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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

### PRAYER

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

Eternal Savior, creator of the world, give us this day a sense of Your majesty. Fill our lawmakers with faith in Your power to help them solve the pressing problems of our time. Lord, enable them to meet their responsibilities with courage and optimism, looking always to You as a guardian and guide. When life's pressures overwhelm, give them patience and the joy of experiencing Your peace and love.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM UDALL 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, June 23, 2011.

To the Senate:

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

DANIEL K. INOUE,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

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

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

### KENTUCKY STORMS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, people in my hometown of Louisville, KY, are still recovering this morning from a series of storms and possible tornadoes last night that inflicted considerable damage across the city, including at the historic Churchill Downs racetrack, home of the Kentucky Derby.

More than 600 Louisvillians were without power this morning after thousands lost power yesterday. The storms did their worst at Churchill Downs in South Louisville, where there were reports of funnel clouds, and some barns were destroyed, sending many horses running loose. In many parts of the city, there were downed power lines. The storms also did considerable damage near my alma mater, the University of Louisville, and in the Jeffersontown area.

The National Weather Service plans to be in Louisville today to survey the damage and determine if the city was indeed struck by tornadoes. The town is bracing itself for another round of severe weather with severe thunderstorms, high winds, and even hail in the forecast for today.

Luckily, it appears so far that only property was damaged and no lives were lost or people injured. The horses are all OK too, for that matter, which is extremely important to us in Kentucky.

We are thinking of those who have been affected by these storms and will continue to keep a close eye on the city of Louisville and make sure the people have everything they need to clean up and rebuild.

### DEBT LIMIT

Mr. President, this morning I would like to address what I view as a worrisome development in connection with the ongoing debt limit talks, but first I think it is important to remind ourselves what the purpose of these talks is.

From the very beginning, the goal has been clear: to come up with a serious and significant plan for reducing the deficit as a condition for any agreement to raise the limit. Without such a plan, we are told, America could very quickly face an economic calamity of historic proportions, at a time when millions of Americans are still trying to recover from the last one.

As one of the major credit agencies recently put it:

The rating outlook [of the U.S.] will depend on the outcome of negotiations on deficit reduction . . . a credible agreement on substantial deficit reduction would support a continued stable outlook; lack of such an agreement would prompt Moody's to change its outlook to negative on the AAA rating.

This is serious stuff, and many of us have been hoping for and working toward a serious bipartisan solution, a plan that would convince the American people, the markets, and the world that America is capable of getting its fiscal house in order. Let's be clear about something else: We all know what such a plan would look like. Everyone, including the President, knows we cannot rein in our debt without a reform of long-term entitlements. It cannot be done. And everyone knows

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



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