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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God, each day, it seems we face new challenges, unexpected hurdles, and tragic realities. Have mercy upon us and this land we love. Remind us that Your plans for us are better than anything we can plan for ourselves.

Today, as our lawmakers depend on You for help, respond to their intercession with Your peace that transcends human understanding. Lord, fill them with the joy that comes from the strength You provide those who refuse to become weary in doing what is right.

Remind us all that we are travelers in this life in search of a city that You have prepared for us.

Lord, we mourn the tragic loss of life in the Maine mass shooting.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024—Continued

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 4366, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4366) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Schumer (for Murray/Collins) amendment No. 1092, in the nature of a substitute.

Mr. WARNOCK. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

#### MAINE SHOOTING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, this morning, the Nation grieves with the people of Lewiston, ME. After last night's horrible, senseless mass shooting, the shooter remains at large, and we pray that there is no more bloodshed after the horrors of last night.

The stories coming out of Lewiston are gut-wrenching—people gunned down while just trying to enjoy their Wednesday night out at the bowling alley and a restaurant—a bowling alley and a restaurant. These are supposed to be places where families go to have a good time, but now they have become sites—too many places—of tragic mass

shootings in America. It is beyond heartbreaking that mass shootings like this continue to happen in our country.

My condolences are with the families and loved ones. I can just imagine them sitting at home just wondering, why did this happen to us? My prayers will be with all Mainers and first responders as authorities keep working to locate the shooter. Today, our hearts are with Lewiston.

#### SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE MIKE JOHNSON

Mr. President, on the new Speaker, yesterday, after a monthlong paralysis in Congress, House Republicans finally—finally—elected a new Speaker of the House.

I spoke with Speaker JOHNSON last night and expressed my congratulations on his election to the speakership. I told Speaker JOHNSON the exact same thing I told Speaker MCCARTHY: In a divided government, the only way we will avoid a shutdown, fund the government, or pass the supplemental is bipartisanship.

I hope the new Speaker learns lessons from the disastrous experiences of his predecessors—Speakers Boehner, Ryan, and MCCARTHY—and realizes that codding the hard right is disastrous both for the country and for the Republican leadership because, like it or not, Speaker JOHNSON will not be able to ignore the need for bipartisanship in divided government.

Right now, the world is in crisis. Americans and the citizens of the world—people across the world—are looking for a Congress that is functional, decisive, and able to reach across the aisle.

We must work together to send Israel the help she needs. We must stand with our friends in Ukraine, which majorities in both Chambers have made clear they support. To allow Putin to succeed is to endanger America's national

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



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security, and it is alarming that a growing number of House Republicans don't seem to care about this. We also need humanitarian aid to reduce the suffering in the Middle East, in Ukraine, and elsewhere.

We must also finish the bipartisan appropriations process. Extremist funding bills that make cuts way below the bipartisan June agreement will not fly. If Speaker Johnson tries to send those cuts over here, they are not going to happen. They will be dead on arrival. All they will do is waste more time at a moment when every day counts. So he cannot listen to these 30 Members of the hard right who somehow think they have all the knowledge and all right on their side and then tie us in a knot.

Again, whether House Republicans like it or not, this is divided government. Bipartisanship is the only way we will be able to get anything done. I hope and pray Speaker JOHNSON realizes this quickly. If Speaker JOHNSON repeats the mistakes of Speaker MCCARTHY, if he tumbles down the MAGA road, it will be inevitable that the House finds itself trapped in even more chaos very soon. If Speaker JOHNSON lives up to the label that Congressman GAETZ has given him, "MAGA Mike," he will fail, as the previous Speakers have. But if Speaker JOHNSON chooses the bipartisan path, we can do great things for the American people, just as we did last Congress with an evenly divided Senate and a narrowly divided House.

I look forward to working constructively with Speaker JOHNSON and congratulate him on his election.

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, on the minibus, the Senate today will continue the bipartisan appropriations process here on the floor.

Yesterday, Senators were busy voting through a number of amendments offered by both sides. We held rollcall votes on 4 amendments offered by our Republican colleagues and adopted 25 additional amendments, many of them bipartisan, by voice vote. We have more amendment votes to hold later today, and Members should expect to keep voting into next week. It is my hope that we can wrap up work on these appropriations bills as soon as next week.

