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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Chaplain MAJ Jonathan Etterbeek, from the 32nd Medical Brigade at Fort Sam Houston, TX.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Will you pray with me, please.

Almighty God, I ask Your blessing upon today's session of the Senate. Grant Your guidance and wisdom upon our legislators and their staffs in their decisions and deliberations. Let this legislative body exemplify the value-based, principle-centered leadership that is reflective of the diversity and inclusivity of the American people. Let integrity and personal courage be the hallmarks of their selfless service to the Nation.

Lord, I ask a special blessing upon our military children with autism during this month of the Military Child and National Autism Awareness Month. Let us honor the sacrifices of our military parents by providing the best possible care for our military children, especially those who suffer from autism. Spiritually edify us to live justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly with You, O God.

In Your Holy name I pray. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND 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 bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 30, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

Mr. REID. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following the remarks of the two leaders, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for up to an hour. Senators will be allowed to speak during that time for up to 10 minutes each. The majority will control the first 30 minutes, the Republicans will control the next 30 minutes.

Following morning business, the Senate will begin consideration of the mortgage foreclosure and enhancement mortgage credit legislation. Senator

DURBIN will be recognized to offer an amendment with reference to mortgage modification—the bankruptcy provision. There will be up to 4 hours of debate on that issue equally divided. There will be an affirmative 60-vote threshold on that amendment. Senators, therefore, should expect the first vote between 2:30 and 3:30 this afternoon.

Upon disposition of that amendment, Senator DODD will be recognized to offer a Dodd-Shelby substitute amendment. The Senate will then proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Thomas Strickland to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife. There will be up to 3 hours for debate with respect to the Strickland nomination, 1 hour for the majority, 2 hours for the Republicans, with Senator BUNNING controlling 30 minutes of Republican time. Confirmation of the Strickland nomination is also subject to an affirmative 60-vote threshold.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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

OBAMA GUANTANAMO POLICY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, today the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State will appear before the Appropriations Committee to support the administration's request for funding to execute our combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. They will be explaining the need to expend more than \$80 billion in our efforts to defeat the Taliban, al-Qaida, and to preserve our security gains in Iraq.

The administration's request also includes \$80 million to close the secure detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. Yet rather than appear before the Senate to explain why these funds are necessary, and what the administration

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



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