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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. 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.

Almighty God, who has given our lawmakers diversities of talents by the same spirit, use us for Your glory.

Lord, protect our Nation from evil. Prevent the weapons formed against America from prospering, for You remain our refuge and fortress. Continue to be the strength of our lives, as we remember the many times You have preserved us in the past.

Lord, open our eyes to the unfolding of Your providence. Open our minds to Your truth. Open our lips to speak Your wisdom.

We pray in Your Holy 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. TILLIS). The Senator from Iowa.

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

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

SWEET CORN DAYS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, in honor of the Iowa Department of Agriculture's Sweet Corn Days yesterday, I would like to highlight the strong agricultural sector of my State of Iowa.

Many people don't know how you get from the seed to the corn on the cob you are used to seeing on your dinner table. That is one reason, particularly

for city people, that I started the hashtag "Corn Watch" series on my Instagram.

Each week I post an update with the progress of how the crop is growing on my farm in New Hartford, IA. It is a small way to show nonfarmers how Iowa feeds and fuels the world.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

ELECTION SECURITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday the entire Senate had the opportunity to meet in classified session for a briefing on election security. We heard from the Director of National Intelligence, the FBI Director, Acting Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, and other key administration officials about our recent progress and ongoing work to protect our democratic process from interference.

The takeaway was perfectly clear. After 2016, this new administration kicked into high gear. Alongside our efforts in Congress, all levels of government worked proactively to make sure that 2018 was not a repeat of 2016.

Far from letting up, the executive branch is continuing to work hard in advance of next year's Presidential election. We know our adversaries will not be letting up, so we aren't letting up either.

I want to underscore my appreciation for the tremendous work that so many officials across our government have been doing to protect our democracy

and impose costs on adversaries who dare to interfere. Threats remain, but yesterday's briefing was an instructive counterpoint to the doom and gloom hyperbole we often see in the media.

Good news doesn't sell newspapers. Although I doubt it would get much coverage, I am proud of the work of our government and what they have done to shore up our defenses of American democracy and deter foreign influence and interference.

I believe our colleagues feel the same way. At one point during yesterday's briefing, applause broke out in the room for the work of one of our agencies—bipartisan applause in the briefing yesterday about what was done in 2018, after which it was largely incident free.

Many of the details of yesterday's briefing were classified and should remain so, but much of what was discussed were the specific details and the full impact of steps that are already public knowledge.

Here in Congress, we have taken legislative action to enhance interagency coordination on cybersecurity, expedite security clearances for election officials, and allocate hundreds of millions of dollars in direct aid to State election officials—direct aid to State election officials.

With the new resources that we provided, the Department of Homeland Security dramatically strengthened its information sharing and security partnerships with the State and local authorities that operate elections in the United States. Participation came from all 50 States and 1,400 localities, and the direct aid to States helped the authorities who were on the frontlines conducting elections update their systems, strengthen their defenses, and maintain vigilance.

These and other actions have been part of a coordinated, government-wide, Federal, State, and local campaign to shore up our defenses. I would anticipate that every Member who attended the classified briefing likely

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



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