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## Senate

The Senate met at 9:15 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Spirit of love, enlarge our horizons. Give to us this day vistas that lie beyond pessimism and negativity. Enable us to lift our eyes to You, our provider, sustainer, and friend. May we never permit today's challenges to make us forget how powerfully You have led us in the past.

Bless our legislative branch today with Your wisdom. Help our Senators to follow the path that leads to the fulfillment of Your purposes. Inspire them to focus on the priorities that will accomplish the most good for Your glory. Strengthen them to labor with such faithfulness that Your will may be done on Earth as it is done in heaven.

Take war and strife from our world and hasten the day when nations will live in friendship with each other, united by Your sovereignty.

We pray in Your marvelous 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.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

### TAX RELIEF EXTENSION RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2005

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will pro-

ceed to the consideration of H.R. 4297, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4297) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201(b) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2006.

Mr. FRIST. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today, in just a short while, we will begin consideration of the House-passed tax reconciliation bill. As Senators remember, the Senate passed our bill, the Senate bill on November 18. We considered the bill for 3 days and after 17 votes, passed the bill with a 64-to-33 vote. With the two bills now complete, we would normally reach agreement to send them to conference to produce a final conference report. I have had a number of conversations with the Democratic leader on this matter. I know Members on his side of the aisle will object and desire to start the House bill with the 20 hours remaining under the statute. That is their right and that is what we will be doing.

We have already considered the Tax Relief Act of 2005, and it is not my desire to take up any more of the Senate's time on this bill. We do need to move forward and get both bills to conference in order to reach an agreement on final language. That would take unanimous consent and, with objection from the other side, we have no choice but to proceed in the manner that we will, under statute over the next 20

hours. I do ask that Senators on both sides of the aisle use restraint and try not to use their entire block of time.

Much of the discussion that carried on in the quorum call is how we can organize that in such a way to consider amendments appropriately and in a reasonable way. But we should not have to use all 20 hours. We have a lot of other important issues to consider.

In the meantime, we will be on the reconciliation bill throughout the day and the evening and the rest of the week until we finish the measure.

I ask unanimous consent that after the House bill is reported, we begin a period of morning business, as under the order from last night, and further, that following the scheduled morning business period, the bill be open for debate only until later today when either I or the assistant majority leader is recognized.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, I haven't talked specifically to either one of the Republican leaders about this, but I would like that to be amended. We did not clear time for Senator DURBIN to speak as in morning business. I ask unanimous consent that he be allowed to speak in morning business for 15 minutes, and another 15 minutes would be added to the time of the majority, and that the only thing that would be out of the ordinary is that Senator DURBIN would be recognized. The Republicans are to have the first half hour. I ask that Senator DURBIN be recognized for 15 minutes. He has to give a speech. He could be recognized to use his additional 15 minutes when we start morning business.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. We understand that additional half hour would come out of the time on the resolution.

Mr. FRIST. As I understand it, all morning business time, including this additional 30-minute increment, would be part of the 20 hours.

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



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