



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JULY 11, 2007

No. 110

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, thank You for Your mercies. You bless us with Your presence and inspire us with new opportunities. You strengthen us with the gift of friends and protect us from the pitfalls of temptation. You have given us clean hearts and renewed right spirits within us.

Today, bless the Members of this body as they seek to live with gratitude. Use them to open new doors of possibility for the discouraged and to bolster the courage of those sorely tested by life. Make them a force that will unify and not divide, that will heal and not hurt. Give them a sense of partnership with You in seeking Your best for all of life's seasons.

We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN 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. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 11, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. CARDIN 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. Mr. President, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour. The majority will control the first half, the Republicans the second half. At 10:30 this morning, the Senate will resume the Department of Defense authorization bill. There will be 1 hour of debate on the motion to invoke cloture on the Webb amendment. That debate time will be divided and controlled between Chairman LEVIN and Senator MCCAIN. The minority leader will have 10 minutes under his control at 11:10. I will control the final 10 minutes starting at 11:20. The vote on cloture will occur at 11:30 this morning. As a reminder to Members, they have until 10:30 this morning to file any second-degree amendments regarding the Webb amendment.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

60-VOTE THRESHOLD

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, let me add to the comments of my good friend, the majority leader. I think we would have a better chance of moving this bill along if we could do what we have done on every other Iraq debate we have had this year, which is to simply enter into an agreement for a series of votes. If we end up in the position of filing cloture on every amendment, it is going to be quite a lengthy process and considerably inconvenient to both sides.

I hope after the vote this morning, we will get back to the way we have dealt with these issues in the past, which is through concurrence and agreement. A series of votes, obviously, with a 60-vote threshold—this is the Senate; that is the way we have done it all year—would be fair to both sides and give both sides an opportunity to express themselves on the most important issue of our national defense.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader.

WEBB AMENDMENT 2012

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I say through the Chair to my good friend, the distinguished Republican leader, a 60-vote threshold on everything is something that is new as a result of a minority that is forcing us to have cloture on virtually everything we do. If we go back and look at the Defense bill last year, there were no cloture votes except on final passage of the bill. All amendments were simple majorities, and a significant number of them dealt with Iraq. The 60-vote requirement is something that is new and has been brought about by this new minority. It is something we didn't do last year. We shouldn't do it this year.

The Webb amendment is a simple amendment. It says that if you are in country—let's say a soldier is in Iraq for 15 months. He has to come home

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



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