

EXTENDING THE LIFE OF THE JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a concurrent resolution at the desk, and I ask that it now be considered.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 2) extending the life of the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, the concurrent resolution is considered and agreed to.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 2) reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 2

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. REAUTHORIZATION OF JOINT COMMITTEE.

Effective from January 3, 2013, the joint committee created by Senate Concurrent Resolution 35 (112th Congress), to make the necessary arrangements for the inauguration of the President-elect and the Vice President-elect of the United States, is continued with the same power and authority provided for in that resolution.

SEC. 2. USE OF CAPITOL.

Effective from January 3, 2013, the provisions of Senate Concurrent Resolution 36 (112th Congress), to authorize the use of the rotunda and Emancipation Hall of the Capitol by the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies in connection with the proceedings and ceremonies conducted for the inauguration of the President-elect and the Vice President-elect of the United States are continued with the same power and authority provided for in that resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote by which the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

FIXING THE HOUR OF DAILY MEETING OF THE SENATE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a resolution at the desk, and I ask that it now be considered.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 3) fixing the hour of daily meeting of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HAGAN). Without objection, the resolution is considered and agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 3) reads as follows:

S. RES. 3

Resolved, That the daily meeting of the Senate be 12 o'clock meridian unless otherwise ordered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I move to reconsider the vote by which the resolution was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I send to the desk, en bloc, 12 unanimous consent requests, and I ask for their immediate consideration en bloc; that the requests be agreed to en bloc, and that they appear separately in the RECORD.

Before the Chair rules, however, I would like to point out that these requests are routine and done at the beginning of each new Congress. They entail issues such as authorizing the Ethics Committee to meet, authorizing the Secretary to receive reports at the desk, establishing leader time each day, and privileges of the floor for the House Parliamentarians.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to agreeing to these unanimous consent requests en bloc?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The unanimous consent requests agreed to en bloc are as follows:

1. That for the duration of the 113th Congress, the Ethics Committee be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate;

2. That for the duration of the 113th Congress, there be a limitation of 15 minutes each upon any rollcall vote, with the warning signal to be sounded at the midway point, beginning at the last 7 1/2 minutes, and when rollcall votes are of 10-minute duration, the warning signal be sounded at the beginning of the last 7 1/2 minutes;

3. That during the 113th Congress, it be in order for the Secretary of the Senate to receive reports at the desk when presented by a Senator at any time during the day of the session of the Senate;

4. That the majority and minority leaders may daily have up to 10 minutes each on each calendar day following the prayer and disposition of the reading of, or the approval of, the Journal;

5. That the Parliamentarian of the House of Representatives and his five assistants be given the privileges of the floor during the 113th Congress;

6. That, notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXVIII, conference reports and statements accompanying them not be printed as Senate reports when such conference reports and statements have been printed as a House report unless specific request is made in the Senate in each instance to have such a report printed;

7. That the Committee on Appropriations be authorized during the 113th Congress to file reports during adjournments or recesses of the Senate on appropriations bills, including joint resolutions, together with any accompanying notices of motions to suspend rule XVI, pursuant to rule V, for the purpose of offering certain amendments to such bills or joint resolutions, which proposed amendments shall be printed;

8. That, for the duration of the 113th Congress, the Secretary of the Senate be authorized to make technical and clerical corrections in the engrossments of all Senate-passed bills and joint resolutions, Senate amendments to House bills and resolutions, Senate amendments to House amendments to Senate bills and resolutions, and Senate amendments to House amendments to Senate amendments to House bills or resolutions;

9. That for the duration of the 113th Congress, when the Senate is in recess or adjournment, the Secretary of the Senate is

authorized to receive messages from the President of the United States, and—with the exception of House bills, joint resolutions, and concurrent resolutions—messages from the House of Representatives; and that they be appropriately referred; and that the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the Acting President pro tempore be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills and joint resolutions;

10. That for the duration of the 113th Congress, Senators be allowed to leave at the desk with the Journal clerk the names of two staff members who will be granted the privilege of the floor during the consideration of the specific matter noted, and that the Sergeant at Arms be instructed to rotate staff members as space allows;

11. That for the duration of the 113th Congress, it be in order to refer treaties and nominations on the day when they are received from the President, even when the Senate has no executive session that day; and

12. That for the duration of the 113th Congress, Senators may be allowed to bring to the desk, bills, joint resolutions, concurrent resolutions, and simple resolutions, for referral to appropriate committees.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the first day for the introduction of bills and joint resolutions in the 113th Congress be Tuesday, January 22, 2013.

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

PROVIDING FOR A CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF THE SENATE AND AN ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. REID. Madam President, there is another concurrent resolution at the desk, and I ask that it be considered at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 3) providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate and an adjournment of the House of Representatives.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the resolution is considered and agreed to.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 3) reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 3

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That when the Senate recesses or adjourns on any day from Friday, January 4, 2013 through Monday, January 21, 2013, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until 12:00 noon on Monday, January 21, 2013, or such other time on that day as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the House adjourns on any legislative day from Friday, January 4, 2013, through Saturday, January 5, 2013, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its

Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2:00 p.m. on Monday, January 14, 2013, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. The Majority Leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, or their respective designees, acting jointly after consultation with the Minority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the Senate and House, respectively, to reassemble at such place and time as they may designate if, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I move to consider the vote by which the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. REID. Madam President, thank you very much for your patience.

CONVENING THE 113TH CONGRESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, it is my pleasure to convene the 113th Congress. I welcome back all my colleagues to a place that we love, the U.S. Senate.

