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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Father Patrick J. Conroy, who is the Chaplain of the U.S. House of Representatives.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day. On this day, help us to discover the power of resting in You and receiving assurance and encouragement in Your amazing grace.

Send Your Spirit down upon the Members of this Senate, who have been entrusted by their fellow Americans with the awesome privilege and responsibility of sustaining the great experiment of democratic self-government.

May they be reminded always of who they are. May they be open to Your inspiration, that they might overcome the temptation to work through the issues of this day on their own strength and cleverness. Grant them wisdom, insight, and vision, that the work they do will be for the betterment of our Nation during a time of struggle for so many millions of Americans. May they earn the trust and respect of those they represent, whether or not they had earned their vote, and make history that expands the great legacy of so many who have served in this Chamber before now—a legacy of noble service, sometimes political risk, but always great leadership.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 301.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 301 (S. 1982) a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11:05 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

At 11:05 a.m. the Senate will resume executive session to consider the nomination of James Moody to be a U.S. district judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

At 11:15 a.m. there will be five roll-call votes in order to confirm a number of district court nominations.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent that there be 2 minutes of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees between the votes in this series.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would also note, these are 10-minute votes after the first one, and we are going to cut them off when the time is up. So if people are late, they are at their peril. We have a lot to do today, and we are

going to move along. It is not fair to Members to keep them waiting around while someone else is finishing a phone call.

Following the disposition of the nomination of Beth Freeman to be a U.S. district judge for the Northern District of California, the Senate will recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate reconvenes at 2:15 p.m., there be an hour of debate equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees prior to a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to S. 1982, the veterans' benefits bill.

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

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

VETERANS HEALTH CARE AND JOB TRAINING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote to advance bipartisan legislation that expands and improves the health care and job training available to our Nation's veterans.

I thank the Senator from Vermont, BERNARD SANDERS, for his leadership on this issue and for his dedication to America's service men and women.

The 19th century British statesman George Canning said: "When our perils are past, shall our gratitude sleep?"

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Although it is clear the world is still a very perilous place, the United States is finally winding down more than a decade of war in Afghanistan, and we are out of Iraq.

Mr. President, our gratitude shall not sleep. It is time to demonstrate the

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



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