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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JIM WEBB, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, forever and ever our Lord, today be the Lord of our thoughts, feelings, hopes, and joys. Bless the Members of this body. Help them to walk in Your way, live in Your will, and achieve Your purposes. May their work today be a bright reflection on their commitment to Your will. Lord, make them great enough for these days. Deliver them from pride and pettiness, as You join them to those who seek to bring sense and system to a disordered world. Give them an inner calm, undisturbed by any outer commotion, and encourage them to follow your light that illumines the path ahead. Remind them that You will use everything that happens for their growth and for Your glory.

We pray in the Redeemer's Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JIM WEBB 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, October 13, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JIM WEBB, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WEBB 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. Following leader remarks, there will be a period of morning business until 3 p.m. today with Senators permitted to speak during that time for 10 minutes each. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the Commerce-Justice-State Appropriations Act. At 5:30 today, the Senate will vote on the substitute amendment regarding cloture on the CJS appropriations bill. This afternoon the managers will continue to work on an agreement to limit amendments to the bill. If agreement is reached, we may not need to have a cloture vote. However, we will still have a vote at 5:30.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 3548, H.R. 3590, S. 1772

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding there are three bills at the desk due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3548) to amend the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008, to provide

for the temporary availability of certain additional emergency unemployment compensation, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 3590) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the first-time homebuyers credit in the case of members of the Armed Forces and certain other Federal employees, and for other purposes.

A bill (S. 1772) to require that all legislative matters be available and fully scored by CBO 72 hours before consideration by any subcommittee or committee of the Senate or on the floor of the Senate.

Mr. REID. I object to any further proceedings with respect to these bills en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bills will be placed on the calendar.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, is there anything more tragic than a preventable catastrophe? Probably not. What is more shameful than having the ability to stop a disaster and not using that power? Ancient and recent history is saturated with examples of nations standing idly by while threats escalate and storm clouds gather on the horizon. Too many times we have learned by example what not to do when we see tragedy pass before our eyes. Today is no different.

Today we face two kinds of preventable tragedies—one on a personal scale and one on a national scale. There are preventable deaths. There are examples of preventable deaths in every city in Nevada and every State in the Union. Stories of preventable deaths fill our mail boxes and our media.

In many of these cases we can draw a direct line from an American's death to the lack of decent health care. In almost all of those cases, we can draw another direct line from their lack of decent health care to our broken health insurance system.

A startling new book by T.R. Reid called "The Healing of America" traces his travels throughout the developed world and contrasts our health care

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



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