



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 152

WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, MAY 19, 2006

No. 63

Senate

The Senate met at 10 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:

May we pray.

O Sovereign Lord, make even our thoughts pleasing to You. Banish bitter thoughts that erect walls between people. Banish proud thoughts that prompt us to become preoccupied with power and prestige. Banish selfish thoughts that keep us from hearing the cries of the marginalized. Banish impure thoughts that would tempt us to dishonor You.

Control the minds of our Senators. Infuse them with the peace that comes from reflecting on Your purposes. Give them pure and loving thoughts that will empower them to serve You by serving others.

We pray in Your powerful 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, today we return to the comprehensive immigration bill. We had a very constructive day and evening yesterday. I appreciate everyone's patience and participation in moving the debate along. We worked late last night, up to about 11 o'clock, and we had votes over the

course of the day and the night. Because of that, and our agreement for multiple votes on Monday afternoon, we were able to announce no rollcall votes for today.

I do encourage Members to take advantage of the session today if they desire to speak on the immigration legislation, to look over amendments that are likely to be proposed, and to spend time getting ready for those amendments once they reach the floor. Today would be a great opportunity to come to speak on some of those amendments in advance as well.

It is my intention to complete action on the bill next week, and it would expedite the process if Members would use the time productively today and Monday.

BROADCAST DECENCY ENFORCEMENT ACT

Mr. FRIST. I want to comment on a couple of issues and take advantage of the time that we have this morning.

Late last night, in closing, we passed the Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act to address abuses and potential abuses in the broadcast arena and to raise indecency fines by a factor of 10.

We told broadcasters in a loud and direct and unanimous voice—it was a unanimous vote last night: Clean up your act or face the consequences.

When families are watching Sunday night football games, they should not have to brace themselves for a televised striptease. I am, of course, referring to Janet Jackson's infamous "wardrobe malfunction" during that 2004 Super Bowl.

While this particular incident represented a new low in broadcasting, unfortunately, as all of us know who do watch television regularly, it was not an isolated incident. Numerous studies have shown that prime-time network programming is growing, has grown, and continues to grow over time increasingly coarse, even during the

evening family hour when children are most likely to be watching TV either by themselves or with their other family members or parents.

That Super Bowl stunt was just the latest in the ever-worsening attempts to grab out commercial attention. It is obvious why this tried to appeal to a low, broad, very coarse common denominator—to make people look, and to make people look to increase those commercial ratings and thus end up accumulating more money.

Between the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 p.m., when there is a reasonable chance that children are watching, broadcasters are required to keep television clean. The requirement is there. Families should be able to turn on that television during that period of time and trust the broadcasters to abide by the law. Broadcasters should know that if they cross the line the penalties will be serious. That is why this legislation is so important.

Broadcasting has become such big business that, steadily, the current FCC fines have become a little drop in this sloshing bucket of profits. This bill, the bill we passed late last night, the Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act, will help change all of that. The fact is, airwaves are a limited natural resource that we, in essence, all own.

In return for free access to this limited space, this limited supply, broadcasters are obligated to serve the public's interest. If adults want to watch adult material in the middle of the day, there are plenty of pay stations they can go out and purchase so they can see that material. And late at night, between 10 o'clock and 6 a.m., the FCC rules allow a safe harbor for material adults can handle but kids really should not be seeing. When they know kids are watching on free TV, broadcasters should not be able to shrug their shoulders, to look the other way, to disobey the rules.

I hope to see the decency bill we passed last night become actual law

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



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