey has taken diplomatic steps to improve bilateral relations with Russia and Israel, and now the United States must extend its hand to our NATO partners and assure them that we will stand with them in the face of this attack and work together to defeat ISIL.

### ZIKA VIRUS AND VA-MILCON FUNDING BILL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, let me read some headlines.

"Senate Democrats block Zika agreement ahead of recess."

"Senate Dems block House Zika funding."

That last article goes on to say: "Senate Democrats . . . blocked a critical funding measure needed to combat the spreading Zika virus, a move that will now make it impossible for Congress to send legislation to President Obama before July 4."

Our Democratic friends are working hard to spin this, but families don't want excuses, they want action. Yesterday, Senate Democrats listened to the demands of a partisan special interest group and turned their backs on women's health and fighting Zika. First, they demanded congressional action on Zika. Then, in the midst of mosquito season, Democrats chose partisan politics over \$1.1 billion in critical funds to protect pregnant women and babies from Zika—after the Democrats voted for the same \$1.1 billion funding level just last month.

Yesterday, Senate Democrats listened to the demands of a partisan special interest group and turned their backs on supporting our veterans. First, they demanded more funding for veterans. Then, just before the Fourth of July, Democrats chose partisan politics over significantly increasing resources for veterans' health care.

In the coming days, Democrats will hear from constituents back home who want to know what they are doing to keep them safe from the threat of Zika and what they are doing to support our veterans. Democrats will have to explain why they chose not to do their job and instead blocked funding for the Zika crisis and for our Nation's heroes.

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



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I have moved to reconsider the legislation, and we will give everybody on the other side a chance to think about that during the Fourth of July. We will get back to that when we get back.

#### PUERTO RICO

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico is in crisis. It owes billions of dollars in debt, and without prompt congressional action, it could be forced to leave residents without essential services such as hospitals and public safety resources. If we don't act before the island misses a critical debt payment deadline this Friday, matters will only get a lot worse—for Puerto Rico and for taxpayers. President Obama's Treasury Secretary warns that Puerto Rico could be forced to "lay off police officers, shut down public transit, and close medical facilities." This could very well result in a taxpayer-funded bailout.

Today, however, we have an opportunity to help Puerto Rico in the face of this crisis and prevent a taxpayer bailout by passing the responsible bipartisan bill before us. This bill will not cost taxpayers a dime—not a dime. What it will do is help Puerto Rico restructure its financial obligations and provide much needed oversight to put in place needed reforms. It achieves this with an audit of the island's finances and the establishment of what the Washington Post has called "an impartial panel of experts" to bring desperately needed transparency and reform to Puerto Rico's fiscal operations.

Puerto Rico currently spends over a third of its budget on debt payments alone. By restructuring Puerto Rico's financial debt and helping reform its operations, this bill will allow the territory to invest more of its resources in growing the economy and creating more opportunities for its residents. Obviously, the bill isn't perfect, but here is why we should support it: It will not cost taxpayers a dime, it prevents a bailout, and it offers Puerto Rico the best chance to return to financial stability and economic growth over the long term, so we can help prevent another financial crisis like this in the future. In short, it is "just the first step," as the Governor of Puerto Rico said, "in what will be . . . [a] long road to recovery" for the island. But it is the most responsible, taxpayer-friendly step we can take right now.

So let me remind my colleagues that Puerto Rico faces a critical deadline this Friday, 2 days from today. This is the best and possibly the only action we can take to help Puerto Rico. As Secretary Jack Lew put it, "[D]oing nothing now to end the debt crisis will result in a chaotic, disorderly unwinding with widespread consequences." It is the surest route to both the taxpayer-funded bailout of Puerto Rico and a humanitarian crisis for its people. These are all things we should avoid.

