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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 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.

Almighty God, the refuge of the distressed, thank You that in our troubles You sustain us with Your loving kindness and tender mercy. Forgive us when we neglect to find in You a shelter from life's storms.

Today, fill our Senators with a vibrant faith. Give them complete confidence in Your providential leading. May the fire of Your love consume all things in their lives that displease You. As they are led by Your Spirit, give them Your peace.

We pray in Your sacred 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. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, whether traveling for business or leisure, American passengers want to feel safe and informed when flying. They also want to feel assured that in light of recent terror attacks, more is being done in our airports and in our skies. Chairman THUNE knows this, and that is why he has worked attentively with Members from both sides to put forth

this bipartisan FAA reauthorization and security bill. I appreciate his work with the Aviation Subcommittee chair, Senator AYOTTE, and their counterparts, Senator NELSON and Senator CANTWELL, to move this important bill forward.

There are several good security measures included in the bill, such as increased efforts to prevent cyber security risks and efforts to help better prepare us when it comes to communicable diseases. But these Senators didn't stop there; they worked to include additional safety measures in an amendment that passed by a bipartisan majority.

Here is what we know the amendment will do: It will help prevent the "inside threat" of terrorism by enhancing inspections and vetting of airport employees. It will require a review of perimeter security. It will also improve various efforts to secure international flights coming into our airports.

In addition to these steps designed to ramp up security, we also adopted an amendment from Senator HEINRICH that would increase security in prescreening areas which could be vulnerable to terror attacks. And Senators TOOMEY and CASEY have worked tirelessly to get the Senate to pass an amendment addressing the security of cockpit doors.

These three amendments, put forth by Republicans and Democrats, emphasize the bipartisan nature of this issue and of this bipartisan FAA reauthorization and security bill.

Nearly 60 amendments from both sides were accepted in committee, and more than a dozen from both sides were accepted here on the floor. I encourage Members to continue working across the aisle to move this bill forward.

As the chairman reminded us yesterday, this bill contains the most comprehensive set of aviation security reforms in years. So let's take the next step in passing this legislation and getting it one step closer to becoming law.

TRIBUTE TO CHRISTINE CATUCCI

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, 40 years ago this week, Christine Catucci set out to spend her summer as a tour guide at the Capitol. She still remembers her first day in the summer of 1976. It was a much different time back then, without the screening protocols and limitations on where visitors could go as we have today. Christine parked her car and walked straight up the main Rotunda steps, ready to work.

She didn't have intentions of staying past the summer, much less for four decades. But today, some 16 Sergeants at Arms and 7 Presidential administrations later, Christine is still a smiling, friendly face to those who enter, which is important because, as director of the Senate Appointment Desk, she is often the first person a visitor sees when visiting the Capitol.

As the years have gone by, Christine's responsibilities and admiration for the Senate have grown. She still considers it an honor and a privilege to help those visiting the Capitol, and that is true, she says, "whether it is an official business visitor or a 'starry-eyed' tourist." She says that she loves seeing the awe people have when they visit the Capitol and she is proud to be a part of that experience.

The joy this institution and this career have brought to Christine obviously made a pretty big impact on the love of her life, her daughter Nichole. Nichole works just one floor up from her mom, and in Christine's words, she is "a constant reminder . . . that family comes first."

Today, Christine's Senate family would like to congratulate her on this notable milestone. We thank her for her four decades of steadfast service, and we look forward to seeing the impact she will continue to make here in the Capitol.

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



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