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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.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.

Savior of all, make us patient and kind. Help us to not do to others what we wouldn't want done to us.

Lord, fill the hearts of our Senators with Your overflowing love. Enable them to love their neighbors as You have commanded them to do. Plant within our lawmakers a sure confidence in Your prevailing providence. Renew and refresh them for the challenges of this day. Keep them congenial with their colleagues, ever eager to explore common ground.

We pray in Your great 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. LANKFORD). The majority leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the chairman of the Commerce Committee, Senator THUNE, says that keeping Americans safe from future attacks is a top priority. He is right, of course. From Brussels to Egypt, events around the world underscore the need for stronger security measures for our Nation's air traffic.

That is why I was glad when large bipartisan majorities voted last week to

advance the FAA Reauthorization Act and then to strengthen it further with the most comprehensive airline security reforms in years.

We appreciate Senator THUNE's work with the Aviation Subcommittee chair, Senator AYOTTE, as well as Senators NELSON and CANTWELL, to move an amendment designed to keep passengers safer and to help deter terrorism in airports on U.S. soil. The amendment will help shore up security measures for international flights coming into the United States as well as improve vetting and inspections of airport employees.

I would also like to recognize Senator HEINRICH for his work to include provisions that will increase security measures in prescreening airport zones and expand preparation for active shooter events.

This FAA reauthorization legislation will do more for security than any other in years. It will do more for passengers than any other in years as well.

Don't take my word for it. A consumer columnist for the Washington Post labeled it "one of the most passenger-friendly Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bills in a generation." It includes a number of consumer-friendly provisions, like fee disclosures and refunds for lost bags or services paid for but not received, and does so without imposing choice-limiting regulations or fees and taxes on airline passengers.

This is a good bill and a good example of what can get accomplished with a Senate that is back to work. It would help keep Americans safe, both in our airports and in the skies. It has enjoyed support from both sides of the aisle.

If Members have additional ideas they think might strengthen the bill further, I would again encourage them to work with the bill managers so we can continue moving forward.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, later today the Senate will confirm Waverly Crenshaw to serve as a district judge for the Middle District of Tennessee.

Mr. Crenshaw is a superb nominee with impeccable credentials and a sharp legal mind. He works at a prestigious law firm in Nashville, where he became the first ever African-American partner.

Mr. Crenshaw is well liked by Democrats and well liked by Republicans. His nomination is supported by the Republican Senators from Tennessee, and the Judiciary Committee reported his nomination unanimously.

Waverly Crenshaw's confirmation is desperately needed. The vacancy he will fill in the Middle District of Tennessee is a judicial emergency, meaning there are more cases than the judges in that district can administer.

While I am pleased the Senate will confirm Mr. Crenshaw later today, I wonder why this eminently qualified nominee wasn't confirmed a long time ago. It has been more than a year since President Obama nominated him. The Judiciary Committee reported his nomination unanimously more than 9 months ago.

That a consensus nominee like Waverly Crenshaw had to wait so long to be confirmed is another example—and not a good one—of Senate Republicans' concerted effort to undermine the American judiciary system. The Republican leader and the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee are leading an all-out assault on our Nation's courts by depriving them of qualified judges.

Americans know of Republicans' unprecedented obstruction of President Obama's Supreme Court nominee,

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



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