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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BEN RAY LUJÁN, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, today, guide our lawmakers to lead blameless lives by doing what is right. Throughout the day, may they repeatedly ask You to guide them in fulfilling Your purposes for our Nation. Lord, empower them to speak the truth from sincere hearts. Help them to trust in Your loving providence as they strive to be Your faithful followers. Grant that their quest for integrity will inspire them to seek Your divine approval and please You in all that they do.

We pray in Your majestic 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 18, 2021.

To the Senate:

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

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. LUJÁN 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—H.R. 1799

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, 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 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. 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.

GEORGIA SHOOTINGS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the Asian-American community is still reeling from the senseless murder of eight people near Atlanta, six of whom were women of Asian descent. It will be some time before we understand what drove the madman who perpetrated this crime, but there is no doubt that abuse, prejudice, and violence against Asian Americans is on the rise, and it is so un-American and so despicable that we all must be speaking out about this.

The same day that six Asian women were killed in Georgia, the Stop AAPI Hate organization released a report naming 3,800 incidents of hate against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and that is just in 1 year alone.

The fear in the Asian-American community and the threat of violence against its members should be a topic of national conversation.

In the last 4 years—you know, we all know there have been forces of racism, dark forces, that have been often seen in America, but the last 4 years, where Donald Trump, at the very minimum, refused to condemn the bigotry in the instances when he should, have allowed them to come far more up to the surface. It is as if the society's superego that keeps these dark forces down has been greatly diminished or even removed.

It is up to us, particularly under the new President, who fights bigotry at every step of the way—but it is up to all of us to speak out against it and to act against it.

The story of the Asian-American community is quintessentially an American story, and we cannot allow the rising tide of bigotry against them, the intolerance against them, the prejudice against them to go unchecked because in a multicultural society like ours, an attack on any one group is an attack on everyone.

I love the Asian-American community. They are such fine, good American people. The story of the Asian-American community is quintessentially an American story. It is a story of coming here, building strong communities, opening local businesses, churches, civic organizations, and slowly but surely gaining the political representation they so deserve.

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

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