When the Senate passes these three bills, they will be the only appropriations bills passed in either Chamber that both parties support, and I think that is key to remember as we move forward. As I said a moment ago, when I spoke to the newly elected Speaker JOHNSON, I said the only way we will solve our most pressing problems—funding the government, avoiding a shutdown, passing a supplemental—will be bipartisanship.

The Senate has been a model for how we can make bipartisanship happen, and it is all to the credit of our appropriators, particularly Chair MURRAY and Vice Chair COLLINS. I thank my

colleagues for their work. I look forward to holding more amendment votes today and into next week.

#### DOMESTIC SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Mr. President, on the domestic supplemental, as the Senate works on America's needs on the world stage, including passing robust funding for Israel, Ukraine, the Pacific region, and humanitarian aid for Gaza, for Israel, and for Ukraine, we will also work to take care of our needs at home.

Last week, the President released his emergency supplemental to help our friends in Israel and Ukraine defend themselves. Now Democrats are working with the administration on a domestic supplemental to support the needs of American families.

Our domestic supplemental will fund bipartisan priorities for Americans, like disaster response, securing American energy independence, fighting the scourge of fentanyl, expanding access to affordable high-speed internet, and so much more.

Among our greatest needs right now is addressing childcare, which remains outrageously expensive for too many families and something I want to see the Senate address. I have had many conversations recently with my colleagues about how the Senate can make childcare more affordable. We are at a cliff now. As of September 30, funding was greatly decreased, and now childcare workers are being laid off and childcare slots are being rescinded. Families are in turmoil when that happens. We have to work on making childcare more affordable, and we have to work on it on the domestic side and have to keep it in the domestic supplemental and do everything we can to get it done.

Just as we have to work on national security on a bipartisan basis, the Senate should absolutely work on America's domestic needs with equal bipartisan fervor. You can't have one try to argue against the other. We need both domestic help and national security. It is not an either-or in this situation. The President has wisely offered a supplemental on domestic issues.

#### NOMINATION OF JACOB J. LEW

Mr. President, on the nomination of Jack Lew, yesterday, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 12 to 9 to report out the nomination of Jack Lew, President Biden's pick to serve as Ambassador to Israel. Later today, I will file cloture on this most urgent nomination so Mr. Lew can be appointed to the post of Ambassador ASAP.

The team at the U.S. Embassy is doing a heroic job right now under terrible circumstances, including a wonderful charge d'affaires who helped us during our visit.

Israel is in crisis. America needs to stand with her, and a most urgent and obvious step would be to make sure we have an American Ambassador in place.

#### AUSTRALIA

Mr. President, finally, later this morning, it will be my honor to wel-

come Prime Minister Anthony Albanese of Australia to the U.S. Capitol for a bipartisan meeting.

Australia is a key ally, partner, and friend of the United States. The strength of the U.S.-Australia alliance is illustrated powerfully by the AUKUS trilateral agreement and by our shared commitment to enhancing Indo-Pacific security and by our strong economic bonds.

I will tell the Prime Minister that the Senate will keep working to pass all of the AUKUS agreement, because our national security interests align with respect to China. I was proud to work alongside my Senate colleagues to include AUKUS Pillar II in the Senate NDAA, and I will work with my House colleagues during the NDAA conference to ensure its inclusion in the final bill. We are now working to make sure Australia can receive the Virginia-class submarines that are an essential part of the trilateral agreement.

So, again, I thank Prime Minister Albanese for meeting with us today. I look forward to discussing the importance of AUKUS and finding new, innovative ways to collaborate.

#### UNITED AUTO WORKERS

Mr. President, on the UAW, I am so pleased to hear that Ford and UAW may have reached a tentative agreement. I hope that this spurs GM and Stellantis, as well as the UAW, to continue negotiating in good faith.

