



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, 2017

No. 101

Senate

The Senate met at 10:45 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable DAN SULLIVAN, a Senator from the State of Alaska.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Gracious Father, our shield and defense, we look to You in these challenging times. Lord, the shooting at the congressional baseball practice reminds us of the importance of numbering our days. May we refuse to boast about tomorrow, for we know not what a day may bring.

Lord, surround our lawmakers with the shields of your protection and favor. Fill them with Your Spirit, causing them to walk in Your statutes and keep Your judgments.

Lord, You know better than we what lies ahead for our lives. So lead us like a gentle shepherd.

We claim Your promise in Hebrews 13:5 that You will never leave or forsake us. Guide and inspire us all to follow Your plan for our lives.

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, June 14, 2017.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable DAN SULLIVAN, a Senator from the State of Alaska, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

CONGRESSIONAL BASEBALL PRACTICE SHOOTING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know the entire Senate will join me in echoing the sentiments of the President this morning. We are deeply saddened. We are all concerned for those injured. We will keep them in our prayers, and we will continue to send them every wish for a quick and full recovery.

We are grateful for all those who stepped in to help—those practicing on the field, the first responders and, of course, the Capitol police officers on the scene. We are deeply indebted for their service. We again salute their continuing and unflinching bravery on behalf of the Capitol community.

The Congressional Baseball Game is a bipartisan charity event. I know the Senate will embrace that spirit today as we come together in expressing both our concern and our gratitude.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

CONGRESSIONAL BASEBALL PRACTICE SHOOTING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I join with the majority leader in offering our prayers for those who are injured.

I was absolutely shaken by the news of a shooting early this morning at the baseball field in Alexandria where many of my friends and colleagues were practicing for the annual Congressional Baseball Game, an event that brings us together each year.

It has been reported that Representative SCALISE, the House whip, was shot during the attack, as were two brave members of the Capitol Police Force and others, including a staffer. Let us pray that they and any others who were injured are able to recover quickly.

This morning is the most sobering reminder of how thankful we should be for the service of the Capitol Police Force, who put their lives on the line day in and day out for us to be safe. I could not be more grateful that Capitol Police was there at a time to prevent this attack from being any worse than it was. I was in the gym with Senator PAUL, who had been there, and he had told me that, had these two Capitol police officers, who were part of Congressman SCALISE's detail, not been there, it might have been a massacre because there would have been no one to respond. But their bravery is exemplary of all the Capitol Police Force, and we thank them.

The entire Senate family sends its thoughts and prayers to those who were wounded and our gratitude to the police officers and first responders who were at the scene.

I yield the floor.

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S3461

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

COUNTERING IRAN'S DESTABILIZING ACTIVITIES ACT OF 2017

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 722, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 722) to impose sanctions with respect to Iran in relation to Iran's ballistic missile program, support for acts of international terrorism, and violations of human rights, and for other purposes.

Pending

McConnell (for Crapo) modified amendment No. 232, to impose sanctions with respect to the Russian Federation and to combat terrorism and illicit financing.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 2 p.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the Countering Iran's Destabilizing Activities Act of 2017, which passed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last month by a vote of 18 to 3.

I would like to thank the members of our committee and the coauthors of this bill for working in a constructive, bipartisan fashion to craft this legislation. I think it is a good example of how the Senate can still work together to tackle complex and difficult issues.

I was in the SCIF recently—it is a place where Senators go to read classified information—reviewing intelligence. It truly is astounding—I know the Acting President pro tempore knows this well—what Iran continues to do around the world. For a people who are capable of so much, their foreign policy is shockingly counter to their own interests. We see destabilizing act after destabilizing act, from missile launches to arms transfers, to terrorist training, to illicit financial activities, to targeting Navy ships and detaining American citizens. The list goes on and on, and it is past time for us to take steps to protect the interests of the United States and our allies.

This bill is the first time Congress has come together since the JCPOA, the Iran nuclear deal, to do just that. For far too long the agreement—which I strongly opposed, as did our ranking member, as did our Acting President pro tempore—has dictated U.S. policy throughout the Middle East.

