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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O Lord our God, giver of everlasting life, nothing can separate us from Your limitless love.

Use our lawmakers today for Your glory, inspiring them to cultivate tough minds and tender hearts. Lord, help them to remember that nothing is impossible to those who place their trust in You. May the power of faith create in them both the desire and the ability to do Your will. As our Senators humble themselves in prayer, prepare their hearts and minds to serve Your purposes on Earth.

Lord, give Your consolation to those experiencing sorrow and Your love to us all.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, November 30, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COTTON thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

WORK BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate has a number of issues to wrap up, including the conference reports on the Water Resources Development Act, the Energy Policy Modernization Act, and, of course, the National Defense Authorization Act as well.

The action taken by the Senate yesterday will allow us to have a final vote on the critical Iran Sanctions Extension Act sometime this week. Later today, the House is set to vote on the 21st Century Cures bill, an important medical research and innovation bill which contains a number of bipartisan priorities.

Once their work is complete, the Senate will consider this measure and send it to the President's desk. Talks on the continuing resolution are ongoing. I will have more to say about that in the coming days.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA BOXER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have served in Congress now for 34 years. Throughout that time, I have tried to

be pleasant and helpful to my colleagues. I feel very fortunate to have become personally close and friends with Members of Congress from all over this great country. BARBARA BOXER and I were Members of the House class of 1982. Such fond memories do I have of that class—TOM CARPER, DICK DURBIN, and scores of others. We had a huge class.

At first glance, BARBARA BOXER and HARRY REID had very little in common. She was from California. It is a heavily populated and liberal State. I was from Nevada, a much smaller State in area and in population. I was the only Democrat in my State's Congressional delegation. But I was stunned when I was asked to join this huge California Congressional delegation. Being from Nevada and being part of the largest Congressional delegation in America was extremely helpful to me.

The Californians were good to me in so many different ways, just allowing me to be part of their meetings every Wednesday morning. I was flattered when I was asked to be secretary-treasurer of that large delegation. I have so many memories of the work we did together, California and Nevada.

Howard Berman, who was the leader of that freshman class from California, was the head of the steering committee. Don Edwards was the chairman of the delegation at those meetings we had every morning. The Burton brothers and just so many others went out of their way to help me.

I came to know quickly that BARBARA BOXER was no ordinary public servant. She was relentless—I mean relentless—and dedicated and very principled. She was raised by hard-working, first-generation immigrants in Brooklyn, NY. She attended Brooklyn College, graduated with a degree in economics. Over the decades, we have gotten to know each other's families very well. We talk about each other's children. We have exchanged family experiences many, many times.

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



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My favorite story of BARBARA BOXER's family is the time when she was a girl coming home from elementary school, with her mom, from a window that was up high, yelling down to her little daughter coming home from school—excitedly yelling out the window of the upstairs apartment: Daddy passed the bar. Daddy passed the bar.

BARBARA knew that her dad did not go to bars. But she quickly learned from her excited mother that she was talking about her dad having passed the very, very difficult New York bar examination. I always remember that story.

In 1965, BARBARA moved to Northern California from faraway New York. But in California, they sat down their roots and raised their two children, Doug and Nicole. Stew became a very prominent lawyer and BARBARA, a stockbroker.

It was in California where BARBARA began to make her mark very quickly as a trailblazer. In 1976, after having been in California not very long, in that very big county, part of the metropolitan area of San Francisco, she became a member of the Marin County Board of Supervisors. She was elected to that post. She quickly became the board's first woman president.

Shortly thereafter in 1982, BARBARA ran successfully for Congress. Her campaign slogan tells us all you need to know about her because that year her slogan was: "BARBARA BOXER Gives a Damn." That was on all of her campaign literature, posters, everything. So I guess with a slogan like that, it should not be any surprise that she won handily.

In 1992, she was elected to the Senate. She stood no chance to win. Everybody told her that—all of the editorials, not only of the California papers but all over the country. BARBARA BOXER was in with the big time, and things were going to change for this upstart Member of the House of Representatives. She had tried to move too quickly. She should have stayed in the House, but she won by a really nice margin. This surprised everybody except her.

In 1992, she was elected to the Senate—the year that was popularly referred to as the "Year of the Woman," and rightfully so. She was part of the memorable class that came here in 1982: DIANNE FEINSTEIN, PATTY MURRAY, Carol Moseley Braun, and, of course, the underdog, BARBARA BOXER.

