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Senate

The Senate met at 11 a.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.

We have thought, O God, of Your loving-kindness. You have blessed our Nation far more than we deserve. You have provided us with a goodly land of spacious skies and golden waves of grain. You have helped us create a durable government of, by, and for the people. You have protected us through wars and rumors of war.

May our lawmakers show their gratitude for Your loving-kindness by being responsible stewards of Your generous gifts. Give them the wisdom to protect the fragile gift of freedom. Lord, unite them in their commitment to do what is required to keep America one Nation controlled by Your sovereignty, with liberty and justice for all.

We pray in Your great 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it was good to see Democrats finally bring an end to their weeks-long filibuster of the Homeland Security funding bill. Once the measure we voted on

yesterday is complete, the Senate will consider sensible legislation from Senator COLLINS.

The Collins bill is really quite simple. It would protect our democracy from the most egregious example of Executive overreach we saw back in November. It is overreach described by President Obama himself as “ignoring the law.” The Collins measure simply takes the President at his word and helps him follow the law instead of ignoring it.

It is hard to see how any Senator could oppose such a good, common-sense idea. So we look forward to that vote.

NET NEUTRALITY RULE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on a different matter, later today the Obama administration’s FCC will take up a proposal by the President to strike a blow to the future of innovation in our country. It is the so-called net neutrality rule.

The growth of the Internet and the rapid adoption of mobile technology have been a great American success story, and they were made possible by a light regulatory touch. In fact, it is this bipartisan light touch consensus that allowed innovators to develop and sell the products people want and to create the kind of high-quality jobs Americans need without waiting around for government permission.

The Obama administration needs to get beyond its 1930s rotary telephone mindset and embrace the future. That means encouraging innovation, not suffocating it under the weight of an outdated bureaucracy and poorly named regulations such as this one.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the essential Department of Homeland Security faces a shutdown in less than 48 hours. At 12:01 a.m. Saturday morning the government will be forced to shut down the most essential part of our government set up to protect the homeland.

It is really unthinkable that America is less than 2 days away from letting its guard down in the midst of such rampant global terrorism. Yesterday, three Brooklyn men were arrested for joining ISIS. FBI Director Comey said yesterday that his agency is investigating suspected ISIS supporters in every State—all 50 States.

As Republican Congressman PETER KING said:

We can’t allow DHS not [to] be funded. People think we’re crazy. There are terrorist attacks all over the world, and we’re talking about closing down Homeland Security.

And listen to this sentence:

This is like living in the world of the crazy people.

Republican Congressman PETER KING of New York has said that what is going on with the work of the Republicans here in the Senate and the House is like living in the world of crazy people.

Yesterday the Senate voted to begin the process of considering passing a clean Homeland Security funding bill. Without an agreement to speed up the process, a vote on final passage would take place on Sunday. As I said yesterday, we on this side of the aisle are willing to expedite passage of this bill by consent. We are ready to do it right now.

Once a clean full-year funding bill for the Department of Homeland Security is passed and signed into law, we look forward to debating how to best fix our Nation’s broken immigration system, just as we did 20 months ago with the help of the Presiding Officer and others.

Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

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



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