

And then we will move forward. Our work for the American people will continue, as it has for more than 230 years. There are serious challenges that our Nation needs to continue confronting, but there will also be great and hopeful opportunities for us to seize.

Certainly, November's elections did not hand any side a mandate for sweeping ideological change. Americans elected a closely divided Senate, a closely divided House, and a Presidential candidate who said he would represent everyone.

So our marching orders from the American people are clear. We are to have a robust discussion and seek common ground. We are to pursue bipartisan agreement everywhere we can and check and balance one another respectfully where we must. And through all of this, we must always keep in mind that we are all Americans, we all love this country, and we are all in this together.

HONORING POLICE OFFICERS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Now, Mr. President, on a related matter, a great deal has already been said about the disgraceful events of January 6. More will be said in the weeks ahead.

I understand the FBI has already made at least 100 arrests, and the Justice Department reports more than 275 persons under investigation—a number that is climbing fast. I want to commend the work of the Department to swiftly investigate and bring offenders to justice.

As I have stated, January 6 saw failures of institutions, protocols, and planning. Those failures did not just leave Congress itself exposed; they also left the courageous men and women of the Capitol Police themselves in a totally untenable situation.

So today, I want to reaffirm the huge respect and gratitude that I have—and I believe all Senators have—for the men and women of the U.S. Capitol Police who put their own safety on the line every single day that they clock in and stand guard.

Neither the institution of Congress nor the American people will ever forget the bravery and the valor of Officer Brian Sicknick, who sacrificed himself to protect this place and those inside it.

We will not forget our friend Officer Howard Liebengood.

And we will never forget our debt to all the brave CP officers and their families.

It is more than just comforting to come to work in a place protected by such fine men and women, at risk to themselves. It is also very humbling.

We are also grateful to the local officers from DC, Virginia, and Maryland, to Federal law enforcement officers, the National Guard, the Secret Service, and all the other professionals who helped subdue the criminals and secure the Capitol on the 6th and are working together to protect peace and order this week.

Tomorrow, a new President and Vice President will swear their oaths of office. They will also do so safely and securely because so many brave men and women have sworn their own oaths to support and defend our Constitution.

We salute you all.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 13

Mr. MCCONNELL. Now, Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 13) to establish an advisory committee to make recommendations on improvements to the security, integrity, and administration of Federal elections.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceeding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, before I get into my remarks, I noted that my dear friend and colleague, the Senator from Illinois, is giving remarks to say a fond and, I am sure, a somewhat poignant farewell to Reema Dodin, who has done a great job for him, for the Senate, for Senate Democrats, and for me for decades. We are going to miss her very much. The only consolation is that she is going on to the new administration and even bigger and better things.

59TH INAUGURATION CEREMONIES

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the Senate returns to session today for what will be a very busy and consequential period. Tomorrow, we will celebrate one of democracy's core attributes: the peaceful transfer of power, albeit under much different circumstances than most Americans are used to.

Rioters, insurrectionists, White supremacists, and domestic terrorists tried to prevent the transfer of power. They were incited by none other than the President of the United States. They have failed. Though they have

made the transition of power anything but peaceful, democracy's oldest and most revered tradition, the peaceful passing of the torch, will take place tomorrow.

We must remain vigilant. We must remain strong. If we do, democracy will always prevail. Despite what these evil terrorists tried to do, the peaceful passing of the torch will take place tomorrow as it has for generations.

In the weeks since the attack, the Nation has learned about the heroism displayed by many Capitol Police officers on January 6. I want to again thank those officers who protected Members and staff. Let us also recognize the bravery of one officer in particular, Brian Sicknick, who was killed in the line of duty.

I also want to acknowledge those members of the fourth estate for their efforts during these difficult times, for continuing to shine a light on what is happening at the Capitol, sometimes at great personal risk.

Now, in the wake of the despicable assault on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, we have taken precautions to ensure the safety of the Inauguration of President-Elect Biden tomorrow. Senate leadership has been in close and constant communication with the Secret Service, the FBI, the National Guard, and the D.C. police. As we speak, there are more troops around the Capitol than there are in Afghanistan. No force—no force—will prevent tomorrow's constitutional proceedings from taking place.

Tomorrow, Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS will be administered the oath of office. They will be sworn into the Presidency and Vice Presidency of the United States, and the powers vested in our Chief Executive will flow to a new office holder, a peaceful passing of the torch, as it has been for over two centuries in the grand tradition of democracy in the United States of America.

Tomorrow, the country will turn the page on the most chaotic and divisive Presidency that can ever be remembered. We will begin again the hard work of unifying and healing this Nation, defeating the pandemic, recovering our economy, and repairing our standing and stature in the world—and this is just the beginning.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the Inauguration of a new President and the start of a new administration always brings a flurry of activity to our Nation's government, but rarely—rarely—has so much piled up for the Senate as during this particular transition. Over the next several weeks, the Senate must accomplish three essential items: a second impeachment trial of Donald Trump; the confirmation of President Biden's Cabinet and other key officials; and legislation to provide much needed—almost desperately needed—COVID relief.

Again, there are three essential items of business. No. 1, as mandated

by law and Constitution, once the House of Representatives delivers Articles of Impeachment to the Senate, we will conduct and complete a trial of Donald Trump for inciting an insurrection against these United States.

No. 2, the Senate will confirm key members of soon-to-be President Biden's Cabinet. Those Cabinet officials in charge of national security must be confirmed quickly, as well as those in charge of responding to the current health and economic crisis.

No. 3, the Senate will take up legislation to provide the country additional relief from the pandemic.

