

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING FOR THE JOINT
CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL
CEREMONIES, 59TH PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION

HEARING

BEFORE THE

JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE
ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

JUNE 30, 2020

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on Inaugural Ceremonies



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JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES

SECOND SESSION

ROY BLUNT, Missouri, *Chairman*

MITCH McCONNELL, Kentucky
AMY KLOBUCHAR, Minnesota

NANCY PELOSI, California
STENY HOYER, Maryland
KEVIN McCARTHY, California

FITZHUGH ELDER IV, *Staff Director*
SONJA MARIA LOHMEYER, *Chief of Inaugural Ceremonies*

**ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING FOR THE JOINT
CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE
ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES, 59TH
PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION**

TUESDAY, JUNE 30, 2020

UNITED STATES SENATE,
JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE
ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:07 a.m., in Room S-207, The Capitol, Hon. Roy Blunt, Chairman of the Committee on Rules and Administration, presiding.

Senators Present: Blunt, McConnell, and Klobuchar.

Representatives Present: Pelosi, Hoyer, and McCarthy.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HONORABLE ROY BLUNT,
CHAIRMAN, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

Senator BLUNT. I call this meeting to order and welcome to my friends from the House and the Senate as we organize to appoint the Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies for the 59th Presidential Inauguration. The first order of business according to the procedures and precedent is as chairman, I yield to Senator Klobuchar—

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Well, thank you, Senator Blunt, for your continued leadership and work on this Inaugural Committee. Our first order of business today is to designate the Chair of the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies for the 59th Presidential Inauguration. I ask unanimous consent to designate Senator Blunt as Chairman.

Senator BLUNT. Is there a second?

Senator MCCONNELL. Second.

Representative PELOSI. Second.

Senator BLUNT. All in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Senator BLUNT. Well, without objection, I am designated as the Chairman.

[Laughter.]

Senator BLUNT. I am glad to have this responsibility one more time. As we start this effort, it is an opportunity for us to show how our country comes together. It is an opportunity for the House, the Senate, and the Supreme Court. Every past President could be there to come together for the Inauguration. Now, in nearly 120 years, the Congress has formed the first—since the Congress

formed the first Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies, it has been our charge, and that has been our bond every 4 years to come together in a non-partisan way—not even a bipartisan way, to host what is really this iconic symbol of democracy.

People watch all over the world as we do this—live. They watch it many other times as it is available, looking back at what happens when this group of Americans comes together for this purpose. As chairman, I will work collaboratively to hold the spirit of our inaugural traditions. There are scopes and complexities here that need to be managed. We are fortunate to have Maria Lohmeyer who managed this effort for our committee last time, to be available to do this again this time.

In a matter of working together, I would have preferred to recognize our principal partners in person. However, honoring our pandemic guidelines, we don't have the same people here we normally have here, but I want to mention who they are and thank them in advance for the great work our partners will do.

The Honorable Paul D. Irving, the 2020 Chairman of the U.S. Capitol Police Board, and Sergeant At Arms for the House of Representatives; the Honorable Michael C. Stenger, member of the U.S. Capitol Police Board and U.S. Senate Sergeant At Arms; the Honorable J. Brett Blanton, member of the U.S. Capitol Police Board and Architect of the Capitol; Chief Steven A. Sund, Chief of the U.S. Capitol Police Department; the Honorable Julie E. Adams, the Secretary of the Senate; Major General Omar Jones IV, Commander of the Joint Force Headquarters National Capital Region and Military District of Washington; Mr. James M. Murray, Director of the U.S. Secret Service; and the Honorable Hugh Nathaniel Halpern, Director of the Government Publishing Office.

Last time we did this, all those people were able to be in the room with us. But on this occasion, we are probably starting to look at the accommodations we may or may not need to make but we certainly need to be prepared for as we move from here to January 20th of next year. The second item on the agenda is to designate the site for the 2021 Presidential Inauguration. Starting with the President Thomas Jefferson in 1801, the Capitol has customarily held the Inauguration at the—the Congress, rather, has customarily held the Inauguration at the United States Capitol.

Since 1981, the Congress has held the Inauguration on the West front. I propose that we continue to plan for the tradition of a full-scale event on the West front of the Capitol, understanding that just like years past, we will develop alternative plans that can be adjusted. Certainly, with the pandemic that we are dealing with right now, we assume that will be an ongoing part of our discussion. Is there a second for the proposal—

Representative PELOSI. Second.

Senator BLUNT. All in favor say, aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Senator BLUNT. Without objection, we will plan to swear our next President in on the West front of the Capitol. The next item on the agenda is the approval of the 2021 JCCIC budget. The total budget for this committee is \$1,500,000, and the money has already been appropriated in the Consolidated Appropriation Act signed on De-

cember 20, 2019. I move the approval of this budget. Is there a second?

Senator McCONNELL. Second.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Second.

Representative PELOSI. Second.

Senator BLUNT. All in favor say, aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Senator BLUNT. Okay. The budget is adopted. I now proceed to designate staff representatives that will meet more frequently than we do. At this time I ask each member of the committee to announce their designated staff representative to the JCCIC. I designate Mr. Fitzhugh Elder as my representative. Speaker Pelosi?

Representative PELOSI. I designate Kate Knudson, our Officer of Protocol on the House side, as my representative.

Senator BLUNT. Leader McConnell?

Senator McCONNELL. I designate Stefanie Muchow.

Senator BLUNT. Senator Klobuchar?

Senator KLOBUCHAR. I designate the staff director, my staff director of the Rules Committee, the very hard working Lindsey Kerr, as my representative.

Senator BLUNT. Leader Hoyer.

Representative HOYER. Another very hard working member of our staffs, Bridget Brennan.

Senator BLUNT. Leader McCarthy.

Representative MCCARTHY. I designate Alexandra Gourdikian DiCicco as my representative.

Senator BLUNT. Well, it is good to know that not only Fitzhugh Elder is hardworking but—

[Laughter.]

Representative McCarthy. He runs the whole thing—

[Laughter.]

Senator BLUNT. Your nominees as well. I'm glad to have that established right here as we move forward. The Joint Committee will meet again in the fall for a ceremony to strike the first nails that formally initiate the construction of the inaugural platform. That contract has already been led by the Architect of the Capitol. The formal business of the organizing committee is complete. Are there any additional statements or questions?

[No response.]

Senator BLUNT. If not, I want to thank all of you for joining today. This is a significant opportunity for us as a country to make a big statement to the rest of the world. I am glad to be involved in it and I am particularly glad to be involved with it with all five of you. I think we will step in front of these podiums now and have the one picture taken that will be the picture of today.

Representative PELOSI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator BLUNT. With that, the committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:14 a.m., the meeting was adjourned.]