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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable E. BENJAMIN NELSON, a Senator from the State of Nebraska.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, whose presence surrounds us, whose power enables us, whose peace comforts us and whose providence cares for us, we praise You that You are Sovereign of this Nation. The founders of our Nation believed that they derived their powers through You and governed with divinely delegated authority. Through the years of our history, You have raised up great leaders who placed their trust in You and sought Your best for America. Thank You for the Senators who stand in this sacred heritage and prayerfully seek Your will. Continue to grant them humility to ask for Your guidance, the magnanimity to be of one mind and heart as fellow patriots, and the determination to press on to accomplish the urgent work before them. Remind them that millions of Americans are praying for them and that You seek to answer their prayers by renewing their strength and rejuvenating their commitment. Thank You for the women and men of this Senate and for all who work with and for them. Especially today we thank you for the leadership of Sergeant at Arms Alfonso Lenhardt, who today completes this first year of excellent leadership through a challenging time of terrorist attack, anthrax panic, and the ongoing pressures of his crucial assignment as an officer of the Senate. You are our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable E. BENJAMIN NELSON 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. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 4, 2002.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable E. BENJAMIN NELSON, a Senator from the State of Nebraska, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2003

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to the consideration of H.R. 5093. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5093) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2003, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, the leadership has been invited to the White House this morning, and therefore this matter will be somewhat delayed until their return.

My distinguished ranking member, Mr. BURNS, is with me, and we are

going to proceed with statements on the bill, after which I have two or three technical amendments which make corrections, and with the approval of my ranking member on the other side of the aisle, I shall propose those, and perhaps the Senate can move them, accept them, and get them out of the way.

The first amendment I intend to offer will not be offered until the majority leader and the majority whip return.

I am pleased to be joined by my distinguished colleague, the ranking member of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, as we bring before the Senate the Interior appropriations bill for fiscal year 2003. I am very proud of our work on this legislation.

Although this bill is not, in terms of total dollars appropriated, the largest of the 13 annual appropriations bills, it is an exceedingly important bill. It is in this legislation that we support and protect the crown jewels of this Nation, our national parks. The four land management agencies funded through this bill, the National Parks Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management, are responsible for overseeing 628 million acres of land or about one-fourth of the total area of the United States.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service provide educational opportunities and critical health care to more than 1.4 million American Indians. The Department of Energy is charged with developing cutting-edge technology in the areas of fossil energy and energy conservation, and the Smithsonian Institution, along with the arts and humanities endowments, protects and promotes some of our Nation's most enduring cultural resources.

Because the bill and the report have been available for review since June 28, I will not go through each and every account line by line. I will, however, reiterate some of the highlights of the legislation.

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



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