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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 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.

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your Name in all the Earth. You are the giver of everlasting life, and nothing can separate us from Your limitless love. You know us better than we know ourselves, and You work for the good of those who love You. You have given us the privilege to be called Your children.

Give our Senators today a faith sufficient for these challenging times. May their trust in You empower them to solve problems, to conquer temptations, and to live more nearly as they ought. Remind them that all things are possible to those who believe. May their trust in You create in them both the desire and power to do Your will.

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 PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY BILL AND FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, later this morning the Senate will have an opportunity to take decisive action

to address our Nation's devastating prescription opioid and heroin epidemic.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act is good legislation that will help tackle this crisis by expanding education and prevention initiatives, improving treatment programs, and bolstering law enforcement efforts. This authorization bill, in conjunction with the \$400 million appropriated for opioid-specific programs just a few months ago, can make important strides in combating the growing addiction and overdose problem we have seen in every one of our States.

In Kentucky, what we have seen is some of the highest drug overdose rates in the country, and we know all too well that the work that must be done to overcome this crisis lies before us. Kentuckians also know the positive impact this legislation can have.

Let me remind you of what a top anti-drug official from Northern Kentucky said about CARA. She said this bill "will address the growing needs of our communities in getting appropriate treatment to those who are suffering . . . [and] allow individuals, families, and communities to heal from this scourge." So we will keep working hard to build on these efforts so that fewer Americans ever have to know the heartache of drug addiction and overdose.

I appreciate the work of Senators on both sides of the aisle to advance this bill. On the Democratic side, that includes the junior Senator from Rhode Island and the senior Senator from Minnesota. On the Republican side, that includes Senator AYOTTE from New Hampshire. She cares deeply about this issue and has studied the problem carefully. She has seen the effect it has had on her home State, and she has worked hard to do something about it.

Now, of course, today's vote on CARA would not have been possible at all without the leadership and work of

other colleagues. I particularly want to mention Senator PORTMAN from Ohio, who has been involved with this for several years, from the very beginning, in developing this important legislation for our country. He has worked diligently over the past few years as the lead Republican sponsor of this much-needed bill. He has held many meetings and expert conferences to get an even greater understanding of the issue. We appreciate the long hours he has devoted to addressing this national crisis through the legislation we will pass today.

And of course, we thank the senior Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, for everything he has done to make this moment possible. He understands the urgency of addressing this epidemic, and we all appreciate the very important role he played in guiding this legislation to passage.

Indeed, this critical legislation to address America's national drug epidemic languished in a previous Senate Judiciary Committee, but then Chairman GRASSLEY came along. Under a new chairman and a new Republican majority, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act became a real priority. It passed the committee swiftly, and it will pass the Senate today.

Important legislation to help the victims of modern slavery languished in a previous Senate Judiciary Committee, but then Chairman GRASSLEY came along. Under a new chairman and a new Republican majority, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act became a real priority. It passed the committee swiftly, and then it passed the Senate.

The list goes on. Here is the chairman who has worked to give voices to the voiceless. He also has a passion for letting Iowans and the American people be heard. No wonder he is working so hard now to give the people a voice in the direction of the Supreme Court.

The next Supreme Court Justice could dramatically change the direction of the Court and our country for a

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



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