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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARIA CANTWELL, a Senator from the State of Washington.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, evermore creating: About us today are needs unattended and problems unsolved. Use the hearts and hands of our lawmakers to lift burdens and liberate lives. Give our Senators the wisdom that will lead them to know what must be done to make a better world. Open their ears to hear the cries of those on life's margins. Infuse them with courage to act by bringing relief and release to those who are bruised by life's storms. Whisper words of counsel to our leaders, particularly during their moments of important decisionmaking. As they seek to honor You, give them a deeper understanding of Your ways.

And, Lord, help them to do the very best they can each day, leaving the results to You.

We end this prayer by asking You to comfort those affected by the tragedy at Virginia Tech.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARIA CANTWELL 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 read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington DC, April 16, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule 1, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARIA CANTWELL, a Senator from the State of Washington, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Ms. CANTWELL 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. REID. Madam President, today the Senate will conduct morning business for a period of 60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 372, the Intelligence authorization bill.

Once the Senate resumes the bill, Senator ROCKEFELLER, the majority manager, will be recognized to offer a managers' amendment on behalf of himself and Senator BOND. A cloture vote on the bill will occur this afternoon at 5:30. That will be the first vote of the week. Members have until 2:30 to file any first-degree amendments.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent that Members have until 5 p.m. today to file second-degree amendments.

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

Mr. REID. Also, during today's session I will move to proceed to S. 3, the prescription drug bill that was reported by the Finance Committee last evening.

I ask unanimous consent, regarding any germane and timely filed first-degree amendment under rule XXII, with respect to cloture on S. 372, that it be in order for the amendment instruction line to be modified to comport to the managers' amendment.

Before the Chair rules on my request, I make this request since we are in a situation where the managers will offer an amendment at 3 p.m., which must be filed by 2:30, the filing deadline for first-degree amendments, and Members will not have an opportunity to review the amendment prior to the time for filing their amendments.

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

TRAGEDY AT VIRGINIA TECH

Mr. REID. Madam President, as mentioned in the prayer by Admiral Black, today America suffered a tragedy that defies our ability to comprehend. The news out of Virginia Tech and Blacksburg is still breaking. We don't know yet all the facts except there are 22 dead, at least 28 wounded. But what we do know breaks our hearts and shakes us to our very core. For now, we can only offer our thoughts and our prayers in our individual ways.

One of my good friends is the athletic director of Virginia Tech. He formerly was the athletic director at UNLV—Jim Weaver, a wonderful man. He has done such a great job with that program. The Virginia Tech program has received such notoriety—positive in recent years because of their athletic program. They also have a great academic program.

We all pray for the students, faculty members, and the families of the Virginia Tech community and do hope for a speedy recovery of the wounded.

We pray that America can find the strength, which we will find, to overcome our grief and outrage as we face yet another tragedy.

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



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