



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 168

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JULY 21, 2022

No. 121

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JACKY ROSEN, a Senator from the State of Nevada.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we would rest in You, for You alone can bring order to our world.

Reveal Yourself to our Senators, guiding them on the path of peace. May they place behind them disappointed hopes as they lean on You for comfort and strength. Lord, replace their doubts with faith. Strengthen the good in them so that nothing may hinder the outflow of Your power in their lives. Give might to the weak, and renew the strength of the strong.

Lord, we thank You for Your great power as we praise You in Your mighty 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. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 21, 2022.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JACKY ROSEN, a Sen-

ator from the State of Nevada, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Ms. ROSEN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

CHIPS ACT OF 2022—Resumed

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the House message to accompany H.R. 4346, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

House message to accompany H.R. 4346, a bill making appropriations for Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Schumer motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Schumer Amendment No. 5135 (to the House amendment to the Senate amendment), relating to the CHIPS Act of 2022.

Schumer Amendment No. 5136 (to Amendment No. 5135), to add an effective date.

Schumer motion to refer the bill to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with instructions, Schumer Amendment No. 5137, to add an effective date.

Schumer Amendment No. 5138 (to the instructions) Amendment No. 5137), to modify the effective date.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

CANNABIS ADMINISTRATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, over the last few decades, Americans' views on cannabis legalization have dramatically, dramatically changed. Twenty years ago, less than a third of Americans believed that cannabis should be made legal. Today, that share is nearly 70 percent of the population, the highest level of support ever.

We can see this shift playing out in the States. Nearly 90 percent of Americans live in a State that has legalized cannabis for either medical or adult recreational use. New York legalized cannabis in 2021. And even voters in deep-red South Dakota voted to legalize it for adult recreational use.

Cannabis legalization has proven immensely successful at the State level so it is time that Congress catches up with the rest of the country.

Last year, Senators WYDEN, BOOKER, and I released a discussion draft of the Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act. After receiving more than 1,800 public comments and working with numerous Senate committees to improve the bill, today we are introducing this historic legislation.

I am proud to be the first majority leader ever to say that it is time to end the Federal prohibition on cannabis, and this bill provides the best framework for updating our cannabis laws and reversing decades of harm inflicted by the War on Drugs.

I have had many productive conversations with my Republican and Democratic colleagues about cannabis reform, and I look forward to working with Members from both sides of the aisle to secure support for this bill.

Our bill will legalize cannabis by removing it from the Controlled Substances Act, empowering States to create their own cannabis laws instead. It

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



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will establish a robust regulatory system to protect public health and ensure that cannabis is as safe as possible. It includes rules to prevent impaired driving, prevent youth access, and prevent illegal diversion. We also robustly fund a variety of research programs to make up for lost time when it comes to cannabis research.

So important, our bill will also expunge the Federal criminal records of people with convictions for nonviolent cannabis offenses and allow those in Federal prison for nonviolent cannabis offenses to appeal their sentences.

It is a tragedy—tragedy—that far too many Americans, particularly Black and Hispanic Americans, have permanent blocks on their record, making it nearly impossible to move forward with their lives just because they were arrested with a little marijuana in their pocket. How unfair and what a waste of human resources.

Our bill will also establish an Opportunity Trust Fund to reinvest in communities that have been devastated by the War on Drugs. And it will create opportunities for entrepreneurs and small businesses to legitimately pursue new opportunities in the growing cannabis industry.

And, of course, underlying it all, this bill is about individual freedom and basic fairness. The fact that cannabis remains a schedule I controlled substance—in the same bad company of other drugs like heroin—is not just senseless; it is deeply harmful for countless Americans—again, almost always people of color—and it impinges on the freedom of all of us. If this is working in all the States, why not let people use it?

We need to change that. We need to change the lack of freedom and fairness. We need to create opportunities for entrepreneurs to legitimately pursue new opportunities, and comprehensive Federal cannabis legislation is critical to reaching that goal.

I want to extend my deep appreciation to Senators BOOKER and WYDEN as well as all of my colleagues who have worked with us on this important and long-overdue change. I want to thank Senators MURRAY and Senator PETERS and all the chairs of the more than 10 Senate committees who worked with us over the past several years to significantly improve the bill from the discussion draft we released last year. This bill would not be possible without the hard work of them and their staffs.

I want to stress that this is the beginning of the legislative process, not the end. We are going to work hard to create support for our bill, and I hope we can make more progress toward cannabis reform in the future. I look forward to working with Democrats and Republicans to get something done this year.

H.R. 4346

Madam President, now on the chips bill, last night, I filed cloture on a major piece of legislation that will help lower costs, boost scientific inno-

vation, and take direct aim at the national chips shortage, which is hurting almost every single American.