In the Senate, BARBARA and I have worked together on matters of importance to Nevada, California, and our Nation. I have watched BARBARA BOXER lead on so many important issues. I am going to name only a handful of them. She worked to designate more than 1 million acres in California as a wilderness, keeping that land in a pristine condition for our children, our grandchildren, and generations to come. I say "our" because the wilderness in California or in Nevada does not belong to California or Nevada, it belongs to the people of this country. She fought

for the Pinnacles National Monument to become America's 59th national park. It became such.

She helped lead the fight to stop drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and, of course, along the California shoreline. She has spoken about that so many times. It succeeded. We have had no oil spills on the coast of California because of a number of reasons, but there is no one more responsible for that nondegradation than BARBARA BOXER.

She advocated to eliminate government military waste as a Member of the House of Representatives and the Senate. It was her first breakthrough where she exposed the outrageous, exorbitant cost of purchases made by the military. She did that while she was in the House. Why was she taking on the establishment? Well, that is who she is; that is who she was.

She discovered that our military paid defense contractors unbelievable amounts of money: for a hammer—a claw hammer—\$430; for a toilet seat, \$640; for a coffee maker, \$7,622. That is quite a coffee maker. For an aluminum ladder, which must have been one that would get you over the fence that Trump is going to build between Mexico and the United States, it cost \$74,165.

It is legendary what she has done with the military. Ever since she did that, the military was no longer untouchable. BARBARA BOXER proved that. She put an end to all of the wasteful spending. Yes, she did—BARBARA BOXER—not all of it; some things slipped through the cracks, but she sure headed everyone in the right direction.

Maybe of lesser importance, but something we all watched very carefully in the House—it did not happen overnight, but she caused the all-male House gym to admit female Members of Congress. She went up against some big people to do that—the very well-known Dan Rostenkowski, the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, and others—but she won.

BARBARA and I have worked together to protect Lake Tahoe. We share that. The States of California and Nevada share that alpine glacial lake. There is only one other lake like it in the world, and that is in Siberia, Lake Baikal. We feel good about what we have been able to do to promote the richness of this beautiful national treasure, Lake Tahoe.

She has also promoted clean energy. I can remember her going after a substance that was in gasoline to put in a car that ruined the environment. She came out strongly against that. Again, she prevailed. We no longer do that. She has also done a lot to protect our public lands.

I mentioned just a little bit of what she has done. I can say without any hesitation that BARBARA BOXER has been one of the best and most effective environmental leaders in the history of this country. That says a lot. She has

made California and the entire country a cleaner, healthier, and a better place, especially as chair and ranking member of the Committee on Environment and Public Works. I loved that committee. It was a committee I was placed on when I first came to the Senate. I had the good fortune to be chairman of that committee twice.

She has done so much in her advocacy. For a lot of the things she was not able to declare a legislative victory, but she certainly declared a victory in the minds of the American people because she took on the big guys without any fear.

BARBARA is also a champion of women. She has been a groundbreaker on issues like sexual harassment and women's rights in the workplace, access to women's health, and clinic violence. She took that on. BARBARA BOXER has worked to protect women's access to health care and make sure that Planned Parenthood continues to help millions of women who depend on their services every year.

I lament the fact that BARBARA will not be here because, as you know, the new Republican majority has threatened to do away with Planned Parenthood. I don't know what they expect to do with the 2 million women who go there every year for help, but that is what they have said they are going to do.

I can remember, oh so clearly, because it was such a difficult time, working on the Affordable Care Act in my office just a short distance from here. BARBARA was there the better part of 2 days. We were facing incredibly contentious issues regarding women's health, and this required close attention. But it worked out. We were able to accomplish this in spite of some people who said we couldn't do that.

BARBARA has always been ideological, pure but with a sound mix of pragmatism on ObamaCare and other issues relating to women. I told her personally—and I said it publicly, but I wish to say it again—that I have enjoyed working with her. She has helped and mentored me and led me to understand issues important to the women of America like no one else, and I appreciate it very much.

I can remember writing her a letter in my longhand, my cursive. In that letter I told her a number of things, but this is something I said—a direct quote:

BARBARA, I have three brothers. I've never had a sister. You are the sister I've never had.

That was what I said. To this day, we still refer to each other as brother and sister.

Stew and BARBARA are an exemplary team. They are partners in every sense of the word "partner." Landra and I have been guests in their Southern California home. We have been together many times in Nevada.

For decades, BARBARA and I have worked together politically, campaigning in different parts of the country, different parts of California, and

different parts of Nevada. We have raised money together for the cause of Democrats. We have raised money for each other. It has always been a pleasure to work with her on this and other issues.

BARBARA and I came to Washington together in 1982, 34 years ago. BARBARA and I will be leaving Washington together after 34 memorable years together.

Senator BARBARA BOXER, congratulations on your historic career as a Senator for 40 million Californians and 300 million citizens of the United States.

