



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 118<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 169

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2023

No. 194

## House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at 12 p.m.

## Senate

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2023

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TAMMY DUCKWORTH, a Senator from the State of Illinois.

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God of time and eternity, who laid the cornerstone of the universe, use our lawmakers today as instruments of Your will. Give them the wisdom to turn from the thoughts, words, and deeds that weaken instead of strengthen freedom. Lord, help them to desire to be people of integrity who will stand for right and leave the consequences to You. May this be a day when our Senators serve You with gladness because Your joy is their strength.

Lord, all nations are Yours. Help us to trust You to rule our world. Bring peace to our planet.

And, Lord, we praise You for the life and legacy of former First Lady Rosalynn Carter.

We pray in Your great 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 (Mrs. MURRAY).

The senior assistant executive clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, November 27, 2023.

*To the Senate:*

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

PATTY MURRAY,  
President pro tempore.

Ms. DUCKWORTH 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.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

### MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 3343

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam 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 bill by title for the second time.

The senior assistant executive clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3343) to provide that United States citizens evacuating Israel shall not be required to reimburse the United States Government, 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.

### BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, let me welcome all my Senate colleagues back to Washington for the final work period of the year. I hope everyone had a good Thanksgiving surrounded by family and by friends.

Speaking personally, Thanksgiving is a bittersweet time for my family. It is my birthday—it occurs once every 7 years, and it occurred on Thanksgiving this year—but it is also 2 years since my dad passed away on Thanksgiving eve in 2021.

It is still hard to fathom that I can no longer hop on the phone with him or go over to his house on Sundays for dinner. We miss him dearly. But I have learned since his passing that those we love never truly leave our side. They endure through the lessons they impart in us in life.

My dad taught me to always fight for what you believe is right, and if you persist and persist and persist, God will reward you in the end. And there is a lot over which the Senate must persist in the upcoming month.

Almost 2 weeks ago, Congress came together to avoid a painful government

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



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shutdown. The task now is for Democrats and Republicans to reach an agreement on yearlong funding legislation, and the only way that will happen is with bipartisan cooperation. Both sides are going to have to give a little on important issues to them.

Over the Thanksgiving break, both parties in both Chambers held talks about the appropriations process, and we hope to be well positioned to pass the first tranche of funding bills before the January 19 deadline.

But before the year is out, there is a lot of other work we must do here in the Senate. Members should be ready to stay here in Washington until all our work is completed.

We must, for one, finish the task of passing an emergency supplemental bill with aid to Ukraine, aid to Israel, humanitarian assistance to innocent civilians in Gaza, and funding for the Indo-Pacific. Time is short for us to act, so it is my intention to bring the President's national security package to the floor as soon as the week of December 4.

I want to be clear that aid to Israel, Ukraine, humanitarian aid for civilians in Gaza, and the Indo-Pacific are all related and demand bipartisan cooperation. We don't have the luxury to pick and choose our national security challenges.

On the other side of the world, Iran has been willing to prop up Hamas and is helping Russia's campaign in Ukraine. The Chinese Government is closely watching what we do in Europe just as much as what we do in the Middle East and the Indo-Pacific.

Russia, China, and Iran have grown closer over these past few years, working together to counter the United States at every turn. They see these conflicts as interconnected, so we must too.

I implore my Republican colleagues to work with us on aid to Ukraine. For the most part, Democrats and Republicans largely agree that we must help Ukraine, including my friend the Republican leader. So I hope we can come to an agreement on an aid package soon. The worst thing we can do right now—the worst thing we can do—is to make something as bipartisan as Ukraine aid conditional on partisan issues that have little chance of becoming law.

Sadly, that is what may well be happening right now because the biggest holdup to the national security supplement is an insistence by some Republicans—just some—on partisan border policy as a condition for Ukraine aid. This has injected a decades-old, hyperpartisan issue into overwhelmingly bipartisan priorities.

Democrats stand ready to work on commonsense solutions to address immigration, but purely partisan, hard-right demands like those in H.R. 2 jeopardize the entire national security supplemental package.