Doing nothing is not an option. We must act now to prevent matters from getting worse. The House already passed this bipartisan bill with the backing of nearly 300 Members. Now it is the Senate's turn to send this to the President's desk immediately.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### ISIS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, often the Republican leader comes to the floor and complains about the battle against ISIS without ever offering a word as to what he would do that is not being done by President Obama and the rest of the allied forces. But let's talk a little bit about the progress that has been made.

Is it all done? Of course not. We are working on that every day. Since the height of the ISIS power, U.S. and coalition forces have captured about 50 percent of the land ISIS once held in Iraq, and they are losing land every day. ISIS has lost 20 percent of the land it held in Syria. Ramadi and Tikrit were key victories for the U.S.-backed Iraqi forces. Iraqi forces captured the city of Fallujah in the last few days and are now working to put out the next pockets of resistance in that key Al Anbar Province town. As we speak, Kurdish, Iraq, and Syrian Democratic forces backed by the U.S. Special Forces are making preparations to retake ISIS's key strongholds in Mosul and Raqqa in Iraq. We have killed more than 25,000 ISIS fighters and 120 key ISIS leaders. We have cut ISIS funds by up to one-third and some say approaching 50 percent. We have drastically slowed the flow of foreign recruits from a high of about 2,000 a month in 2014 to 200 a month today. The same goes for the young Americans who have sought to travel and join ISIS abroad. A year ago, about 10 Americans a month—hard to comprehend that, but it is true—were leaving to join ISIS. That is now numbering about one a month.

At home the FBI is cracking down on recruits. They are doing a good job. It is a tough job. Are they going to be able to get it all done quickly enough? We don't know, but they are doing their best. Over the past 2 years the FBI has arrested 80 individuals on ISIS-related charges. Prosecutions have gone forward, and with rare exception, they have all gone forward successfully.

#### ZIKA VIRUS AND VA-MILCON FUNDING BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Republican leader came here yesterday and came here again this morning talking about Zika.

Understand how the House of Representatives works—and stunningly, the Republicans over here accept what they do in the House. In the House of Representatives, they have what is called the Hastert rule, named after a Congressman from Illinois who was the Speaker of the House for a number of years. He created what was called the Hastert rule. What that was is, you had to deal only with legislation that had enough votes to pass it with Republican votes. They didn't want Democrats to be involved, and they are still that way.

Even though Hastert's in prison, they follow the Hastert rule. As a result of that, in the dead of night last week, Republicans in the House—and I mean the dead of the night. Remember the House had been taken over by the House Democrats because they were upset about what had not been done with guns. The event was interrupted for probably less than a minute, and the House was called back into session. The House passed with no discussion whatsoever the conference report dealing with Zika.

As could only be understood by someone understanding what the Hastert rule is, here is what they did. They had to get all the crazies over there—I am sorry to use that term. That is the term Speaker Boehner used, and the more I see of this, I think he had it pretty down pat. They did everything they could to go after all the pet projects of Republicans. They hate Planned Parenthood. They hate it, even though millions of Americans get their care there. This Zika disease causes young women to be concerned about birth control. About one out of every five women will get care at Planned Parenthood at some point in their lives. But what did Republicans do? They said: We are going to restrict funding for birth control provided by Planned Parenthood. Why would they do that? Only to get votes from those crazies over there.

They exempted pesticide spraying from clean water. What we need to do with these mosquitoes—in addition to inventing vaccines and other medicines to fight this plague, we also have to kill the mosquitoes, and we do that by spraying. That works better than anything else. Of course, the Republicans, hating environmental laws, went after the Clean Water Act, which has been in existence for decades.

Just to make sure that they covered all their bases, they whacked veterans funding by \$500 million below the Senate bill. Those were for processing claims of veterans. What do we hear complaints about? Processing claims. Well, they took care of that. They want to cut \$500 million from Secretary McDonald's budget so he cannot process claims very quickly. It cuts Ebola funding by \$107 million and rescinds \$543 million from ObamaCare. Just for good measure, I guess they had to make sure they had all the southern votes. They said: What we are going to