



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 118th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 170

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 2024

No. 125

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, August 2, 2024, at 11 a.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 2024

The Senate met at 11:01 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God, holy, powerful, loving, and good, thank You for expressing Your love to us with generous gifts. You have sustained our families and loved ones and nourished us with the blessings of faithful friends. You also have honored us with the privilege of being called Your children. You have showered our land from Your bounty with freedom, justice, and strength. You have delivered those bruised and battered by life.

Thank You for our lawmakers who work to keep America strong. Lord, use them this day for Your glory.

Lord of hosts, we lift to You this day our gratitude and praise.

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

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 31, 2024.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND 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. 4853

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 leader is correct.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4853) to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from promulgating or enforcing rules regarding disclosure of artificial intelligence-generated content in political advertisements.

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.

ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, 245 days ago, I stood right here on the Senate floor to raise the alarm of rising anti-Semitism in America and the need to condemn anti-Semitism whenever we see it.

This week, Squirrel Hill, the site of the Tree of Life synagogue massacre of 2018, was targeted once again with anti-Semitic vandalism and attacks. These attacks are vile. They are hurtful. They poison our society with division, fear, grief. And for the Squirrel Hill community, which has already suffered unimaginable tragedy, this is particularly horrific.

It pains me to say that anti-Semitism like this is unfortunately not unusual today. In our community and in our politics, anti-Semitism is ascending. This week, none other than Donald Trump, once again, added to the division.

Yesterday, during a radio interview with WABC in New York City, Donald Trump agreed with his interviewer that the Nation's Second Gentleman, a Jewish American, is "a crappy Jew."

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S5637

Why? Presumably because he is a Democrat. On air, Donald Trump then repeated the sick idea that if you are a Jew and you happen to support Democrats, you should “have your head examined” and that you are a bunch of “fools.”

Sadly, we have been here before. But it must be said again: Donald Trump’s comments were reprehensible, dangerous, and proof that he is disturbingly at ease with anti-Semitic rhetoric.

It might be tempting to listen to what Donald Trump said on the radio and tune it out just as another Trump insult. But that would be a mistake. Calling Jews “fools” and suggesting they are bad or disloyal because of their political beliefs is not just some juvenile insult. It is an old anti-Semitic trope that goes back centuries, one of dual loyalty. It has been used for a very long time to drive Jews out of their homes, to paint them as untrustworthy, to deny their basic dignity.

So when Donald Trump goes on air and attacks Jews for the way they vote, he knows precisely what he is doing. He is sowing the seeds of division. He is propagating naked anti-Semitism.

Donald Trump will always try to drag this Nation down with insults, intolerance, fear, and smear. But we are better than that, as the American people will make very clear in the months to come.

TAX RELIEF FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES AND WORKERS ACT OF 2024

Mr. SCHUMER. Tomorrow, Senators will have a chance to take up a bill that in one fell swoop will deliver significant tax relief for America’s families, for America’s businesses, and for Americans suffering from natural disasters. All we have to do is come together—both parties, bipartisan—and vote yes to advance the bipartisan tax package.

Democrats are ready to get this package done. It already passed the House under the leadership of a Republican chair of Ways and Means, Congressman SMITH of Missouri, with an incredible margin of 357 to 70. A majority of both parties voted strongly for this bill. Frankly, it is hard to imagine a vote more lopsided than that in this Congress.

If we get this bill done, it will go right to the President’s desk. It will become law. That means families and businesses and parents will see more money coming back to them during this tax season. More Americans will have a little more money in their pocket. Half a million kids will be lifted out of poverty by expanding the child tax credit. Sixteen million kids will also see these benefits, and most of those kids are working class, poorer kids. And now that the Senate Democrats and House Democrats and House Republicans are all onboard—Senate

Democrats, House Democrats, House Republicans all onboard—we are very close to getting this bill done.

The only ones standing in the way of enacting tax relief right now are Senate Republicans. Everyone else—even House Republicans, hardly known for their moderation—support this tax bill. Respectfully, to my Republican colleagues here in the Senate, it is never a good sign to be more obstructionist than House Republicans on any issue. But that is precisely where our Senate Republican colleagues find themselves in right now. That is where they are.

At yesterday’s Republican weekly lunch, one Senator was passing around pamphlets telling his colleagues to oppose this bill, to oppose even having a debate. They are repeating a whole bunch of false talking points about undocumented immigrants and about discouraging work. They are trying very hard to justify voting no.

But let’s be honest. There is no great mystery behind Senate Republicans opposing a tax bill many of them helped write. Senate Republicans are looking at the calendar, and they have decided they care more about the results of the election than in passing a law. They hope that, if things go their way, they can get a more conservative package sometime in the future, and they are willing to walk away from expanding programs like the child tax credit along the way.

Don’t take it from me. Listen to what my colleague, the senior Senator from Missouri, said yesterday about Republican leadership:

They’re not interested in passing anything, clearly.

“They’re not interested in passing anything, clearly”—what a shame, what a shame.

Senate Republicans love to say they care about families. Yet it seems like most of them will block a bill that expands the child tax credit, lifts half a million kids out of poverty, expands benefits to 16 million children.

Senate Republicans also say they are champions of business. Yet it seems like most of them will block a bill that rewards businesses that invest in R&D, helps pay for new equipment which will promote new jobs, new job growth, and innovation.

I certainly hope I am wrong, Madam President. I hope Republicans seize this opportunity and send a tax bill package to the President’s desk—a bipartisan tax relief bill passed by a majority of House Democrats and House Republicans.

If the American people see that the only reason this tax relief bill fails was because Senate Republicans stood in the way, they are not likely to forget it very soon.

NOMINATION OF MEREDITH A. VACCA

Mr. SCHUMER. On the Vacca nomination, today, the Senate will confirm another exceptional judicial nominee

from New York whom I recommended to President Biden, Meredith Vacca, to serve as district judge for the Western District of New York, the Buffalo and Rochester areas of our State.

Judge Vacca’s confirmation will be a historic moment for Western New York. A proud Korean American, Judge Vacca will be the first Asian American and first woman of color ever to serve in the Western District of New York.

I am proud to say Judge Vacca is a Western New Yorker through and through, a Buffalo Law School graduate, longtime resident of the Rochester area, raised in the suburban town of Greece.

Judge Vacca will bring great talent, experience, and respect for the law to the Western District of New York.

The Western District, as I mentioned, stretches to Buffalo and Rochester and many other counties in Western New York. These are places that have benefited immensely from New York’s great Asian-American community. As the senior Senator from New York and as majority leader, I have always worked to make New York’s Federal bench reflect better the communities it serves. And I know the Presiding Officer and I have worked hand in hand on that noble goal.

Judge Vacca’s nomination will mark another major step toward that goal. Judge Vacca has every quality you could want in a jurist: compassionate, tough, legally astute, with a genuine love for her community. She spent over 15 years as an attorney, prosecutor, and judge fighting for vulnerable New Yorkers.

She has developed a rare institutional knowledge of our State and our country’s laws and will bring tremendous legal expertise and experience to the Western District bench. And notably, once confirmed, Judge Vacca will make the all-male Western District bench 50 percent female, making it one of the few country’s 50 percent female benches. One day, I hope this is the norm across the country.

So I am proud to support Judge Vacca’s nomination, and I look forward to voting to confirm her later today.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

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

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, it has been less than 2 weeks since