



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 159

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2013

No. 8

Senate

(Legislative day of Thursday, January 3, 2013)

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable HEIDI HEITKAMP, a Senator from the State of North Dakota.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, we shout praises to You, for Your love never fails. You rescue us from trouble with Your loving and mighty providence. We commend our Nation to Your compassionate care, trusting You to guide it with Your merciful hands.

Bless the work of our Senators. Help them to respect and esteem each other as they struggle together for resolution of complex issues.

Lord, we thank You for the many people working on Capitol Hill who support our lawmakers, serving You faithfully, without public recognition. May we never take for granted their labors for liberty.

We pray in Your gracious Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable HEIDI HEITKAMP 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. LEAHY).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 23, 2013.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable HEIDI HEITKAMP, a Senator from the State of North Dakota, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Ms. HEITKAMP thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

Mr. REID. Madam President, yesterday I had the opportunity to meet with my Democratic Senate caucus for the first time this year. It was the first opportunity for all of us to sit down together, to break bread, and to discuss challenges and opportunities we all face. As the majority leader, I was gratified to see so many new faces and to have such an inclusive caucus. It was music to my ears to hear the announcement that the Presiding Officer today would be HEIDI HEITKAMP.

We have nine new Democratic Senators. Four of these new Senators are women, and so about one-third of our Democratic caucus is now women. We have, for example, the first Asian woman. We have expanded our majority. I am particularly satisfied that with each passing election cycle our caucus better reflects the Nation it serves. But despite the diversity of the caucus—and in particular its freshmen—there is one quality shared by each Democratic Senator: deep and abiding patriotism.

As Governor Adlai Stevenson said:

Patriotism is not short, frenzied outbursts of emotion, but the tranquil and steady dedication of a lifetime.

That is true. Patriotism is not short, frenzied outbursts of emotion, but the tranquil and steady dedication of a lifetime. If we look at the records, the careers of these new Senators, that is the way it is.

Each person coming here reminds me of my first few weeks in the House of Representatives when Tip O'Neill—we had a large incoming class, so he called us in these groups of maybe 15 or so, and he told us something I have always remembered. He said: Each of you are successful politicians or you wouldn't be here. And that is true. I say that to each of my new Senators. They are successful politicians, and there is nothing wrong with the word "politician." I am proud I am a politician. I am proud I serve in government, and we should each be proud.

So I am pleased now, and I was pleased yesterday, to be surrounded by so many dedicated public servants, new Members and old alike, who have devoted their lives to making their individual States and our shared Nation a better place in which to grow up, grow a family, and grow old.

Each new Democratic Member is accomplished, I repeat, in his or her own right. Our new caucus members include a couple of former Governors, a Harvard law professor, an engineer, just to name a few. While they have each accomplished so much already, their greatest achievements are still ahead of them. I know they will look back with satisfaction on the work we do together in the Senate.

Our caucus, this Congress, and our country face immense challenges. As we approach these tests and trials, this diverse group of new Democratic Senators will be united by a single objective: to fight for fairness and balance on behalf of the middle class.

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



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