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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, You are our God. Please draw near to all who are affected by the violence in Your house of worship in Sutherland Springs, TX. Comfort those who mourn, bring healing to the injured, and shower Your mercy upon us all.

Lord, keep our lawmakers composed even in life's storms. May they acknowledge their need of Your power, Your wisdom, and Your might. May they run toward life's challenges and hardships, knowing that they are never alone. Satisfy their souls with good things, and transform the mundane into the meaningful. Lord, purify their hearts, creating within them a hunger and thirst for righteousness. Reveal to them Your plans for their well-being, providing them with a future and hope.

We pray in Your loving 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Engel nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Steven Andrew Engel, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order of November 2, which notwithstanding rule XXII, be modified to have all executive session cloture motions ripen following the disposition of the Gibson nomination; further, that if cloture is invoked on the Engel nomination, the time postcloture be counted as if invoked at 5:30 p.m. on Monday.

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

TEXAS CHURCH MASS SHOOTING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for most Americans, a church is a place of worship and love, a place where the faithful go to feel mercy and compassion, which is why what happened in Texas yesterday is so difficult for many to comprehend. Why would an individual do this? Families lost so much. Our hearts go out to them in this time of untold grief. Our gratitude goes out to the civilians and first responders who answer the call when others are in need.

As we continue to learn the details of yesterday's tragic events, I, along with all Members of the Senate, will keep the victims of this tragedy and their families in my prayers.

Mr. President, on a completely different matter, last Monday I said the Senate would confirm four excellent

judicial nominees by the end of the week. That is just what we did—Amy Barrett, confirmed; Joan Larsen, confirmed; Allison Eid, confirmed; Stephanos Bibas, confirmed.

After 8 years of a President who selected judges based upon an ideological litmus test designed to find nominees who favor certain groups or individuals over others, we now have a President who is sending over nominees who will ensure that the judiciary is actually living up to the role we expect in our democracy: treating everyone equally, giving every litigant a fair shake, applying the law as it is actually written, not as the judge wishes it might be. The four circuit court nominees the Senate confirmed last week will do just that.

Democrats have put up a lot of procedural roadblocks to prevent the Senate from moving forward all year. We have moved ahead anyway. As a result, despite all the obstacles from the other side, we are making significant progress.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the hard work and notable leadership of Judiciary Committee Chairman CHUCK GRASSLEY, and I want to thank him again for everything he has done.

We are not finished yet. We are going to keep pressing forward on judicial nominees. We are going to keep confirming the other nominees before us as well.

This week the Senate will consider some of President Trump's other qualified nominees for various positions throughout the Federal Government. Each of these individuals will help lead their agencies to fulfill their particular mission in running the government.

First, we will advance the nomination of Steven Engel to serve as Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel. Mr. Engel previously worked in the OLC, having done so under President Bush. He also served as Deputy Assistant Attorney General

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



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