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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Our Father and our God, in the silence of this moment, we feel gratitude for the privilege of approaching Your throne of grace.

Lord, we come to You aware that You know us better than we know ourselves. We are grateful that You know what we need even before we ask. Forgive our mistakes and the wrong we have done.

Lord, You know that, at times, we have been difficult to live with. Enliven our lawmakers. Let Your power come among them, as You direct them according to Your will. Remind them that their lives, Nation, and world are in Your hands.

We pray 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, September 13, 2022.

To the Senate:

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

appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 4822

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the title of the bill for a second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4822) to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to provide for additional disclosure requirements for corporations, labor organizations, Super PACs and other entities, 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 proceedings.

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

ABORTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, shortly after the news leaked that the U.S. Supreme Court was ready to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, Leader MCCONNELL acknowledged that a Federal ban on abortion was now “possible”—his words. Well, later today, the senior Senator from South Carolina is going to make good on Leader MCCONNELL’s warning by introducing a radical bill to

institute a nationwide restriction on abortions.

Proposals like the one today send a clear message from MAGA Republicans to women across the country: your body, our choice. Rather than expanding women’s rights, MAGA Republicans would curtail them rather than give individuals the freedom to make their own healthcare choices. They hand that power over to radical politicians.

And let me add this. Republicans are twisting themselves into pretzels trying to explain why they want nationwide abortion bans when they said they would leave it up to the States. Even the senior Senator from South Carolina said a few months ago that “if the Supreme Court overturns *Roe v. Wade*,” it would mean that “every state will decide if abortion is legal and on what terms.” And yet here he is, introducing a bill to restrict abortions nationally.

For the hard right, this has never been about States’ rights. This has never been about letting Texas choose its own path while California takes another. No, for MAGA Republicans this has always been about making abortion illegal everywhere.

The contrast has become clear. While Democrats want to protect a woman’s freedom to choose, MAGA Republicans want to take that right away with proposals to ban abortions, to punish women and doctors for carrying out abortions, and even to push bans with no exceptions for rape or incest.

We are seeing it play out across the country. It is chilling—chilling—to the bone. Every single American should stand in opposition against these radical MAGA Republican views.

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT OF 2022

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now, on the IRA, this afternoon I will join with my Senate Democratic colleagues at the White House to celebrate the enactment of the Inflation Reduction Act

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



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of 2022. When this bill passed the Senate a little over a month ago, I expressed confidence that this legislation would signal a turning point in our country's fight to lower costs, to meet our Nation's climate challenges, and to usher in the era of affordable clean energy.

A month later, the good news is already pouring in. Companies like Toyota have announced billions in new investments to start manufacturing batteries for electric and hybrid vehicles right here in America. Elsewhere, Honda and LG Energy have also recently announced over \$4 billion for EV battery production in the United States. And recently, the CEO of First Solar said it was the Inflation Reduction Act that provided the "clarity" needed to make their investments here in America.

Had we not done this, many of these plants would have been built but probably overseas. And yet, despite this record of success, despite the fact that Democrats have told Republicans that this is opening a new way for the future for American jobs with good futures here, not one Republican voted in favor of this bill.

That is the difference between the two parties in a nutshell: While MAGA Republicans are fixated on their extremist agenda, Democrats are focused on creating jobs, lowering costs, bringing our country together. While Democrats will join today with President Biden to promote our job-creating agenda, Republicans will spend today introducing new, radical legislation to ban abortions on the national level, right here on the Senate floor. That is the contrast between the parties, clear as day, and we know which side the American people are on.

And while Democrats want to lower costs, increase prosperity, and strengthen ladders to the middle class, the junior Senator from Florida, who serves as the chief elections architect for Senate Republicans, continues to promote tax hikes—tax hikes—for working families and putting Medicare on the chopping block.

This split screen is unmistakable for all Americans to see for themselves. Democrats will spend today focused on the job-creating, inflation-fighting agenda we promised and delivered for the American people, while Republicans continue defending tax hikes for the working class while pushing national abortion bans here in the Senate. And the American people will have no trouble deciding for themselves which party is truly in their corner.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. On judges, last night I moved to file cloture on the nomination of Sarah Merriam to be U.S. circuit judge for the Second Circuit. She will be the sixth circuit court judge this Chamber has considered since the beginning of this work period—the sixth. She will be in exceedingly good company.