It is worth noting that the JCPOA is not unlike the Paris climate accord. I

don't think many people in our country nor many people in this body realize it is a nonbinding political agreement that was entered into by one man using Presidential Executive authority and can easily be undone by one man using Presidential Executive authority. In fact, in many ways it is easier than the Paris accords, considering the President doesn't have to take action to exit this agreement. I don't think most Americans understand that he doesn't even have to take action to exit the agreement. All he has to do is decline to waive sanctions. I think that has been missed. I know the Acting President pro tempore is very aware of that. I know the ranking member is very aware of that. No matter what the President decides, this bill makes it clear that Congress intends to remain involved and will hold Iran accountable for their nonnuclear destabilizing activities.

What the nuclear agreement failed to do was allow us to push back against terrorism, human rights issues, there are violations of U.N. Security Council resolutions relative to ballistic missile testing, and to push back against conventional arms purchases which they are not supposed to be involved in. As many of us predicted at the time, Iran's rogue behavior has only escalated since implementation of the agreement, and this bipartisan bill will give the administration tools for holding Tehran accountable.

Let me say this. I don't think there is anybody in this Chamber who doesn't believe the Trump administration—and I know there has been a lot of disagreements recently about foreign policy issues in the administration—but I don't think there is anybody here who believes they are not going to do everything they can to push back against these destabilizing activities. What we will be doing today and tomorrow with passage of this legislation is standing hand in hand with them as they do that. It also sends an important signal that the United States will no longer look the other way in the face of continued Iran aggression.

I want to recognize the important work of my colleagues in making this legislation possible. Senator MENENDEZ has been a champion for holding Iran accountable in this bill but also in decades of work on this issue. He is truly an asset to the Senate, and I thank him for his commitment to many issues but especially this one. Senators COTTON, RUBIO, and CRUZ all played an important role in crafting this legislation as well.

Finally, let me say this. This would not have been possible without the support and tireless effort of the ranking member, Senator CARDIN, and his great staff. It has truly been a pleasure for me to work with him on the Russia bill that we will be voting on today at 2 p.m. but also this legislation—we have come from two very different places, representing two very different States,

and yet are joined by the fact that we care deeply about making sure the foreign policy of this country is in the national interests of our citizens and that we as a Congress and as U.S. Senators are doing everything we can to help write positive foreign policy. I thank him for that, and I am proud of the strong bipartisan momentum behind this legislation, which his leadership has helped to happen, and I look forward to passage of this bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, let me return the compliment to Senator CORKER.

Senator CORKER announced in his opening remarks about the bipartisan vote in our committee on the Iran sanctions bill. In the last Congress, we were able to get a unanimous vote on the Iran bill. We, under the leadership of Senator CORKER, fully recognized that particularly on foreign policy, our country is much stronger when we speak with a united voice, so bringing Democrats and Republicans together is in our national interest.

Senator CORKER has listened to different views. He and I do have different views on many issues concerning foreign policy, but in almost every one of those cases, we have been able to reconcile those differences. That is true and it was very clear on the Iran sanctions and it is also very true on the Russia sanctions amendment that we will be voting on later today.

To Senator CORKER, I just want my colleagues to know we have a leader on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee who puts America's national interests first and has respected the rights of every Senator, not only in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee but in the U.S. Senate, that can add to the richness of our discussions and debate. I think we are much stronger today because of that. This is a good example of that, and I am very proud to be supportive of all these efforts and supportive of how this came about because I think it is important for our colleagues and the American people to know about that.

CONGRESSIONAL BASEBALL PRACTICE SHOOTING

Mr. President, Senator CORKER and I both want to express, before we start our debate on this issue, our concerns for our colleagues who were victimized by the shooting that took place in Virginia—an outrageous event—and for our security people as well as the innocent bystanders who were struck by the gunfire. Our prayers are with those who are recovering. We hope they will have a complete recovery. We are committed to making sure we keep our Senate and congressional family safe, and we will do everything we can to make sure that takes place. We will continue to work to make sure we preserve the democratic ideals of this Nation and the free society we live in. We know there are rifts, and we know we can do service and stand by those democratic commitments but also keep America safe.