But in particular, I would like to welcome Illinois Senator MARK KIRK. He has been away from us for a year recovering from an illness. We are all grateful for his recovery. He has been an inspiration to us. Today, on the east front of the Capitol, to see him walk up those steps said it all. So we are very proud of him and glad he is back with us.

I also offer a special welcome to the 13 new Members of the Senate. I am confident that each Senator will treasure their memories in this historic legislative body, and that each will serve their State and our Nation with distinction.

All of the Members of this freshman class are accomplished in their own right. I can remember many years ago—30 years ago, Madam President—being a new Member of the House. Speaker O'Neill called us in, in small groups, to talk to us. And he said to each of us: All of you are accomplished or you would not be here. You are all politicians. It is not a bad word. And I say that to all our Senators—the new Senators—that they are all accomplished or they would not be here, and they should all understand that. They should have confidence in moving into this body because they are just as experienced as the rest of us.

I trust that serving in the Senate will be the most rewarding experience of their lives. In this Chamber the 113th Congress will face the most significant challenges of our careers—not just the new Members, all of us.

To turn those challenges into triumphs, I urge all Senators—new and experienced—to draw not only on our varied experience at every level of government and public service, but also on each other's experience, regardless of political party.

Daniel Webster said: "We are all agents of the same supreme power, the people."

Today, as we begin a new Congress, we are afforded the opportunity to reflect upon the successes and failures of past Congresses.

It has been said that the 112th Congress was characterized by some of the sharpest political divisions in memory. But during the last Congress, there were also many commendable examples of compromise. The recent effort to avert the fiscal cliff was an example of both the divisions and the collaborations that mark a moment in history—and it was a moment in history.

Although the process of resolving some of the fiscal issues facing this country was extremely difficult and protracted, in the end our two parties came together to protect America's middle class. That is something of which we should all be proud.

As we advance the debate over the best way to strengthen our economy and reduce our deficit during this Congress, the 113th, Democrats will continue to stand strong for the principle of balance. I am hopeful and confident my Republican colleagues will do the same.

Any future budget agreements must balance the need for thoughtful spending reductions with revenue from the wealthiest among us and closing wasteful tax loopholes.

The 112th Congress, unfortunately, showed that we had some political differences, and these differences prevented us from accomplishing as much as we had hoped during the Congress that was just completed. But we also passed very important legislation, such as the transportation jobs bill. This was important because it kept 2 million people working, and we began the restoration, with that legislation, of our crumbling infrastructure.

We made strides to reduce the Nation's deficit and prevented a tax increase for 98 percent of American families and 97 percent of small businesses. I guess I should have started, Madam President, by telling everyone that the marks that people see on my face—that has nothing to do with the fiscal cliff or the disagreements that Speaker BOEHNER and I had. It is from being very pale and living in the desert most of my life.

We were able to accomplish, as I indicated, many things to reduce the deficit and prevent a tax increase for American families and small businesses.

We reformed our patent system for the first time in six decades, gave small business owners access to the capital they need to compete, and reauthorized the Federal Aviation Administration, keeping 300,000 workers employed. Not a single piece of that legislation became law without the votes of both Democrats and Republicans. All those legislative initiatives I just talked about were bipartisan.

Unfortunately, many other worthy measures that passed the Senate with strong, bipartisan support then languished, awaiting action by the House

of Representatives. In the 113th Congress, it will be incumbent upon the House Republican leadership to allow bipartisan bills passed by the Senate to come to a vote before the full House of Representatives—not before the Republican Members only but before Democrats and Republicans, all 435 Members of the House. Too many good pieces of legislation died over the last 2 years because House Republican leaders insisted on passing legislation with a majority of the majority; that is, only Republicans. Democrats were ignored most of the time. For example, postal reform, the Violence Against Women Act, the farm bill, and relief for the victims of Hurricane Sandy all passed the Senate on a bipartisan basis after extensive deliberation and debate. Yet the House failed to act on all four of these measures, and there were others.

As Speaker BOEHNER saw on New Year's Day, when he allows every Member of the House to vote and not only Republican Members of the House to vote, Congress can enact bills into law. No legislation can pass the Senate without both Democrats and Republicans. During the 113th Congress, the Speaker should strive to make that the rule of the House of Representatives as well.

Still, it is true that the 112th Congress left much undone. That is why we resolve to pick up where we left off in just a few weeks. The first crucial matter we will address will be the long-overdue aid to victims of Hurricane Sandy. I am hopeful that the House will act, as they said, on the 15th. Then when we get back here, we will move on it very quickly.

We need to strive to be more productive, and we will do little if we don't address a major reason for our inefficiency. Simply, the Senate is not working as it should. That is why in the last Congress I made plain that Democrats would do something to fix those issues.

The beginning of a new Congress is customarily a time that the Senate addresses changes to its rules. In the last Congress, Democratic Senators JEFF MERKLEY, TOM UDALL, TOM HARKIN, and SHELDON WHITEHOUSE made the majority's case for change. I commend these passionate leaders. They have made compelling arguments for reform.

In recent months, Senators on both sides of the aisle set about trying to broker a compromise. This group was led by two of the greatest Senators who ever served in this body, the finest and the best, Democratic Senator LEVIN of Michigan and Republican Senator MCCAIN of Arizona. They worked many hours with a group of six other Senators to come up with something they thought would work better, and I so appreciate their work. But in the waning weeks of the last Congress, Senators were justifiably occupied with other matters, including the fiscal cliff. But I believe this matter warrants additional debate during the 113th Congress, which just started.