On impeachment, the Senate has solemn responsibility to try and hold Donald Trump accountable for the most serious charge ever levied against a President: the incitement of an insurrection against the United States of America.

The events on January 6, make no mistake about it, were not a spontaneous demonstration. President Trump invented the lie that motivated these criminals. He exhorted them to come to Washington. He then directed them at the U.S. Capitol, and his demagoguery whipped them into a frenzy.

We need to set a precedent that the severest threat ever committed by a President will be met by the severest remedy provided by the U.S. Constitution: impeachment and conviction by this Chamber, as well as disbarment from future office.

In 230 years, the House of Representatives has impeached the President of the United States only twice. In just the past 13 months, it has impeached President Trump twice more. President Trump is a threat to our constitutional order whether he is in or out of office. Even now, he has not accepted responsibility for what he has done and still falsely maintains that the election was stolen.

Once he leaves office, do we really expect him to change his tune and accept the truth? Of course not. He will continue spreading lies about the election and stoking the grievances of his most radical supporters, using the prospect of a future Presidential run to poison the public arena at a time when we must get so much done. After what he has done, the consequences of which we were all witness to, Donald Trump should not be eligible to run for office ever again.

All of us want to put this awful chapter in our Nation's history behind us, but healing and unity will only come if there is truth and accountability, not sweeping such a severe charge, such awful actions, under the rug.

So let me be clear. There will be an impeachment trial in the U.S. Senate. There will be a vote on convicting the President of high crimes and misdemeanors. And, if the President is convicted, there will be a vote on barring him from running again.

Now, the Cabinet. As I mentioned, the Senate must also fulfill its constitutional duty to advise and consent

on soon-to-be President Biden's executive and judicial nominations, particularly his Cabinet. Today, there are no fewer than five Senate hearings on Cabinet-level officials for good reason. The violent insurrection at the U.S. Capitol on January 6 showed us we need qualified Senate-confirmed people in key national security positions on day one. That means tomorrow.

The Senate will be in session tomorrow after the conclusion of the Inauguration of the 46th President of the United States. With cooperation, we can confirm key national security nominees at State, the Department of Defense, Homeland Security, Treasury, and the intelligence community. The health and economic challenges our Nation faces and the need to get vaccines out quickly also require having key health officials and key economic nominees confirmed and on the job as soon as possible.

In 2017, the Senate confirmed President Trump's Secretary of Defense and his Secretary of Homeland Security on Inauguration Day. President Biden should have the same officials in place on his Inauguration Day at the very least. That is the expectation and tradition for any administration, but especially now in the midst of a Homeland Security crisis.

As I said, the way the Senate works, it will take cooperation from our Republican colleagues to swiftly confirm these highly qualified national security officials. But make no mistake, the Senate will move quickly to consider and confirm President Biden's cabinet.

Finally, on COVID and the legislation that is needed, once the Senate has confirmed key nominations for the incoming administration, it will turn to the subject of additional COVID relief items, including key items such as an increase in direct payments to American families; strong, further support of vaccine distribution which must be improved; help for small businesses, schools, and State and local governments. Very soon, the country will pass another tragic milestone: 400,000 American deaths from COVID-19. There is no issue more urgent than defeating this pandemic, and the Senate will immediately set to work on that goal as the first order of legislative business.

There will be much more work for us to do in the following months. Working with President Biden and our House colleagues, the Senate will finally address the major challenges facing our country that have for too long been ignored. We will consider bold legislation to defeat the climate crisis by investing in clean infrastructure and manufacturing, which will create millions of good jobs for Americans, regardless of ZIP Code. We must move significantly to improve our healthcare and childcare systems. To fix and restore our income and equality problem, we will fight to restore workers' rights and fairness in the Tax Code.

Today, we announce the first bill, S. 1, which will be a package of long overdue reforms to protect our democracy after it has been so attacked in 4 years and will guarantee every American's right to vote.

One issue that has been long important to me is immigration reform. I always felt that comprehensive immigration reform with a path to citizenship is one of the most important things a Democratic Congress can do. To me, passing comprehensive reform is a very high priority, so I was pleased that President-Elect Biden has crafted a proposal and will call on Congress to take up this important subject. I am studying the President-elect's proposal, and I look forward to working together with him and the new administration and with my colleagues in Congress to get comprehensive immigration reform signed into law.

As I said at the beginning of this talk, the next several months will be very, very busy and a very consequential period for the U.S. Senate. Let us begin our work in earnest.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mrs. LOEFFLER. Mr. President, it has been the honor of my lifetime to serve Georgia in the U.S. Senate. There has never been a day that I don't walk through the hallways of the Capitol when I am not awestruck by the magnitude of this job and of this place and of my duty.

I want to thank my colleagues, especially those who welcomed me from the start, who worked with me, and who even across the aisle worked with me to get things done for our country in such a consequential year.

I want to thank the people of Georgia who showed me the very best of our great State. My goal as Senator was clear: to work every single day to make Georgians' lives better and to make ours the very best State to work, to live, to worship, and to raise a family.

I never stopped working to meet that goal and was energized and humbled every single day by the opportunity to serve. In between weeks spent in Washington, I crisscrossed our great State nonstop, going from southeast coastal Georgia in Camden County to northwest mountain Georgia in Catoosa County. Time with Georgians are my fondest memories.

One of my earliest visits was in Homerville, GA, population 2,400. I carried the people of Homerville with me every day as I approached my work. Having grown up on our family farm, where the nearest small town had a population of 600, my calling to public service was, in large part, to be a voice—an outsized voice—for those who feel they didn't have a voice in Washington.

Many Georgians inspired me each day to bring results to every corner of