



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 118th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 170

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2024

No. 89

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable PETER WELCH, a Senator from the State of Vermont.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, this day we give You our lives, for without You, we are like dust in the wind. Shield us from disgrace as You surround us with Your protection, mercy, and love. Remind us that disgrace comes to those who seek to deceive others.

Lord, sustain our lawmakers, show them the right plans, point them to the right path, and lead them to the right destination. Continue to keep them from stumbling or slipping, so that one day they will stand in Your presence with great joy.

We pray in Your sovereign 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 legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 22, 2024.

To the Senate:

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

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

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WELCH 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 4381

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I understand that 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 legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4381) to protect an individual's ability to access contraceptives and to engage in contraception and to protect a health care provider's ability to provide contraceptives, contraception, and information related to contraception.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, 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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BORDER ACT OF 2024—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 397, S. 4361.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 397, S. 4361, a bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for border security and combatting fentanyl for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

DONALD TRUMP

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I would like to begin with a few words about Donald Trump's dangerous post last night on Truth Social. What Donald Trump said, falsely suggesting his political opponents are out to kill him, is beyond the pale and is the stuff that leads to political violence. Donald Trump seems to have no consideration for the sanctity and peacefulness and further functioning of our democracy.

Everyone who was here on January 6 should immediately see what he is doing—what Donald Trump is doing—using conspiracy theories to spin the hard right into a frenzy, and it is despicable for Members of Congress to spread Donald Trump's lies. This is how people get killed, how the seeds of political violence are sowed, and how people lose faith in this democracy. Donald Trump has no regard for that. He would basically rip up parts of our democracy for what he thinks is his own personal gain.

Let's speak truthfully. What the FBI did was follow standard practice. They worked with the Secret Service at Mar-a-Lago ahead of time to coordinate how to carry out a search warrant. Donald Trump wasn't even in Florida but instead in New Jersey on the day of the search.

So this idea that his political opponents are out to kill him is absurd. Every single Member of the House and Senate, Democrat and Republican, should condemn Donald Trump's outlandish and dangerous statement. 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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should be the easiest thing they do today.

If words like Donald Trump's are not fiercely condemned, we are only begging for something far worse to happen to our democracy down the line. We cannot let this man, Donald Trump, or anybody else throw these kinds of matches to light flames that could burn our democracy. It is just horrible. I can't believe that someone would do something like that.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on judges, a much better note, today, the Senate reaches a significant milestone: 200 judges confirmed to lifetime appointments under President Biden and this very proud Democratic majority: 200 judges who are restoring balance in excellence to our courts, 200 judges who are increasing the diversity and dynamism of our judiciary, 200 judges who are committed to applying the law fairly, impartially, equally. Of those 200 judges—I am so proud—127 are women; 125 are people of color, both traditionally underrepresented demographics on the bench. We are making our courts look more like America. It is not just going to be male White partners in fancy law firms. It is much more diverse, and the bench is better for it. It is something we can all be proud of.

Mr. President, 127 women, 125 people of color, over twice as many women, and more than three times as many people of color have been confirmed under the last administration. We have confirmed more Black judges, more Latino judges, more Asian-American judges. We confirmed the first Muslim-American man and woman on the bench, the first Navajo Federal judge, the first Black woman to serve on the Supreme Court, of course, Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson.

We have confirmed more judges who have served as public defenders and civil rights lawyers and consumer lawyers and immigration lawyers and labor lawyers; again, not just partners of big law firms. We have confirmed more judges, in other words, who embody the very ideal of America, a place where the rule of law is protected, where the rights of all are honored, and where everyone—everyone—gets a fair shake.

I commend Chairman DURBIN. I commend the Judiciary Committee for their great work processing judges in and out of our committee. I commend President Biden for nominating so many of these people and working with our Senate colleagues as to who would be best from their States and regions.

Senate Democrats are very proud of our record. We are proud of our judges, and we will keep going.

BORDER ACT OF 2024

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on the border, well, tomorrow, Senators face

an important decision: Will both sides come together to advance a bipartisan border security bill or will partisanship get in the way yet again?

