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OF THE
SENATE
OF THE
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA



REGULAR SESSION BEGINNING TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2021

FRIDAY, MARCH 18, 2022

Friday, March 18, 2022
(Local Session)

~~Indicates Matter Stricken~~
Indicates New Matter

The Senate assembled at 11:00 A.M., the hour to which it stood adjourned, and was called to order by the ACTING PRESIDENT, Senator HARPOOTLIAN.

ADDENDUM TO THE JOURNAL

The following remarks by Senator KEVIN JOHNSON were ordered printed in the Journal of February 17, 2022:

Remarks by Senator KEVIN JOHNSON

Members, as I walked over here from the Gressette building a little while ago Senator BRIGHT-MATTHEWS and I were talking about how busy we are and how we have not been getting a lot of rest. I told her, "Because of you I didn't get any sleep last night," and she asked what I was talking about. I told her for some reason I tossed and turned all night thinking about the words she spoke before we adjourned yesterday in reference to House Bill 3620.

During her debate, she stated that she was not going to beg anybody, but as I tossed and turned I thought of something. You know the Temptations had a song back in the day titled, "Ain't Too Proud To Beg". Well, I am not too proud to beg if that is what it takes. I am not trying to change anybody's mind -- as far as how they feel -- but I would like to change some of your minds so we can at least debate this Bill and the merits of it. This is a Bill that has passed in 48 out of 50 states. I do not know everything that we have in common with Wyoming but I do know that we have this Bill in common. We debated a Bill yesterday brought up by Senator YOUNG and I support his Bill as it relates to handheld devices, texting, and talking on the phone while driving. He mentioned that 24 states have passed that Bill. We debated a Medical Marijuana Bill for three or four weeks and he mentioned that over 30 other states have passed that Bill. So now, I'm talking about a Bill today that was passed in 48 states, and not only that, it passed our House of Representatives in a bipartisan fashion with a vote of 70 something to 30 something, and here in the Senate, we can't even get the Bill up for debate. So I thought about it. I know there's a part of the Bill named after our esteemed, distinguished, and late colleague Senator Pinckney but this Bill is about more than what happened at Emmanuel AME

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Church in Charleston. We have a colleague that was killed because of hate. He was not in the House of Representatives nor in the other 48 states that passed this Bill. He served with us. I remember the last day that Senator Pinckney served, I remember being in a Senate Democratic Caucus meeting, and as long as I've known Clementa Pinckney, for whatever reason, I paid more attention to him that day than I had at any other time. I remember sitting across from him in the conference meeting. He had on a sharp black suit and a very nice crisp white shirt, and he looked more distinguished than ever. The Senate Democratic Caucus asked for donations for the custodians that day, so he reached in his pocket and pulled out his part, which was more than what we were asked to donate. They tried to give him the change back and he said, "No, no I want them to have that." He later told us that he had to rush to Charleston because he had a church meeting and Bible study. That was the last time I saw him alive. I know that I have been here for a little while now, not as long as some others, but I have been a member of this Body probably longer than about half of the Senate. During my time here, I do not think I have ever seen a Bill that was objected to by so many members as I have with this Bill. I got up around two or three o'clock this morning, read over the Bill, and said I must be missing something. Senator Pinckney left here that day and went to Charleston. He did not die as a result of a tragic automobile accident, as often as that is the case on I-26. He did not have a massive heart attack or some other type of sudden medical emergency. He died because of hate, just hate, and evilness. You do not have to take my word for it, because the person that committed that tragic crime said so himself. He said he did it because he wanted to start a race war. The church invited that same person in for Bible study. Senator Pinckney was studying the word of God and the word of God is about love. This was an evil hateful act. At least 48 states and the South Carolina House sees that, and those of us who served with Senator Pinckney see that. I looked at the list of us that objected to this Bill, and I think over half of the members that objected were not here as a member of the Senate when this awful act happened. I will tell you, and remind others, that on the first day we came back in session after that awful incident there were some comments made. The Chamber was crowded, with members and staff, and there was not one dry eye in this Chamber because we realized not only did we lose a good member, friend, and brother but also we lost him because of hate in the heart of others. This Bill does not say that every time someone commits a crime it adds this extra punishment. Think about the Ahmaud Arbery

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case in Brunswick, Georgia, which was clearly a crime of hate and the people that committed the crime were found guilty and they will now go on to another step, which will be a hate trial. This Bill just adds five more years of punishment because the crime was based on hate in the heart and over the last several years throughout this country, hate has become more and more visible. It does not say that everything you do is a hate crime. Senator McELVEEN gave a good example with an incident we had in Sumter County, where a young white male somehow got access to a contractor-owned traffic sign that was altered to read, "Honk if you hate Niggers." He used the word hate, and I was told that several people were passing by honking their horns; however, that incident would not fall under this legislation. As I told you, I tossed and turned last night. I just want you to know that all this Bill says is that if you burn a church down, which we've had in Clarendon and Sumter Counties, or you commit a murder like the one we had in Charleston County, then you may be charged. I know that we members know, but for the TV listening audience, this Bill does not only address hate crimes when the victims are black, Jewish, or gay. This Bill will addresses all crimes of hate, yet 22% of this Body will not allow us to debate this Bill. As I said earlier, I could not sleep last night. I feel passionate about this issue, and I just wanted you to know how I feel. Thank you.

