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Senate

The Senate met at 8:15 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHNNY ISAKSON, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we rejoice in Your strength, for You continue to withhold no good thing from those who do what is right. You are our God; be merciful to our Nation and world.

Lord, teach our lawmakers Your ways so that they may live according to Your truth with a purity of heart that honors You. Guide them with Your unfailing love, fortifying them for every challenge. May they never be put to shame, as they strive to live worthy of Your amazing grace. Listen closely to their prayers and provide them with answers to the questions that befuddle them.

And Lord, we thank You for the faithful service of our 2016 spring page class. We are grateful for the creativity, competence, and commitment of these outstanding young people. In all of their tomorrows, do for them more than they can ask or imagine.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 10, 2016.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHNNY ISAKSON, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. ISAKSON thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The majority leader is recognized.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in just a few minutes, the Senate will take another important step toward passing sweeping defense legislation that will support our troops and our national security. It will help drive defense innovation and research. It will authorize pay raises for our servicemembers and modernize retirement benefits. It will help prepare our country to deal with the threats of today and the challenges of tomorrow, and it will help prepare the force that the next Commander in Chief will lead to do so as well.

It is a responsible and important bill. Chairman MCCAIN and Ranking Member REED of Rhode Island have worked relentlessly to manage this bill, and I urge all my colleagues to join me in voting for cloture this morning.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I appreciate the hard work of Senator REED and of course of Senator MCCAIN. They have worked very hard on this bill, but it is not a good bill. I am going to vote against cloture for a lot of reasons. The White House has announced they have scores of reasons to veto the bill, and they will.

I also am concerned about the so-called robust amendment process we were supposed to have under the new Senate leadership. We have Senator GILLIBRAND, who has worked for years. All she wants is a vote, and she hasn't been given that opportunity. We have many other Senators. I know every Senator who has an amendment can't offer it, but, gee whiz, we have had a handful of amendments. I think we have been very outgoing and doing what we can to make sure these managers' packages are approved, but it has been unfair, the whole process. So for that, and many other reasons, I will vote no on cloture.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2943, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2943) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2017 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Pending:

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



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