BARBARA, remember, you are and always will be my sister.

Godspeed, BARBARA.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Senator REID, my leader, I can't tell you how humble I feel to hear you talk about my career and to put it, in many ways, in a historic place.

I am going to have a lot to say about your career, what you have meant to me. Today I won't get into it, but you are a man—you just don't throw words around. I know how humble you are because every time I try to praise you, even in a situation with just a few people around you, you look down like you are doing now. It makes you uncomfortable. I don't want to make you uncomfortable. So here is what I am going to say today. I am going to make you uncomfortable in the near future when I talk about your career and what it has meant to me. But today, hearing you talk about what you just said, weaving our friendship, our work together, and our family friendship has meant a lot to me.

Obviously, I am going to miss you, but I will say this. As we enter into uncharted territories in terms of politics, I know you and I are not going to lose our voices. We will have a platform. We are not leaving because we are tired of the fight. We are not leaving because we have nothing more to say, we are leaving because we think it is time for the next generation. I look forward to working with you in the future—and I mean that sincerely—just fighting for the things we care about, whether it is Lake Tahoe or whether it is clean air, whether it is fighting against the ravages of climate change, whether it is fighting for the right of the American people, from children to seniors, to have affordable health care. We are not going into the wilderness. That I was able to protect more than a million acres—I am so proud you mentioned that.

Today you have humbled me with your words. I will always be your sister. Thank you very much.

I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DACA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there are many disagreements in this Chamber and between the House and the Senate, but I think there is one thing we fundamentally agree on. Our system of immigration in this country is broken. There are many different ways to approach it in changing it, improving it, and fixing it, but most of us concede something is wrong. If we have 11 to 12 million people living in the United States who are not documented or not legal, by our definition—and that has been going on for years, sometimes decades—it raises a serious question about whether our immigration system works, whether it is responsive, and whether it serves the best interests of the United States.

Many of the people who are here once came to the United States on visitors' visas that they were supposed to ultimately see come to an end and leave, but they stayed. They got married. They had children in the United States who became citizens. Those who think that families represent the large share of undocumented people don't take a look at the families individually. They should. You may find in one household of a mother, father, and two or three children that only one person is undocumented, and it might be the mother.

The one thing we also came to discover was that there were many people here who were undocumented, technically illegal under our system, and they were in that condition through no fault of their own. Well, who could that be? Children—children who were brought here as toddlers, infants, small kids, and brought in with their families. They had no voice in the decision to come to America, but the family did, and they grew up here. Some of them came at a very early age. They didn't speak the language of their original country. They never visited that country.

From the start, they thought they were Americans. They went to school, went to class, put their hands over their hearts and pledged allegiance to the only flag they ever knew. They

sang the only national anthem they really knew, and they believed they were Americans. At some point in their lives, maybe someone in the household said: Let me tell you a stark truth here: You are not legal by this Nation's standards.

It was because of that group that I introduced a bill 15 years ago called the DREAM Act. The DREAM Act really defined this category of people who are undocumented, were brought here as children, grew up in America, graduated from our schools, and didn't create any criminal record in their lifetime, and they were hoping and praying that they would get a chance to stay in a legal status as citizens. That is what the DREAM Act was all about. It is just for these—they have come to be known as DREAMers—who came here as children and infants, to be given that choice.

It was a few years ago that I wrote a letter to President Obama—signed by Senator Lugar of Indiana, a Republican, who shared my feelings—and asked the President if he could do something to protect these young people from being deported. We had a number of Senators join me in a subsequent letter, and the President acted, creating something called DACA, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program.

What it boiled down to was that, if these undocumented young people who came here as young children would step forward, identify themselves to our government, pay about \$500 in a filing fee, and go through a criminal background check, we would give them a 2-year temporary protection from being deported and give them a temporary right to work in this country.

The DACA Program turned out to be a big success as 740,000 young people were eligible, signed up, and were cleared to be approved for this DACA status.

Then came a change in administrations, which will happen in just a few weeks. Questions started being raised. What is going to happen to these young people—the ones who complied with the law as they were told it existed, who did a risky thing in identifying themselves to a government, paid their fee, went through the background check, and now are in the United States? I have met so many of them—thousands of them across this country, the DREAMers, those who are DACA eligible, those who are DACA approved. They are amazing stories.

At the Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine in Chicago, they decided to open a competition in their medical school to allow these DACA-eligibles to apply—not to give them a special number of billets or positions in the school but to say: You can apply with everyone else.

For many of these young people from across the United States who dreamed of being a doctor one day, this was the answer to a prayer, and they were ready for it. They competed and they

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.