ADDENDUM TO THE JOURNAL

The following remarks by Senator HARPOOTLIAN were ordered printed in the Journal of March 8, 2022:

Remarks by Senator HARPOOTLIAN

Thank you, Mr. President. As you may hear from time to time, I am going to bring you greetings from my wife who is not far from the combat zone in Eastern Europe. She is in Slovenia as the United States Ambassador. She is a rule follower and does not share any classified information with me. I am extremely disappointed by that, and as I try to whittle it out of her, she refuses to tell me anything. However, in a conversation I had with her today she indicated she was having lunch with an Iranian Ambassador this week. There is beginning to be a refugee crisis in Hungary as they come south into Yugoslavia and into Slovenia. Slovenia is an EU and NATO country; they are a democracy and extremely prowestern. As a former communist country created in 1991 when Yugoslavia broke into separate pieces, they are literally fighting

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for their lives as you see every night on television. They are concerned, as many of the Eastern and Western European countries are that we, the United States, will not stand up. We have and we are, but they are wondering how long we will be willing to stand up to Putin who is a thug and a dictator. The main reason for that is they view us Westerners -- Americans especially -- as not extraordinarily disciplined or committed. They wonder when gasoline is hitting \$5 a gallon, when the stock market is dropping off by 10%, 700 points last week, whether we will have the will and the resolve to continue to support the fight for freedom. I have indicated, she has indicated, and everybody in the process has indicated that we do have that resolve and we will stick with it. Extremely high gas prices and that drop off in your 401k are literally the price of freedom. Many of you my age have parents. I had a dad who was a bomber pilot in World War II, and while he was over there fighting Hitler, we had gas rationing. You could not buy a new car; you could not buy but so many gallons of gas. Women could not even get silk stockings because all the silk was for the production of parachutes. That is shared sacrifice, and this is one of those times. We need to remember that, and we need to share the sacrifices being made by men and women all over if you do not want to turn on the TV at night and see children being blown up. I think Senator KIMBRELL has relatives in Ukraine; he can tell you the horrors of what is going on over there. We have to stop it. We have to step up out of our comfort zones -- the price of gas, your 401k or whatever -- and make that commitment. I remind you that freedom is not free. It is not free, and the price of freedom you are going to see throughout this process is inflation; the price of gas goes up, inflation goes up and our stock values go down. Thank you.

ADDENDUM TO THE JOURNAL

The following remarks by Senator HARPOOTLIAN were ordered printed in the Journal of March 15, 2022:

Remarks by Senator HARPOOTLIAN

As many of you know, I spent the last two weeks a few hundred miles from Ukraine. My wife was presenting her credentials at a very impressive ceremony with military guards and all the bells and whistles. I was merely her arm candy. I just feel it important to share with you what I saw in this small country -- former communist country part of Yugoslavia. The free market system is flourishing. The people are

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friendly and kind. These same people lived under the oppression of communism. This democracy is what you see in Hungary and many countries where they lived under an authoritarian figure like Stalin, Tito, or now Putin. Over the last week and a half as I watched television, I had an interesting experience in Slovenia. On some channels you could see CNN, BBC and Sky News where you were getting, I thought, a pretty accurate picture of what was occurring and that is an invasion of brutality like we haven't seen in Europe since 1945. I changed the channel to RT (Russian Television) and was shocked to learn the reasons the Russians gave for invading Ukraine and wanting to conquer it. According to Russian Television, massive numbers of Russians that live in the Ukraine were being massacred in a huge genocide and buried in mass graves. Not only were they being massacred, they were being molested, raped, and children were being buried in mass graves. This is not seen on CNN, Sky News or BBC. I am sure the propaganda that Russian Television was putting out inspired some Russians to support Putin, but the people I ran into from former communist countries know what Putin is about and they are ready to resist. They are ready to fight and they are ready to do whatever is necessary to stop this dictator. As we sit here, we are very comfortable; there is no threat to us physically. People over there realize that threat -- they feel that threat, as we all should. I want to commend Senator HUTTO for his comments a few moments ago, but we have to do more than that. We have to understand that those people look to us. They look to this country as the example of how democracy should work and how freedom should work. I think all of us need to understand that these are not just storm clouds on the horizon. These storm clouds could be here if we do not do something. What we have done, what President Biden has done is a beginning, but we are going to have to take much more aggressive action if we are to stop what I think is a psychopathic thug who happens to be running Russia now. It is good to be back.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11:05 A.M., on motion of Senator JACKSON, the Senate adjourned to meet next Tuesday, March 22, 2022, at 12:00 Noon.

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