The bottom line is simple, the workers gave up plenty when the auto industry was in trouble. Now that the auto industry is making large profits, the workers need to share fairly in that.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

#### MAINE SHOOTING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I was devastated to hear the news last night of a deadly shooting in Lewiston, ME. I know the entire Senate stands behind our colleagues Senator COLLINS and Senator KING as they help their State marshal its response.

We pray especially for the victims of this senseless violence, for their families, and for the law enforcement personnel working tirelessly to save lives and bring the suspect to justice.

#### SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE MIKE JOHNSON

Mr. President, now, on an entirely different matter, yesterday, I spoke with the newly elected Speaker of the House, MIKE JOHNSON. I congratulated him on his victory, and I expressed my support as he begins to steer the House Republican majority.

We have a lot of work ahead of us. House and Senate Republicans need to work together on a number of urgent priorities, beginning with supplemental appropriations for a number of our national security priorities. So I look forward to meeting with the Speaker soon to begin this important work.

## ISRAEL

Mr. President, every day brings new harrowing details of the terrorist attacks of October 7, and we continue to learn more about the role Iran plays in aiding and abetting terror. Just yesterday, new reports indicated that hundreds of terrorists from Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad traveled to Iran last month for specialized combat training with Tehran's murderous Quds Force.

Of course, waiting for specific evidence of tactical involvement really misses the point. Iran is the world's leading state sponsor of terror. It has spent decades supporting proxy terrorists who share their hatred for Israel and America precisely so Tehran can maintain plausible deniability. We cannot lose sight of this savage charade. Evil will continue to target the United States and our allies, whether we pay attention to it or not.

And the threats our adversaries pose are all connected. Iran doesn't just underwrite terrorist attacks on Israel; it outfits Russia with drones to help kill Ukrainians. China doesn't just menace Taiwan; it helps Iran circumvent international sanctions by trading consumer goods for oil. And Russia isn't just pummeling a sovereign neighbor; it has joined China for joint naval exercises in the Sea of Japan, as well as off the coast of Alaska.

Our adversaries' ambitions are not local. They have been showing us for years that they are determined to challenge American leadership, undermine our interests, and weaken our alliances.

But on every front, the Biden administration's response has fallen short. The President was hesitant to deter Russia's aggression in the first place and has dithered about helping equip Ukraine to defeat it. He has prioritized engagement with China on climate policy over building resilient supply chains with trusted allies.

And just listen to his administration's jaw-dropping naivete after 3 years of squandering leverage on Iran. In early October, the President's National Security Advisor wrote a self-congratulatory article assessing the administration's foreign policy.

Here is some of what he said about the Middle East:

In the face of serious frictions, we have de-escalated crises in Gaza and restored direct diplomacy.

He went on:

U.S. troops were under regular attack in Iraq and Syria. . . . Such attacks, at least for now, have largely stopped.

Finally, he claimed that the President's approach "frees up resources for

other global priorities" and "reduces the risk of new Middle Eastern conflicts."

Well, at least that was the account that went to print before 1,400 Israelis were murdered on a Saturday morning and before Iran-backed terrorists injured two dozen servicemembers in numerous attacks in Iraq and in Syria.

The incongruity between the administration's spin and the reality has since been scrubbed from the article online, but the Biden administration's naive approach to terror remains woefully inadequate to meet the growing threat of radical Islamic terrorism—from Afghanistan to Yemen, to Iraq and the Levant, to the Sahel.

Abandoning Afghanistan, obsessing about closing Guantanamo Bay, removing the Houthis' designation as a terrorist organization, turning the other cheek when terrorists attack Americans and our allies, squandering leverage over Iran—weakness in one theater begets weakness in another.

The United States is a global superpower, and it is high time we started embracing and properly resourcing the responsibilities that come with that role. Now is the time to invest deeper in our alliances and partnerships. It is time to restore credible deterrence with hard power.

That is why I will oppose Senator PAUL's resolution to compel the withdrawal of American servicemembers from Niger later today. Radical Islamic terrorism in that part of the world is on the rise, and we should be working more closely with local partners, not abandoning them. We should be conducting more surveillance flights, not blinding ourselves by abandoning strategic airfields in Niger. Russia and China are working overtime to displace American influence in Africa. We should not be making their job any easier.

