



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 152

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2006

No. 24

## Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 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.

We receive this day from You, our God, with all of its uniqueness. Thank You for the fresh possibilities and opportunities. Use our lawmakers today as a creative force for good. Give them the discernment to see what new thing You are doing in our day, and the willingness to receive Your guidance. Remind them that to whom much is given, much is expected. May Your love reach out through them to touch our hurting world.

Lord, increase our hunger and thirst for righteousness and freedom.

We pray 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, this morning, following the time for the two leaders, we will have a brief period for closing remarks related to S. 2271, the PATRIOT Act amendments legislation. The vote on passage of that bill is scheduled for 10 a.m. this morning. Immediately following that vote we will recess in order for the Senate to proceed to the House of Representatives for the joint meeting. The purpose of

that 11 a.m. joint meeting is to hear an address by the Prime Minister of Italy. We will return to business following that address at 12 noon to continue work on the PATRIOT Act. We will have a cloture vote on the underlying conference report to accompany the PATRIOT Act legislation.

There are two additional procedural votes that may be requested from the other side of the aisle. We should not need those. I hope we do not have to proceed with those votes so we can expeditiously proceed to the cloture vote. If all of these votes are necessary, we could have three consecutive votes around noon today.

Once cloture is invoked, we wish to work out a time for the adoption of the PATRIOT Act conference report with no further delay.

In addition to the PATRIOT Act, we are working on a process to consider the LIHEAP bill introduced by the senior Senator from Maine. Yesterday I filed a cloture motion on the motion to proceed to that bill. I hope that will not be necessary, but I will continue to consult with Senators about a process that allows the Senate to vote on the underlying LIHEAP issue. In the meantime, this cloture vote would occur tomorrow unless some other agreement is worked out.

Again, I remind our colleagues to be prompt for this morning's vote so we can recess on time and proceed to the joint meeting.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

### SENATE SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I hope it is not necessary to have cloture on the LIHEAP matter. It has been cleared on our side and I understand the distinguished Senator from Tennessee is

doing everything he can to have it cleared on his side. If the cloture vote is necessary, we will move forward as rapidly as possible. It is something we need to do. Both Senator FRIST and I have committed to move this bill as quickly as we can. I hope that can be done.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, could I ask, through the Chair to the Democratic leader, to express an opinion first, and that is we absolutely have to proceed with this pensions legislation. I know my distinguished colleague has come to the floor and said certain things about why we are not proceeding to conference, but it does come down to the fact that in November we passed this bill and the House passed it about a month later. At that point in time I said the conferees would be seven and five. As the Democratic leader knows, that is, after consultation—with consultation to the Democratic leader—the prerogative of the majority leader. I have been consistent with that.

We have waited a couple of months for a response and the Democratic leader has given us a response, but the response is that it is unacceptable, we need more people—because of things going on within their caucus.

I think it is time to stop—both. Everybody stop playing games and let's get to conference. It is an important issue. We had this April 15 deadline. We finished work on the floor now 3 months ago, and yet we had this bickering about the number of conferees. I know it is tough. We have been in conversation about what those numbers should be. It is going to be 7 to 5. And it is tough. The tax reconciliation bill we just did was 2 to 1. It is always tough, telling our fellow Senators that, no, you can't be on this conference report because we want a reasonable number of people.

I would make another plea that we proceed, that the other side of the aisle

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S1555