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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JACK REED, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Lord God Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, Creator of humanity, bless our lawmakers today as they seek to do Your will. Guide them through this day by Your higher wisdom. Answer every prayer in this Chamber uttered or unexpressed, according to each particular need.

As our Senators labor, help them to move with alacrity, to be patient when they must wait, and to make decisions only when Your answer has become clear. Guard their hearts and minds with a peace that passes understanding.

We pray in the Redeemer's Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JACK REED 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 assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

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

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JACK REED, a Senator

from the State of Rhode Island, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate will be in a period of morning business. I ask unanimous consent that it be a full hour of morning business because I am going to have to go into a quorum call in a minute to wait for one of my colleagues to come. We have some business to transact in the Senate, and I want to make sure there is somebody here to do that. So I ask unanimous consent that there be a full hour of morning business.

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Today, when we finish morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the Department of Defense authorization bill. As we announced, there will be no rollcall votes tonight. This is the only Monday or Friday during this work period there will be no rollcall votes, unless we are able to get work done that we do not expect to get done that soon.

The amount of work we have to do this work period is significant. As I have indicated, we want to do what we can to finish this Defense authorization bill. We want to do the Homeland Security appropriations bill. We want to be able to complete reconciliation, which is for higher education. We have

SCHIP, for which there is a bipartisan agreement that will be reported out of the committee, I understand, tomorrow, which has been worked on for weeks and weeks by Senators BAUCUS, GRASSLEY, ROCKEFELLER, and HATCH. They have agreed on a bipartisan arrangement. In fact, it may have been—I do not know if it was reported out last week, but I do know there is good bipartisan support on that legislation. Some people believe it is not enough money, the \$35 billion, some think it is too much, but it is bipartisan, and Senator HATCH has contacted the President, that the President would reconsider his threat to veto that bill.

We also have to do the 9/11 Commission recommendations conference report. It is my understanding the House is going to appoint conferees on that today. There has been a lot of work done preconference on that with Democrats and Republicans working together. I think that will work out very well.

We still have the holdup with the ethics and lobbying reform. I do hope we can get that done. We will get it done. It may take a number of cloture votes, but we are going to finish that before the August recess. It would be to the advantage of everyone here to get that done. The staff of Senator MCCONNELL and my staff have worked very hard to see what they can do to help the various committees that are involved in this issue. It is now being held up. I hope this can be worked out. I have reached out to Senator DEMINT, who is the person at this stage holding it up on behalf of the Republicans. He, at this stage, has not been willing to change his position, which is very unfortunate because it is important we work out the earmarking provisions in this bill in conference. We cannot jam something into the process here, where you have the House with one rule, the Senate with another rule, and you go to conference and you wind up in no-man's land. We have to work out something.

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



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