Members of both sides know that America's chips crisis is sending shock waves across the economy. It is endangering our national security. According to an article by Bloomberg, China's top chipmaker has now likely advanced its tech by two generations, threatening U.S. competitiveness.

To ignore the chips crisis means higher costs, squandered job opportunities, and greater dependence on foreign chip producers. Thankfully, the Senate is close to finally taking action.

In the long run, our bipartisan chips bill will ease semiconductor supply chain woes, increase domestic inventory of chips, and thus help lower costs on all sorts of products that rely on chips to work.

But because the vote earlier this week was so bipartisan, I amended the bill to include one of the largest science packages the Senate has considered in a long time.

As you know, I was the original author of many of the provisions in the science section when I worked with Senator YOUNG on the Endless Frontier Act more than 2 years ago.

We will devote tens of billions of dollars to cultivate the next generation of tech hubs all across the country, especially in regions that have been overlooked. We will invest in new science jobs, and that will keep America No. 1. It has always been America's cutting-edge lead on innovation, in science and research, that has then created millions and millions of good-paying jobs and kept our economy prosperous. In the last decade, America seems to have forgotten that, and this bill revitalizes that goal and that dream.

These scientific investments are crucial not just for innovation and science jobs but for critical jobs that support these industries too.

I will keep working with my colleagues to get this bill done quickly. With 64 votes in favor of moving forward earlier this week, there is no reason to wait around.

The 21st century will be won or lost on the battleground of technological innovation. Let me say it again because that is a crucial sentence. The 21st century will be won or lost on the battleground of technological innovation.

Our country now faces a moment of truth: Will American workers, American tech, and American ingenuity shape the world over the next hundred years in the same way we have shaped it in the last hundred? Of course, I believe America will lead the way if this Chamber is willing to do what is necessary for our economic and national security.

PREScription DRUG COSTS

Madam President, now on prescription drugs, later today, Senate Democrats and Republicans will meet with the Parliamentarian to start the so-called Byrd bath on legislation to bring

down the cost of prescription drugs, cap out-of-pocket expenses, and make sure millions of Americans do not see their premiums go up in the coming months. This is an important step in the larger process of bringing a reconciliation bill to the floor that can win the support of all 50 Democratic Senators.

Ask any American on the street, and it is a guarantee that they will agree the price of prescription medications is one of the most frustrating and debilitating problems in our country.

It is a vicious pincer grip: On the one hand, Americans desperately need their medicines to stay healthy, live a normal life, and stay alive, in some cases, but on the other hand, that means many Americans have to pay an arm and a leg at the pharmacy just to stay healthy.

Meanwhile, as Americans pay exorbitant prices for basic medications, the Nation's largest pharmaceutical companies are feasting off record profits because they face little accountability for jacking up prices to consumers. This cannot continue.

Democrats are going to work in the weeks ahead on legislation that will empower Medicare to negotiate the price of prescription drugs for the first time ever. We will also cap out-of-pocket expenses at \$2,000 a year. These changes will save Americans an incredible amount of money, and it is one of the best things we can do to lower costs for the American people.

Let me say again, lowering the cost of prescription drugs and capping out-of-pocket expenses is one of the very best things we can do to fight inflation and lower costs for the American people. So those who talk about inflation, support this bill.

So in the coming weeks, the question before the Senate will be simple: Who will take action in this Chamber to bring down the cost of prescription drugs and make sure premiums don't go up in the future, and who will defend the interests of Big Pharma that spikes the prices of scores of crucial drugs?

TUCKER CARLSON

Madam President, finally, on FOX News, earlier this week, FOX News anchor Tucker Carlson once again used his enormous platform on prime-time television to spread the malicious, dangerous, and racist conspiracy of "replacement theory." It is far from the first time he has done so. But in light of the recent violence in Buffalo inspired by "replacement theory," it is shocking and dangerous for Mr. Carlson to keep propagating this message.

I am deeply disappointed—frankly, outraged—that FOX News has taken no action to address the conduct of Mr. Carlson. It makes me sick to my stomach to think that Mr. Carlson has been given a free pass to amplify racist conspiracy theories to millions of Americans—theories that are eerily similar to those cited by Buffalo's horrible shooter.

There is only one way to describe what Mr. Carlson is doing: He is stoking racial resentment among his viewers with these vile and racist conspiracy theories. I urge FOX News to compel him to stop at once.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 8404

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 8404) to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act and ensure respect for State regulation of marriage, and for other purposes.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

CHIPS ACT OF 2022—Continued

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam 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. MCCONNELL. Madam 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, Washington Democrats' one-party government has actually performed an amazing feat. In 18 months, they have taken an economy that was ready to soar and completely derailed it with \$2 trillion in unnecessary borrowing, printing, and spending. Now, 9.1 percent inflation is pinching hard-working Americans every time they visit the gas pump or the grocery store.

