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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m., and was called to order by the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God our strength, You fulfill the desires of those who trust in You. You are great in power and infinite in understanding. Give our lawmakers today a sense of Your nearness. May they open their hearts to Your presence, their minds to Your precepts, and their willingness to Your providence. Remind them, Lord, that You are the source of their abilities and the one who opens doors of opportunity that will keep this Nation strong. Dwell with them and make them productive for Your glory. We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN 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. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 8, 2011.

To the Senate:

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

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. SHAHEEN 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, following leader remarks the Senate will resume consideration of the Federal Aviation Administration Authority bill. At 10:20 there will be up to 10 minutes of debate equally divided on the Nelson of Florida amendment—that is amendment No. 34—regarding NASA.

Senators should expect a rollcall vote at approximately 10:30 in relation to the Nelson of Florida amendment. Today will be only a short session in order to accommodate the Senators attending the Democratic issues conference.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION

Mr. REID. Madam President, I had a conversation last night with the Republican leader. For all Senators, we need to have amendments on this bill, the FAA bill, laid down. We all know there is a lot of feigning going on around here, a little posturing. We still have one issue left that deals with slots at airports. It is not going to be resolved. We have worked on this for years, and it will not be resolved except on the Senate floor. If it is not resolved and we do not have amendments laid down, taken care of, I will file cloture on this bill on Monday.

It is a shame. I wish I could blame the Republicans for the impasse, but it is both parties. We have people on both sides of the aisle who are trying to take advantage, as they see it, on this slot issue. This is an extremely impor-

tant piece of legislation. I know the slots to individual Senators is important. But it is not important enough to hold up this bill. We have been trying for years—years—to get this bill passed. This will create or save 280,000 jobs. It will improve the safety of our air travels. It will give rights to people who are flying who do not have those rights. We have a passengers' bill of rights. It is a shame this one issue is holding up this bill.

I repeat, if we do not have this matter resolved Monday, I am filing cloture on this bill. We have to complete this legislation. Before we leave for our President's Day recess to go back to work in our States, we also have the FISA legislation that is a must. It expires. We have to take care of that before we leave. Of course, we have many other issues, but those are the two I am concerned about today. We have to pass the FAA bill, and we have to take care of the FISA legislation again.

So I would hope everyone understands that we are not going to be playing around with this slot issue for another year. This bill has to pass, and there is one way we can solve it: people offer their amendments, and we will vote on them right down here in the well.

I heard yesterday there are meetings going on to try to resolve this issue. These meetings have been going on for months and months and months, and they have held up this legislation. That is unfair. So I tell everyone, we have to move forward on this legislation, and if we do not have this issue worked out by Monday I am going to file cloture on this bill. It is a shame.

I repeat, this is a bipartisan bill. This is not something that Republicans are trying to hold up or Democrats are trying to jam through. This is a bill that Democrats and Republicans believe is for the best interests of our country.

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

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

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



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