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Senate

The Senate met at 2:05 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHN CORNYN, a Senator from the State of Texas.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O, maker of the seas and the Earth, speak to our hearts. Teach us to cling to the things that endure beyond time. When we are tempted to doubt, remind us of Your unfailing precepts. Sustain our lawmakers today in their important work. Help them to sacrifice and not to count the cost; to toil and not to seek for rest; to strive and not to ask for any reward except that of knowing they are doing Your will.

Use them today to do all the good they can for as many as they can for the honor of Your Name.

Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JOHN CORNYN 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 assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 15, 2006.

To the Senate:

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

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this afternoon we begin consideration of S. 2611, a comprehensive immigration measure. Chairman SPECTER is here today to manage amendments to the bill. We have several Senators on this side of the aisle who have indicated they are prepared to pose their amendments during today's session. I encourage Members to come forward and bring their amendments to the managers just as soon as possible so that we will be able to consider them. Exactly how we handle amendments over the course of the afternoon, the Democratic leader and I and the chairman and managers will be discussing in a few minutes. We do expect a full session on the immigration bill today.

On Tuesday we have an order to have a rollcall vote at shortly after 10 o'clock on the confirmation of a circuit court nomination. I expect after that we would have some other votes that could be stacked and voted upon before our policy luncheons.

I do want to say, once again, that we need Senators to offer their amendments, to give us language on their amendments just as soon as possible. The debate itself will be fair, will be dignified. We have all agreed we want to be able to dispose of these amendments in a way that allows time for effective debate, whatever time is necessary for a debate, but that we would expect to be voting about every 2 hours—and that could go to 3 hours on some and could go to 10 minutes on others. But in order to consider the

range and number of amendments that have been proposed, we do need people to come forward and we will deal with those accordingly.

This is an important bill. It is a bill that we have talked a lot about on the floor for a couple of weeks already. There has been much good discussion, both on and off the Senate floor. I think everybody has spent a lot more time with the bill and with the proposed amendments. Thus, I think we should be able to address the issue in a careful, deliberate way, a complete way, and finish this bill before Memorial Day.

It is an important bill. It is an important bill to our national security. It is an important bill to our values, to our economy, and to our safety.

I have a brief statement to make on another topic, but I turn to the Democratic leader, if there is any comment on scheduling, of course.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The distinguished Democratic leader is recognized.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, very briefly, we have in this most important debate two veterans of the Senate, to say the least, Senators SPECTER and LEAHY, who will be managing this bill. I agree with the distinguished majority leader. This debate should be dignified. People have very strong feelings about issues. I look forward to some very pronounced debate and voting.

We have had a lot of talk about the need to do immigration. Now is the opportunity to see what we can do. I met with my staff today, and I asked them to prioritize our amendments. We worked through some of those, which ones we want to offer first, second, third. I am sure that has been done on

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



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