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Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Immortal God, You rule the Earth with goodness. Great and marvelous are Your works. Help us so to live that we can be Your instruments for good in our world. Lord, fill our hearts with Your peace and undergird us with the unfolding of Your loving providence.

Bless our Senators. Enlighten and illumine them that they may know You and Your precepts. Touch their lips so that they may speak no words that grieve You. Give them faith for every challenge, strength for every temptation, and wisdom for every perplexity.

We pray in Your majestic Name. 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 PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The majority leader is recognized.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, human trafficking affects every State in this Nation—every single one of them. In Kentucky we have heard reports of victims as young as 2 months old—2-month-old victims of human

trafficking. We heard about a Kentuckian who said she was sold for sex from the age of 5 until she was able to physically break free as an adult. Stories such as these may shock the conscience, but they are hardly unique in our country.

The Judiciary Committee recently heard the story of Aviva, who was barely a teenager when she was kidnapped and forced into modern slavery. Listen to this. Aviva was sold to as many as 10 different men a night. Freedom was stolen from her, innocence ripped away. Aviva's trafficker tried to stamp out everything that made Aviva Aviva. Aviva even forgot what it felt like to be human anymore.

Democrats have said they were in favor of helping victims such as Aviva. Democrats demanded that I bring the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act to the floor. But now that the very legislation is here on the floor, our Democratic friends seem to have changed their tune completely—a totally different tune. Now that they have a chance to actually help the victims, they decided they are more concerned about a few sentences in the bill—a provision they seemed perfectly fine with until just recently. They are more concerned about those few sentences than actually solving the problem the bill would address.

Now, this provision has been included in countless bills they have voted for and cosponsored. It is language they were perfectly happy to endorse again in another bill this very week—2 days ago. But that bill was designed to help doctors, not children enslaved by sex traffickers. So it is OK to vote for that kind of language if you are trying to help doctors, but not OK to vote for that kind of language if you are trying to help these poor young children. Obviously our Democratic friends think that doctors are worthy of their help. What about the victims of modern slavery?

Now, the rationale for this filibuster seems to shift by the day, and it is al-

most incomprehensible. Their foremost concern seems to be about treating this specific kind of money this way, versus treating that specific kind of money that way. It is hard to follow; isn't it? Focusing all their attention not on the victims of these crimes but on financial assessments levied on the people who perpetrate them—the traffickers.

Honestly, I am not sure why anyone would think money collected from criminals ought to get more consideration than money collected from law-abiding taxpayers. What a strange argument. But this is where they have planted their flag. That ridiculous argument is where they have planted their flag.

Their contention is essentially that the victims of trafficking should get no help at all because Democrats say the money they would receive might be considered "private" and that this bill should not pass, therefore, because the bipartisan Hyde principles it contains might apply to those private funds. If that argument sounds contrived and illogical to you, you are not alone.

Now we find out it is not even true. Let me repeat that. The very heart of the Democrats' argument isn't even true. That is what the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service told us just yesterday.

So I would ask my Democratic friends to listen to this closely. CRS, the Congressional Research Service, answered some very straightforward questions posed by the senior Senator from Texas, my friend and colleague Senator CORNYN. Here is what they said to Senator CORNYN: Money deposited in the General Treasury from traffickers, as the Federal law requires, is Federal money, according to CRS.

So let me repeat. The Democrats have been blocking an antislavery bill over money they call private, and they are not even correct about this. Our Democratic colleagues have also blocked this bill because they say Hyde has only applied to annual spending or

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



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