The Biden administration has tried their hardest to find a silver lining amid the economic storm clouds they helped create. They have touted the strength of consumer spending to conclude our economy is strong. That is what they said. Well, of course, consumer spending has only gone up because the price of nearly everything has increased. A recent economic analysis shows the American people do spend more on gas, groceries, furniture, and clothes than we used to, but—listen to this—adjusted for inflation, they are actually consuming less—paying more, getting less.

Parents of school-age kids are some of the hardest hit. Four in ten say they

won't go back-to-school shopping before the upcoming school year. One young mother in Nevada says she will "pick out one or two shirts" for her daughter "and that's it." Inflation has made everything else too expensive.

Over in Arizona, inflation forces the average household to spend over \$9,600 more a year compared to when President Biden took office. Many families simply don't have that much wiggle room in their budgets and are resorting to desperate measures simply to stay afloat.

One Phoenix area food bank has seen a 78-percent increase in visitors compared with just last year—78 percent more families who simply can't afford to live in this Democrat-run economy. A woman in line at the food bank said she had never needed to visit one before but "the prices are way too high" right now to support four children on her husband's salary.

Colorado families are facing the highest inflation costs in the Nation, in the whole country: nearly \$10,900 in extra spending per year compared to the beginning of the Biden administration. Not surprisingly, Coloradans are falling behind on paying for daily necessities. One pawn shop owner in the State has noticed a marked increase in loan seekers at his business. For most of them, they just need "30 bucks, 40 bucks" to "pay small bills, get gas, put groceries on the table."

This is all happening in my home State of Kentucky as well. People are taking out loans, cutting back spending, and relying on charity just to cope with ever-increasing prices. But that hasn't stopped Washington Democrats from proposing new ways to wreck our economy. As we speak, they are battling around a new suite of tax hikes aimed squarely at the middle class. If Democrat-driven inflation hasn't pushed struggling families off the edge quite yet, the Democrat-driven recession certainly will finish the job.

So what is on the menu? New taxes on small businesses already struggling with inflation, new fees and regulations on American energy producers that will send prices even higher at the pump, new socialist price control schemes to stifle healthcare innovation.

Apparently, record inflation isn't enough to make Democrats realize their reckless economic agenda is a failure, an abject failure. Maybe tax-hike-induced stagflation will set them straight.

UKRAINE

Madam President, now on another matter, I had the honor, along with others, of greeting the First Lady of Ukraine, Olena Zelenska, who greeted us here in the Capitol. Like my colleagues in the room, I was moved by her blunt, plaintive remarks to Congress. As her country endures the fifth month of a brutal Russian siege, Ms. Zelenska was candid about the pain and suffering Russia's unprovoked war of aggression was causing her home-

land. She said: "Russia is destroying our people."

The First Lady conveyed the incredible determination of the Ukrainian people and echoed their simple request for the tools to fight their own fight—"Weapons," she said, "to protect one's home and the right to wake up alive in that home."

I hope the First Lady's visit helped steel our colleagues' resolve as friends of Ukraine. Russia's invasion has already reminded the West that revisionist aggressors cannot be appeased. And Ukraine's brave resistance, equipped with the arsenal of the free world, is a further reminder that this is a fight they intend to win.

The Senate should be proud of our work over the past several months to get more lethal capabilities into Ukrainian hands. But at every step of the way, the Biden administration has been a bit slow to green light the game-changing weapons Ukraine's frontline defenders actually need.

I urged the President for more than a year to take specific actions to deter Russian aggression against Ukraine—actually, before it escalated. Last June, I urged him to deliver lethal capabilities to Ukraine and other states in Vladimir Putin's crosshairs. Instead, the administration slow-walked security assistance for months.

In December, I called for U.S. military reinforcements along NATO's eastern flank, but the President waited until February to deploy forces—too late to deter Putin's aggression. And even after Russia had launched its unlawful invasion, the President has repeatedly deterred himself from providing Ukraine the capabilities it needs.

With nearly every weapons system requested by Ukraine, the cycle in Washington plays out like this: first, hesitation and concern; then, excuses that Ukraine couldn't effectively use the proposed weapons or objections that providing them would escalate the conflict; then—then—grudging willingness to transfer the weapons; and finally, with weapons in Ukrainian hands, self-congratulations from the Biden administration that they are having a positive impact on the battlefield. It is exhausting to watch this decision-making cycle repeat itself from Kentucky. It must be exacerbating to watch it from Kyiv.

The need for advanced, longer-range weapons to turn back Russia's aggression is painfully obvious. Air defense capabilities to combat Russia's continuing long-range strikes against civilian populations across Ukraine, anti-ship weapons to combat the Russia Black Sea blockade and the humanitarian food crisis it is causing worldwide, and more capable, longer-range artillery to pound Russian positions in occupied Ukraine from relative safety—this will help offset any numerical advantage Russia has achieved by pumping so much more combat power into its invasion force.