I urge my colleagues, as they think about that, to remember what Presi-

dent Zelenskyy told us when he spoke in the Old Senate Chamber. He said:

If we don't get the aid, we will lose the war.

Let me repeat that. Zelenskyy said:

If we don't get the aid, we will lose the war.

That is what is at stake with Ukrainian aid: the possibility of victory or defeat for the Ukrainian people and ultimately our Western way of life. And let's be clear: A victorious Putin would be an emboldened Putin. If Ukraine falls, Putin will keep going. Russia's authoritarian influence will expand. Other autocracies may feel emboldened, and democracy around the world could enter decline.

History will look harshly upon those who let partisan politics get in the way of defending democracy. Nothing would make Putin, Xi, and the Iranian regime happier than to see the United States abandon a democratic partner in its hour of need. So Democrats and Republicans need to stand together and pass Ukrainian aid, along with the rest of the supplemental package. If we allow Putin to prevail, it will come back to haunt us.

For the information of Senators, in the coming days, we will hold an all-Senators classified briefing on the situation in Ukraine so we can get the latest update about the situation on the ground and see the immense importance of passing another aid package. I urge everyone to attend.

#### MILITARY PROMOTIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on Senator TUBERVILLE's blockade, before the end of the year, the Senate must put a stop to a grave abuse carried out by the senior Senator from Alabama: the brazen, months-and-months-long blockade of over 350 military nominees.

The blockade of hundreds of military nominees, to push the hard-right view on abortion, is something that the majority of Americans do not support. Let's look at what happened in the referendum results over the last 2 years.

It is something never seen before in the Senate. It has cost our military preparedness dearly. It has thrown the lives of hundreds of families into limbo.

Members on both sides of the aisle are reaching a boiling point with Senator TUBERVILLE, and before the year is out, we are going to act to bring his blockade to an end.

In the coming weeks, I will bring a resolution to the floor, approved by the Rules Committee, allowing the Senate to quickly confirm the hundreds of military leaders that Senator TUBERVILLE has obstructed. I thank Chairman KLOBUCHAR and Senator REED and everyone else who has championed this measure, and I hope my Republican colleagues who care about military preparedness end up supporting this resolution or at least getting Senator TUBERVILLE to back down.

No matter what, we have an obligation to act because Senator TUBERVILLE's military holds are an anomaly in the history of the Senate. If every Senator did what Senator TUBERVILLE has done and held up military confirmations because of this or that partisan issue, no matter how deeply felt, it would grind the Senate to a halt. It would be a catastrophe for our military. We dare not go further down that road. We have gone too far already.

To all of my colleagues who don't want to see the military forever ensnared in partisan fights, I urge them to support this resolution or else implore Senator TUBERVILLE to stand down.

#### ISRAEL

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on the hostages, last week, an agreement was reached for a pausing of hostilities in the Gaza Strip to allow for the release of 50 Israeli hostages held by Hamas. This pause also allowed for the delivery of humanitarian aid for innocent civilians in Gaza. And a few hours ago—just a few hours ago—it was reported that all sides have agreed to extend this pause for 2 more days to allow additional hostages to be released.

I am so relieved that some of the hostages are coming home after enduring weeks of utter horror. I have met with many of their families. I have heard of the pain they have been in. We have cried together in Israel, in New York, and in Washington. And while much healing is ahead, I am relieved that some are home.

I am also glad that the temporary pause has allowed for critical humanitarian aid to enter Gaza and reach innocent civilians, who have nothing—nothing—to do with Hamas.

So the extension of the pause, the release of the 50 hostages, and the delivery of humanitarian aid are all extremely positive developments, but there is lots of work to do. We must keep working until all the hostages are freed. We must continue working here in the Senate to pass humanitarian aid for innocent civilians in Gaza, and we must ensure that Israel has the aid it needs to defend itself against the threat from the terrorist organization Hamas, so it can never again pose such a threat to Israel.

I yield the floor.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

#### BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, before the Senate adjourned for Thanksgiving, we voted to extend Federal Government funding into the new