The Week Before Recess
Jonny Hiler

’Twas the week before Christmas recess, when all through the House
Not a Member was legislating, not even on the Sage Grouse;
The bills were filed at the desk with care
In hopes that St. Parl soon would be there;
The staff were nestled all snug in their nooks,
With drafts of amendments worked up in their books;
And the Speaker in his glasses, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter’s nap,

When over in the Senate there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my desk to see what was the matter.
Away to the Hill I flew like a flash,
Got through Security, to the Reception Room in a dash.
The glow of the light on the marble floors
Gave the lustre of bipartisanship behind closed doors,
When, what to my wondering ears did I hear,
But a border security “framework” and Ukraine money this year,
With a little old Senator, so lively yet a Boomer,
I knew in a moment it must be Chuck Schumer.

More rapid than Interns his Democrats they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called senators by name:
“Now, Murphy! now, Cornyn! Now, Lankford and Kelly!
On, Tillis! on, Sinema! on, Coons and Shelley!?
To the top of the dais! To the top of the dome!
Now draft away! draft away! before you go home!”
As pointed attacks that before the wild debate grow,
When they meet with a filibuster, fail to show;
So over to the White House the working group they flew,
With a bill full of compromises, and Mitch McConnell too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard a bit of raucous
The snarking and sniping of the House Freedom Caucus.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Through the Rotunda Speaker Johnson came with a bound.
He was dressed all like Christmas, from his head to his toe,
And his clothes were all garnished with crosses that glow;
A folder of demands he had tucked in his arm,
And he looked like a staffer but with more charm.
His spectacles—how they glimmered! his smile how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the position of his Conference no one could know;
The margin of a vote he held slim in his head,
Meant the Senate’s designs would most likely be dead;
He had a kind demeanor and a good head of hair,
That held when he negotiated, like the ruling of the Chair.
He was pleasant and slim, a right jolly young elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;

A smirk on his face and a shake of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;
He spoke not to the press, but went straight to work,
And held his position; without calling anyone a jerk,
After drawing his redlines on the draft in chalk,
And giving a nod, across the Capitol he walked;
He sprang to his Balcony, to his Conference gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
“Happy Congress to all, we love a good fight!”