Later today, we will vote on the nomination of Arianna Freeman to be U.S. circuit judge for the Third Circuit, followed by cloture on the nomination of Lara Montecalvo to serve on the First Circuit.

Altogether, the Senate has now confirmed 80—80—judicial nominations to serve lifetime appointments on the Federal bench. I made clear that confirming more of President Biden's judicial nominees would be a top priority for Senate Democrats, and we are making good on our promise by being on track to vote on six circuit court judges in the first 2 weeks of this work period alone.

Among the judges confirmed this month are a number of notable firsts: the first Latino to serve from the State of Washington to the Ninth Circuit, the first Black Tennessean to ever sit on the Sixth Circuit, and the first Asian American from anywhere to sit on the Seventh Circuit. And that is just in the last 2 weeks.

The 80 jurists we have confirmed also include the first Native American judge, the first Muslim American district judge, and the first Black woman, of course, in the history of the U.S. Supreme Court. I mention these firsts because even though it takes a lot to be a successful jurist, representation is a key part of the equation.

There has been a lot of talk lately about the public's trust in our courts—in my judgment, for very good reasons. So if our courts are to long endure—to say nothing of our democracy—they must reflect the rich vibrancy of our country.

So as we continue confirming judges, we will make sure that the individuals on the bench meet this important standard. We have come a very long way, but there is much work left to be done.

NATIONAL SEPSIS DAY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, on sepsis, I want to say a few words on a health issue that rarely gets the attention it deserves here on the Senate floor, and that is the issue of sepsis. Every year, roughly 1.7 million Americans are infected with sepsis. That is a population roughly the size of Phoenix, AZ. Of those, 270,000—270,000—are ultimately killed by the disease.

For those unfamiliar, sepsis is a terrible, life-threatening condition where the body overreacts to an infection in an extreme way. Most cases are preventable, if they are caught with enough time. Sadly, because of a lack of public awareness, too many cases fly under the radar until it is too late.

So today, I am here to introduce a resolution designating September 13 as National Sepsis Day. It would encourage greater public education about this condition, urge Federal entities to streamline treatment guidelines, and marshal our resources to ultimately bring sepsis to an end.

The Federal Government has a great model to follow in my home State of

New York, which adopted Rory's Regulations to guide health officials when it comes to this illness named in honor of Rory Staunton, a 12-year-old from Queens who died from sepsis 10 years ago. These rules have undoubtedly saved countless lives and should inform Federal policy.

I cannot imagine the profound suffering that Rory's parents must feel to this day, but I hope they find strength in knowing that the rules bearing their son's name have gone a long way to help others.

It is time we take this disease seriously at the Federal level. For that reason, I am proud to introduce this resolution today.

I yield the floor.

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. 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

INFLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Just a few minutes ago, yet again, the American people received a monthly inflation report that was even worse than the expert predictions.

The expectation was that Democrats' runaway inflation might finally begin to actually level off. The top-line inflation rate was expected to fall. Instead, yet again, the opposite happened. Overall inflation was up even higher.

The prices this past August were still 8.3 percent higher than they were in August of 2021. Just a catastrophically high inflation rate.

Food prices went up another 0.8 percent just this past month alone. Overall food prices just logged their biggest 1-year increase since the late 1970s. Groceries in particular are now 13.5 percent more expensive than they were at this time last year. Democrats' policies are sucker-punching American families every time they set foot in the checkout line. Eggs are up 40 percent. Butter, up 25 percent. Baby food, up 13 percent. Chicken, dairy, bread, cereal, and canned fruits and vegetables are all up around 16 percent each. Coffee is up even more than that.

Housing and shelter costs were up. Medical costs were up. Furniture, up. New cars, up.

Electricity costs were way, way up—a 15.8-percent increase since last year. So let me say that again. Inflation on Americans' electricity bills alone—alone—is 15.8 percent in just the last 12