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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Reverend Charles V. Antonicelli, of St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in Washington, DC, is, once again, our guest Chaplain.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we give You thanks and praise at the start of this day. Help us to know Your will. In the words of the Psalmist we pray, "Lord, make me know Your ways. Lord, teach me Your paths. Make me walk in Your truth, and teach me: for You are God my Savior."

Help us Lord, to be as generous with each other as You are with us. Help us to respect and care for all people, even those who are different from us.

Bless and protect Your humble servants in this Senate. Watch over them, their families and their staffs. Keep them from harm and guide them in the ways of Your peace.

We ask this in Your Holy 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 PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1,

the prescription drug benefits bill first thing this morning. There are two amendments currently pending to the bill: an Enzi amendment relating to pharmacies and mail-order prescriptions, and a Bingaman amendment regarding asset tests. These amendments are being reviewed, and we will have one of those votes some time early today. The other we will be voting on over the course of today. In addition, of course, we will be considering other amendments both today and tomorrow.

The chairman and ranking member will continue to work together to try to get Senators to come forth and offer their amendments, or to let them know what those amendments will be so we can establish a queue for those amendments to be considered today, tomorrow, and, indeed, into next week.

I do encourage, as I did yesterday morning, all Members to come forward and let the managers know what amendments they are considering offering. It is important to do so. For example, today we are waiting on one of the amendments to get an official scoring back from the Congressional Budget Office, so even after we hear about the amendments, it takes some time to process them. So it is absolutely critical that we hear from our colleagues in terms of what amendments they intend to offer.

We will have rollcall votes throughout today's session. We will be voting tomorrow as well.

(Ms. MURKOWSKI assumed the Chair.)

JUNETEENTH OBSERVANCE

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, I will comment very briefly on two issues, the first is on the Juneteenth observance.

Madam President, Juneteenth, which is also known as Freedom Day, is the date on which 250,000 slaves living in Texas finally learned of their emancipation. And that occurred nearly 3

years after President Lincoln's historic Emancipation Proclamation.

It was in 1865, on June 19, that Union General Gordon Granger led 2,000 troops into Galveston, TX, with news that the war had ended and that slavery had been abolished. He told the people of Texas:

[T]hat in accordance with a Proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and free laborer.

The celebrations that followed began a 140-year tradition. Today, all across the country, Americans of all races will celebrate with prayer, and picnics, food, family, and friends.

We join them, here on the Senate floor, to celebrate the struggle for freedom and to honor the profound contributions of African Americans to our Nation's culture and history.

MEDICARE REFORM

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, one last issue I wish to speak about now is one we will be talking about today and tomorrow on the floor of this Senate, and that is this whole issue of strengthening and improving Medicare.

Over the last several days, we have used terms such as "actuarial value," and "asset tests." We hear those terms again and again. We use acronyms so often. We talk about PPOs and HMOs and waiting on CBO for scoring. All these are important issues and vital issues, technical issues that are critical to our decisions that must be made, that we are obligated to make and should make to serve seniors in a better way with regard to their health care.

But I do want to step back, just for a second, to set the stage for today's debate, to talk to seniors who might be either watching on C-SPAN or listening on the radio, and try to describe

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



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