Three months ago, Donald Trump told his Republican allies to block the strongest bipartisan border security bill Congress has seen in a generation. Luckily, we are trying again tomorrow, and I hope this time Republicans join us to achieve a different outcome.

The only way—the only way—we are going to fix the border is through bipartisan legislation, just like the one both sides spent months negotiating a few months ago and which we are taking up again tomorrow. We don't expect every Democrat or every Republican to support this bill. It wasn't designed that way. It wasn't designed to get all the votes of one party, which then almost inevitably means you get none of the votes from the other side. It was intended to be a compromise that could pass and become law.

We know there are disagreements, as there always are, about the best way to proceed on the border. But that is precisely why I have emphasized from day one, we need to have strong border support if we hope to get border done.

Unlike H.R. 2, a very partisan bill, the bipartisan border bill was written with the goal of getting 60 votes in the Senate, with support from both Republicans and Democrats. It had input from both Republicans and Democrats. H.R. 2 can't claim that. If anything is political, it is H.R. 2. It didn't receive a single Democratic vote in the Senate because Democrats weren't consulted. It didn't even get the full support of Senate Republicans. H.R. 2 was the definition of political theater, one side sitting in a room by itself writing what it wanted not even thinking of how you pass a bill.

Our bill, however, is what a serious attempt at border reform looks like. Now, most people might not remember, but a few months ago, there was a lot of bipartisan interest in getting our border bill passed before Donald Trump killed it in its tracks. Our Republican colleagues—including the Republican leader—was adamant. We needed to get border security done as part of the national security supplemental. This is what the Republican leader said right before our bill was released:

I think this is the ideal time to do it.

He then added, Leader MCCONNELL added:

This is a unique opportunity where divided government has given us an opportunity to get an outcome.

These aren't the words of someone who thinks our efforts were political theater. These are the words of someone who thinks we were close to reaching a breakthrough, and he wasn't alone. My friend from South Carolina also said that.

To those who think that if President Trump wins . . . that we can get a better deal, you won't.

He added:

This moment will pass. Do not let it pass.

Republican Senator from South Carolina.

So let's be perfectly clear: Our bipartisan border bill represented a real chance—in fact, the best chance in decades—to act on border security, to make a law, not just to make a political point.

Importantly, the bill would have made huge strides toward cracking down on the scourge of fentanyl. It would have given billions for DEA, for DHS to hire officers to focus exclusively on drugs and billions for state-of-the-art equipment to detect the flow of drugs at border crossings and ports.

And some of my Democratic colleagues will be talking about that, at 12:30, at an event, how this bill really does more than anything we have done thus far, and we have worked hard on it to deal with the scourge of fentanyl. So, today, my Democratic colleagues will shine a spotlight on the immense good this bill will do to protect our country from the free flow of this dangerous drug, fentanyl.

If you told me a year ago that this was the kind of bill we had before us, I would have been certain Republicans would have helped enact this bill into law. By any objective measure, it is strong, necessary.

And one final note, the last time we came close here was 2013 when we passed comprehensive immigration reform. We did it bipartisan. It was the only way to do it. I and my late friend, good friend, John McCain had a Gang of 8—four Democrats, four Republicans. We got, I believe it was, 69 votes on the floor of the Senate. Unfortunately, the House didn't pass it.

But it is just a lesson to all of us. Bipartisanship is the only way to go. H.R. 2 is not the least bit bipartisan. Our bill was completely bipartisan.

So, tomorrow, we are going to lay out a clear choice. Tomorrow, we will see who is serious about actually wanting to fix the border and who prefers to merely talk about fixing the border.

FARM BILL

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on the farm bill, tomorrow, House Republicans will mark up their partisan farm bill that, frankly, completely misses the mark.

The farm bill should support the farmers who grow our food. It should protect our land. It should invest in jobs for rural communities big and small to rebuild their economies. The farm bill should provide lifesaving hunger assistance for the millions of Americans who rely on programs like SNAP, and it should extend SNAP benefits to our friends in Puerto Rico who have been excluded from this program for decades, and it will expand it to them.

It is sad to see that rather than working together to get a serious farm bill passed, House Republicans are playing games and pushing a one-sided, insufficient partisan bill.