



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 105th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 144

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 1998

No. 44

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today our prayer will be offered by the guest Chaplain, Dr. Carl F. Schultz, Jr., First Church of Christ Congregational, Glastonbury, CT.

We are glad to have you with us.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, Dr. Carl F. Schultz, Jr., offered the following prayer:

Oh God, Scripture reminds us that those who wait upon You shall renew their strength; they shall walk and not faint. In the confidence of that glorious promise, we wait upon You in prayer with joy and thanksgiving.

O Creator God, we thank You for the gift of this new day. We thank You for the gift of life, full of potential and promise. We thank You for the beauty we see all about us these spring days, as nature comes alive at Your call.

O God of hope, help us to live sustained by Your hope. O God of love, empower us so that our deeds mirror Your love and compassion. O God of wisdom, may our decisions reflect Your truth.

Gracious God, bless each Senator this day, each staff member, each person who serves in this place. Guide, guard, protect, and nudge them to be open to Your spirit.

O God, pour Your power on Your people, that each of us might see ever more clearly what You require, that we might live justly, love mercy and kindness, and walk humbly with You and with one another, till at last justice rolls down like water and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Shalom. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, on behalf of the majority leader, I wish to announce that today at 9:40 a.m. the Senate will resume consideration of S. 414, the ocean shipping reform bill. Under a previous unanimous consent agreement, there will be 20 minutes of debate remaining on the Gorton amendment No. 2287 which is pending to the shipping bill. At 10 a.m., the Senate will proceed to two stacked rollcall votes. The first vote will be on or in relation to the Gorton amendment, followed by a vote on the motion to table the Kennedy amendment No. 2289 to the Coverdell education bill.

Further, the Senate will stand in recess between the hours of 12:30 and 2:15 for the weekly party caucuses. When the Senate reconvenes at 2:15, under a previous unanimous consent agreement, there will be two stacked rollcall votes. The first vote will be on or in relation to the Glenn amendment No. 2017, followed by a vote on or in relation to the Mack-D'Amato amendment No. 2288. Following those votes, Senators should expect further votes throughout Tuesday's session as Members offer and debate their amendments to the Coverdell education bill.

I thank my colleagues for their attention. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SMITH of Oregon). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SHIPPING REFORM

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I am going to take the 2 or 3 minutes we have before we begin the debate on the Gorton amendment just to familiarize my colleagues with the bill that is before us, the Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 1998, and give an overview of the bill.

This is something that I think has been a long time coming. What we are trying to do is open our ports and give our carriers and our shippers more of an opportunity to compete with foreign competitors where they have been at a disadvantage in the past because our markets were so open that they were transparent in their contracts to the extent that many shippers would go to foreign carriers in order to escape the requirement to have so much openness and on the other hand carriers would be able to compete at a disadvantage to our shippers because they knew everything about a contract and they could undercut that contract.

So it has not been a good situation. Particularly our ports that are near Canada or are near Mexico have felt a loss of business because of the competition from the foreign carriers. What we are trying to do is level the playing field for American shippers, American carriers, and try to help American ports get more of the business, which we think, of course, would create more jobs for our port cities.

So what we tried to do was balance the interests. We want transparency. We want openness. But we also want to allow the privacy of contracting to the extent that shippers and carriers can make contracts which they ought to be able to do privately, and as long as everything is open in competition it should be an open marketplace.

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



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