Beyond today's vote, the Senate should recognize the opportunity before us to shape a supplemental appropriations bill that equips our military, our defense industrial base, and our allies and partners to meet the growing threats that we face—from our southern border to radical Islamic terrorism, to authoritarian aggression. We have a chance to demonstrate the American leadership our people, our allies, and our interests require. We should take it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Iowa.

## FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, 59 years ago tomorrow—in other words, Friday—Ronald Reagan delivered his

iconic "A Time for Choosing" speech. In this speech, the future President laid out, in very stark terms, the challenges that Americans faced as a nation, all due to a bloated Federal Government that threatened America's prosperity and individual freedoms.

Well, America is once again at a time for choosing, and much like in Reagan's time, the issues confronting us cross party lines. This would be a good time for me to say that we have a partial step in this direction because of the Biden-McCarthy agreement in June not to shut down the government because the government couldn't issue debt.

So here we are again. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office and others have warned policymakers for decades that, absent changes, the retirement of the baby boom generation would result in an explosion of debt and deficit.

Yet we in the Congress have turned a blind eye as the country walked headlong towards a fiscal cliff. For 40 years, our public debt averaged around 35 percent of our economy. But over the past 15 years, that debt has grown by leaps and bounds.

First came the 2008 financial crisis, which led to a \$6 trillion leap in public debt in just 4 years after 2008. This amounted to a doubling of the national debt as a share of the economy, rising from 35 percent—where it was for about 40 years—to over 70 percent of GDP.

Then, we all know what the pandemic has done to the public debt. The pandemic hits, and public debt went upwards by \$7.5 trillion over 3 years. As a result, public debt soared to roughly equal to our Nation's entire annual economic output—or what you have economists tell you: That is about 100 percent of GDP.

Now that brings us to where we are today and to take Ronald Reagan's advice very seriously: a nation drowning in a sea of red ink with no life preserver or a rescue boat in sight.

What is more, debt continues to rain down upon us at a record clip. The fiscal year 2023 deficit checked in at 2 trillion once you adjust for the Supreme Court striking down the Biden student loan bailout.

Measured as a share of GDP the 2023 deficit was larger than in all but 5 years since 1945.

Our historic deficit was fueled, in part, by rising interest payments on the debt, which alone cost \$711 billion. The cost to service our debt is expected to consume an increasingly larger share of the Federal budget. While we argue about what we should or shouldn't spend taxpayers' money on, interest on the debt is crowding out our priorities and shrinking our options going forward. And this all automatically happens because you pay the interest on the national debt or you default; and we don't want to do that. And that is what the Biden-McCarthy agreement of June kept from happening.

Going back to June, the CBO projected that servicing our debt over the next 10 years would cost 10.4 trillion; however, that projection was made before rates on treasury bonds used to finance our debt surged to a 16-year high. The rate on a 10-year treasury bond is now a full percentage point higher than what CBO assumed this spring. All of that adding to our deficit problems. But these higher than expected borrowing costs persist. It will be trillions more spent simply servicing that debt.

What is more, we haven't yet hit the precipice of the fiscal cliff that CBO and other nonpartisan experts have been warning will result due to the aging population. And, of course, that involves Social Security and Medicare. And the trustees of these two programs say the trust funds for both programs will be insolvent within the next 10 years. Moreover, CBO projects that spending for major health programs will skyrocket from 32 percent of Federal revenue this day to 45 percent of revenue at midcentury.

We can no longer afford to kick the can down the road. We must put an end to governing crisis to crisis and get back to the fundamentals of government. And the fundamentals of government for Social Security and Medicare should cause us to look at the success that Reagan and then-Democratic speaker Tip O'Neill of the House of Representatives said: We can't let Social Security go bankrupt. And they fixed it to this very day by tough decisions that we ought to be making today to fix it for the next 50 years like they did. And I will bet maybe they, at that time, thought maybe they were only fixing it for 10 or 20 years. But that is from 1983 till now. Social Security is supposed to run out of resources, reserves by, I think, 2033.

