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Senate

(Legislative day of Tuesday, March 16, 2021)

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable MARTIN HEINRICH, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Father in Heaven, bless our Senators. May they strive to act with integrity. Guide them to listen to the voice of conscience, seeking to please You with their motives as well as their actions. Lord, give them such ethical congruence that their words will be validated by laudable actions. Test their hearts with Your unfailing love, empowering them to become instruments of Your peace. Mighty God, keep their feet on solid ground.

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 (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 17, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARTIN HEINRICH, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. HEINRICH 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.

PPP EXTENSION ACT OF 2021

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, in a second, I will move the PPP bill to the floor. I hope—and I ask our Republican colleagues to cooperate—that we can move this bipartisan PPP proposal without delay. It passed the House overwhelmingly. A vast majority of Democrats and Republicans voted for it. I hope we can move it quickly here in the Senate as it expires on March 31, and there are some changes that were made in the ARP that people need time to adapt to and implement. To allow a lapse would not be the right thing to do for so many of our small business people across the country. So I am hoping that our Republican colleagues will move the bill with the same alacrity with which it passed in the House with an overwhelmingly bipartisan majority. I think there were fewer than 10 votes against it.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 1799

Mr. SCHUMER. With that, Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1799) to amend the Small Business Act and the CARES Act to extend the covered period for the paycheck protection program, and for other purposes.

Mr. SCHUMER. I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will receive its second reading on the next legislative day.

GEORGIA SHOOTINGS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now let me proceed to my remarks.

First, on the terrible tragedy in Georgia, the people of Atlanta, GA, and the surrounding communities were just shocked last night by a series of shootings that left eight people dead, six of whom were of Asian descent.

The motivations behind this devastating tragedy are still unknown, but there is a legitimate concern that these killings may have been racially motivated. Over the past year, the Asian-American community has faced a rising tide of abuse and violence in the wake of COVID–19, driven by ignorance, by misinformation, and by age-old prejudices against the Asian-American community. Tragically, hate crimes against Asian Americans have skyrocketed.

There is bigotry in the land and far too much of it. These dark forces have always existed in America, but, recently, they seem to have been unleashed. The sort of superego that puts

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