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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable PATRICK J. TOOMEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Giani Sukhvinder Singh, of Gurdwara Philadelphia Sikh Society, Upper Darby, PA.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

"One Universal Creator God. By The Grace Of The True Guru."

Almighty God, we call You by many names, but You are one. Keep Your Divine Hand over the Members of this Senate as they help steer the future of our great Nation. Keep truth on our tongues, love in our hearts, and sound judgment in our minds. Remind us of our purpose: to love and serve one another and create a more peaceful world.

We ask for blessings unto all leaders as they work for the common good. Give all who govern this land humility and courage, integrity, and compassion. Release each one of us from ego so that we may serve selflessly. Help us remember that we belong to one family.

"Recognize the entire human race as one."

We ask of the Almighty to also keep watch over our Nation's protectors who work tirelessly, day and night, to ensure our safety and our freedom.

You are everywhere; all are Yours. Whatever is seen, O God, is Your form. My Lord, You are but one. We ask You to bless this great Nation and its people.

"In the name of Nanak, find everlasting optimism. With Your will, Almighty God, may there be welfare of all of humanity."

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. GRASSLEY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 16, 2019.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable PATRICK J. TOOMEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,
President pro tempore.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

550TH BIRTHDAY OF GURU NANAK

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise to mark a very special day for the Sikh religion and the Sikh community across America and especially in Pennsylvania—specifically, the birthday of the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak.

Guru Nanak was born into a Hindu household in 1469 in what is now modern-day Pakistan. Guru Nanak showed a keen interest in religion from very early on in his life. He had a real aptitude in his youth for philosophizing and writing poetry. He married, had children, and became an accountant like his father. Yet he always believed in the importance of living a spiritual life. Eventually, he underwent a pro-

found personal transformation to become the religious figure and leader for which he is recognized today.

Guru Nanak's most famous teachings include that there is only one God, that people need not go through an intermediary, such as a priest, to access the one God, and that all people are created equal. He preached that his followers should meditate and remember God, that they should earn an honest living, and that they should share with those who are less fortunate than themselves.

Guru Nanak began teaching the Sikh faith around the year 1500, and with around 30 million adherents, the Sikh faith is the sixth largest religion in the world. Approximately 700,000 Sikhs have chosen to make their homes in the United States. There are several Sikh places of worship, known as gurdwaras, in and around the Philadelphia area, Pittsburgh, Allentown, Erie, and across America.

Next month, on November 12, there will be celebrations at gurdwaras across the globe to mark the 550th birthday of Guru Nanak. In addition, Sikh leaders have come to the Capitol today to commemorate the birthday of Guru Nanak.

A few minutes ago, a giani, or a Sikh religious official, gave a prayer as the Senate opened for business. I am proud that he hails from my State of Pennsylvania. This evening, leaders from the Sikh community will convene an interfaith event to promote the peaceful values that all of the world's major religions share.

This morning, I just wanted to add my voice to wish the Sikh community great luck and great joy with this event and to wish Guru Nanak a happy 550th birthday this year.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

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



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