So what I am saying is it means actually managing the government instead of doing it from crisis to crisis and to do it by not chasing an elusive partisan ideal. That will require implementing honest budget and appropriations practices that will enable us to begin to chip away at this daunting debt.

According to the well-regarded Penn Wharton Budget Model, the United States has about 20 years to take corrective action to avoid fiscal disaster. I almost hate to say 20 years—but Penn Wharton is respected—because that means that maybe we won't take the necessary action in the near term. And it is always easier to solve these problems yesterday than it is tomorrow. The longer we wait to take these actions, then, obviously, I am saying the more painful those actions will be.

In Penn Wharton's estimation, if we put off corrective action until the fiscal crisis is at our doorstep, no amount of future tax hikes or spending cuts will enable us to avoid defaulting on our debt.

When I just said—as I did—until a fiscal crisis is upon our doorstep, Iowans

at my 99-county meetings that I hold every year would say that we are already at that point. And when you talk about maybe it can be done or not done, then you can imagine the cynical people of Iowa—just like the cynical people of the United States as a whole—are even going to have less confidence in our government institutions.

Now, we all know there is plenty of blame to go around for how we got into our current fiscal situation, but no amount of finger-pointing—political or otherwise—will change where we find ourselves today. We must now make a choice. We can either continue down the path to fiscal ruin, or we can begin to rein in a bloated Federal Government in pursuit of a more prosperous tomorrow.

Well, remember what I said about Ronald Reagan 59 years ago tomorrow, also in the words of Ronald Reagan:

You and I have a rendezvous with destiny. We will preserve for our children this, the last best hope of man on earth or we will sentence them to take the last step into a thousand years of darkness.

We see on television a lot of times people saying how God-awful this country is. And yet on that same television day, you can see 10,000 people crossing the border to come to our country. For those people that live in America and have lived here all their life and find that America is not such a great place, they ought to wonder why people all over the world want to come to America.

Or sometimes I tell people at citizenship ceremonies in the courthouses of Iowa when I am able to go there, I say to this group—many of them have come from autocracies to America where they have less freedom than they have in America today—and I say to those people, I hope when you hear somebody that was born in America bellyaching about the God-awful wrongs we have in this country, I hope you will remind them as a person born in another country how great this country is because people that were born here lose sight of how great America is.

So getting back to this fiscal issue I have been talking about, whether Ronald Reagan says it or I say it or each of my 99 colleagues say it—because I think, to some extent, we are all on the same page—maybe not how to solve the problem, but that there is a problem—then I say, like Reagan said: The choice is clear. It is time we do what our constituents sent us here to do. And that basically means to lead—to lead us out of this fiscal crisis.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

#### CONDEMNING HAMAS AND ANTISEMITIC STUDENT ACTIVITIES ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 418.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 418) condemning Hamas and antisemitic student activities on college campuses in the United States.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. HAWLEY. I know of no further debate on the measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 418) was agreed to.

Mr. HAWLEY. I ask unanimous consent that the preamble be agreed to and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of October 19, 2023, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, 1 week ago, I came to this floor to try and pass this very resolution that condemns the violent, genocidal, anti-Semitic rhetoric and actions on our college campuses all across this country. Sadly, I was blocked by one of my Democratic colleagues. And since then, the situation at our universities has only worsened.

I offer you just two examples. I could multiply these examples, sadly, but let's just take two.

On Tuesday of this week, just 2 or 3 miles from where we stand now on the floor of the U.S. Senate, at the George Washington University, pro-Hamas students projected onto the side of the university library various anti-Semitic, anti-Israel, pro-genocide slogans, including "Glory to Our Martyrs," in reference to the terrorists who attacked the State of Israel, and not just the State of Israel, but who committed cold-blooded murder of babies, cutting off their heads, shooting women and children in their homes, executing soldiers as they lay sleeping in their barracks.

These same students projected other slogans onto the library wall: "Free Palestine From the River to the Sea".

What does that mean? Well, it is a reference to Hamas's longstanding call for the extermination of the State of Israel.

Let's just be clear. This is a reference to their call for genocide of Jews in the Middle East and everywhere they can get their hands on them. This is what is going on, on our college campuses.

If you talk to the students who were there at George Washington University