stand in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:36 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer [Mr. INHOFE].

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

Mr. SESSIONS. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The assistant legislative clerk continued the call of the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, in his capacity as a Senator from Oklahoma, objects.

Objection is heard.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk continued the call of the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The clerk will continue the call of the role.

The assistant legislative clerk continued the call of the roll.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, I ask unanimous consent that Senator MCCAIN, Senator BREAUX, and Senator MURRAY be recognized to speak on the issue of pipeline safety for up to 15 minutes, followed by Senator REID for 9 minutes; Senator MURKOWSKI to be recognized to speak for 20 minutes on energy policy; Senator DURBIN for up to an hour on postcloture debate; and that all time be charged to the postcloture debate. Further, I ask unanimous consent that no action occur during the above described time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I say to my friend from Alaska we would like to proceed on the postcloture debate as rapidly as possible. We have a number of people who want to speak on that. I hope that this afternoon we can move along.

I also ask that the unanimous consent agreement be changed to allow Senator WELLSTONE 5 minutes for purposes of introduction of a bill. He would follow Senator MURKOWSKI.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. The ranking member and the chairman of the committee also asked that following Senator WELLSTONE, Senator HATCH be recognized for 30 minutes and Senator KENNEDY be recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I have another request that Senator THOMAS be recognized for 5 minutes in the order.

Mr. REID. Democrat, Republican; Democrat, Republican.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. That is fair enough to me.

Mr. REID. I ask, further, that Senator BIDEN be allowed 15 minutes. We would also say, if there is a Republican who wishes to stand in before that, or after Senator BIDEN, they be given 15 minutes.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I wonder if I could ask the Presiding Officer—so we will have the clarification of the words—to indicate what the unanimous consent request is.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair would repeat the original unanimous consent request and add to that, Senator WELLSTONE for 5 minutes, Senator HATCH for 30 minutes, Senator KENNEDY for 30 minutes, Senator THOMAS for 5 minutes, Senator BIDEN for 15 minutes, and a Republican to be named later for 15 minutes, alternating from side to side.

That is the amended unanimous consent request.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I believe Senator THOMAS wanted to follow Senator WELLSTONE with 5 minutes.

Mr. REID. That is fine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, thank you.

PIPELINE SAFETY LEGISLATION

Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, I want to take a few minutes to speak to my colleagues in this body as well as to our colleagues in the other body regarding the subject on which the Senate has spent a considerable amount of time; that is, pipeline safety, legislation which passed the Senate by a unanimous vote, with Republicans and Democrats supporting a unanimous consent request to pass this legislation without any dissent and without any arguments against it whatsoever.

On September 9, that bill passed the Senate and is now pending over in the other body where our House colleagues are taking a look at this legislation, trying to figure out what course they should take.

This legislation passed this body by unanimous consent because of the good work for over a year by colleagues in both parties. I particularly commend and thank the chairman, who I understand is coming over from the Commerce Committee, Senator MCCAIN, for his good work and for working with me as a member of the committee but also taking the rather unusual step of inviting other interested Senators to actually participate in the markup in the Commerce Committee.

I credit Senator MCCAIN for making it possible for Senator MURRAY of Washington to come over and actually sit in on the hearings, which is unusual for a Member, to take the time not only to attend to her duties in her own committee but to take time to listen to witnesses in another committee, which she did sitting at the podium with those of us on the Commerce Committee and also participating in asking questions.

It was a good combination between what Senator MCCAIN allowed, which was a little unusual, and what Senator MURRAY was able to participate in because of her strong interest and because of what has happened in her State with the recent tragic accident involving a pipeline which exploded, resulting in the tragic death of individuals from her State.

The result of those hearings was a compromise piece of legislation, which is a 100-percent improvement over the current situation with regard to how we look at the issue of pipeline safety. This is an issue that is extremely important to my State. We have over 40,000 miles of buried natural gas pipelines in the State of Louisiana.

If you look at a map of our State, it shows all of the buried pipelines. It looks like a map of spaghetti in an Italian restaurant because we have pipelines all over our State transporting the largest amount of natural gas coming from the offshore Gulf of Mexico as well as onshore pipelines that distribute gas not just to the constituents of my State but to constituents throughout the United States who depend upon Louisiana for a dependable source of natural gas. Pipelines in Louisiana are important not just to Louisianians but also to people from throughout this Nation.

The bill we have is one that requires periodic pipeline testing. It says if we can do it from an internal inspection, we will do it that way. If that is not possible, we have to do it with what we call a ''direct assessment'' of the lines, which actually means companies would have to dig them up and physically inspect the lines.

We require enhanced operator qualifications to make sure the people who are doing the work are trained and have a background in this particular area. We call for investments in technology to look at better ways of doing what is necessary to ensure their safety.

States would be given an increased role. But I have to say that the primary role would be the Federal Government's because these are interstate pipelines we are talking about under the pipeline safety area.

Communities would also be given increased involvement. I think it is important to let them know where the