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Senate

The Senate met at 1 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JEFF SESSIONS, a Senator from the State of Alabama.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

You have given us much, O God, not because You love us more than others but because You have entrusted us with a stewardship. Help us to faithfully use our gifts to bless others.

As Senators today do the work of freedom, may they invest their talents in uniting our Nation and world. Guide them toward those opportunities that will destroy barriers and remove walls. As they work to bring harmony from discord, may they live lives that lead to peace.

Lord, warm all our hearts with Your love. Enlighten our minds with Your truth, and fill our lives with Your power that we may live for You. We pray in the name of the Prince of Peace. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JEFF SESSIONS 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 6, 2006.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable JEFF SESSIONS, a Senator from the State of Alabama, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. SESSIONS thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today, following my remarks and the remarks of the Democratic leader, we will start a period of morning business. We are expecting that around 2 o'clock today we will begin consideration of the lobbying reform bill. The two bills were reported last week—one by the Rules Committee and the other by the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. We will proceed to the Rules Committee bill and offer a substitute amendment which is a combination of these pieces of legislation. I hope Senators will take advantage of the opportunity today to come down and give statements on lobbying reform.

This afternoon at 5:30 we have three votes on three district court judges. I am not certain we will need a rollcall vote on each of these. But at this point Senators should anticipate up to three rollcall votes at 5:30.

I should remind our colleagues that we have a cloture motion filed on LIHEAP, which was introduced by Senator SNOWE. That cloture vote will occur tomorrow morning. I hope cloture will be invoked and we can complete that bill as quickly as possible and then return to the consideration of the lobbying reform legislation.

We will have votes over the course of the week. I anticipate it is going to be

a busy week, requiring a lot of work on the lobbying reform, on LIHEAP, and other issues that come forward. There are 2 weeks remaining before our next recess. Another issue we will be dealing with in committee this week is the budget. We will be dealing with that before we leave, and issues such as the debt ceiling as well will be dealt with before we leave—a whole range of issues. It will be a busy week as we go forward.

Let me turn to the Democratic leader—I have a brief statement on lobbying reform—if there are any thoughts or questions or comments about scheduling or issues.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we believe it will not be necessary to have a vote on the Puerto Rican judge. We will be able to do that by voice vote. There will be two votes. I am wondering if the leader has an indication as to tomorrow. What will happen after the cloture vote? Do we know yet?

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, we do not know yet. We will have some idea by later today. But I hope cloture will be invoked and that we can complete it as rapidly as possible.

LEGISLATIVE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today the Senate is taking another step forward to make our Government more transparent and more accountable. It will be a very important debate on very substantive issues, issues that affect the operation of this body and our relationships to outside groups.

We will begin debate on the comprehensive lobbying and ethics reform legislation. Over the last few months, we have made steady progress.

The Senate was first to develop a plan. It was the first to establish a working group to examine the issue. It was the first to hold committee hearings and to have a markup—two markups. And today we will be the first to

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



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