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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, March 23, 2020, at 11:30 a.m.

Senate

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2020

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Father, answer us speedily when we don't know which way to turn. Guide us with Your light when we cannot see the way.

Do not hide Your face from our lawmakers as they seek to do Your will, for in the time of trouble, You continue to hide us in Your pavilion. Lord, teach our Senators how to live in a way that will honor You.

We magnify Your Name for the way You have preserved our Nation through the seasons of its existence. You have made us glad, for You are our light and salvation.

We pray in Your glorious 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 1 minute.

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

SENATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am leading negotiations on tax and healthcare issues as part of the third phase of economic relief to help workers, families, and small businesses. We have been working through tough issues, and we must do it in short order.

The American people need Congress to put partisan politics aside and provide them relief as quickly as possible to get the economy turned around, and we must demand this of ourselves as well.

Our multifaceted approach includes recovery checks to Americans, enhanced unemployment insurance, and much needed resources for our healthcare system. This is just one piece of the Senate's comprehensive package; in other words, there are a lot of other Senators who are working in separate arenas to accomplish in that area what I am trying to accomplish through the Finance Committee.

I hope that Democrats and my colleagues in the House of Representatives will work with us to pass our relief package as quickly as possible. This requires all hands on deck.

From what I just said, you might draw the conclusion that fighting this virus pandemic is going to be just a role for the Congress of the United States, as important as that role is, but also, as you read how people are responding, we have to thank a lot of private large and small businesses that we read about that are stepping into this abyss that we call the pandemic.

While we are wringing our hands—and we all ought to be wringing our hands—you read about manufacturing plants of different varieties all over the country converting production to badly needed hospital supplies and testing supplies. You not only read that in the United States of America but you also read about President Macron of France saying that we are in a war-like environment—all joining together to produce these badly needed hospital supplies and testing supplies. You read about the German Chancellor calling unemployed people out to help with harvest because workers who normally come in can't cross borders there.

So we here in Washington might think the only reaction to the pandemic we are in is only something we can do in Congress, as important as that is, but it is also very important that we recognize that there are a lot of people out there in our private sector doing what entrepreneurs normally do—coming to the rescue—and they need to be thanked and recognized as well.

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. SCHUMER. 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

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

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