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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHN E. SUNUNU, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's prayer will be offered by guest Chaplain Dr. Kathryn Towne, of Lakewood, CO.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Our great and mighty God, today I ask that You be present, O God of Wisdom, and direct the counsel of this Honorable assembly. Enable them to settle things on the best and purest foundation. Make them strong to do the work at hand and to heed Your will. They are empowered to serve the people of the United States. Enable them to do so with great assurance that You are directing them.

"Righteousness exalts a nation." May righteousness inspire every thought, word, and action of this Senate. Their task is great. Thank You for their diligence and long hours given in the endeavor to keep this Nation the greatest on Earth. Truly "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." We are a blessed nation indeed. Thank You, Our Lord. In Your Name I pray. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JOHN E. SUNUNU 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. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 13, 2004.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN E. SUNUNU, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. SUNUNU thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today following my remarks and any remarks from the Democratic leader, we will have a period of morning business for up to 60 minutes. The order provides for the first 30 minutes to be controlled by the minority and the second 30 minutes to be controlled by the majority.

Following the 60-minute period, we will resume consideration of S. 1248, the IDEA—Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—reauthorization bill. Yesterday we made very good progress on the bill and we now have an agreement to finish the bill early this afternoon.

We do have one final outstanding issue on paper reduction, and we should then vote on final passage of the bill. I anticipate passage will occur somewhere between 11:30 and 12:30 today.

I do want to congratulate both managers on their hard work on this very important piece of legislation. I thank them for allowing us to proceed through the legislation under a unanimous consent agreement.

Later today I will also be discussing Executive Calendar nominations with the Democratic leader. I hope to begin

scheduling consideration of those nominations, including the judicial nominees. We will have more to say on the nomination schedule later today.

Finally, I want to remind everyone that next week we will be considering the Department of Defense authorization bill. Senators can expect busy sessions throughout the week, including votes on Monday. That will be late Monday afternoon.

RECOGNITION OF THE ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The assistant majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. If I may make a comment to the majority leader, we have been told this morning Senator BINGAMAN will not offer a second-degree amendment to the Santorum amendment; therefore, the managers will accept the Santorum amendment. So I think all we have left on the IDEA bill is final passage.

Senator KENNEDY is the godfather to his niece or nephew—I really don't remember who it is—but Caroline's child was confirmed and he will not be able to be here until around 11:30 today, so the majority leader should keep that in mind. If we will vote 12:15 or 12:20, if that meets the majority leader's plans, Senator KENNEDY would like to speak before final passage, and, as I indicated, he will not be here until 11:30.

Mr. FRIST. Through the Chair, we are aware of Senator KENNEDY's plans and we will do everything we can to accommodate all Senators. We have a number of people who have engagements this morning and this afternoon, and we will do our best. I think that is consistent, having this vote in the hour we so designated.

PRISONER ABUSE SCANDAL

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I want to comment briefly on two other issues.

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



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