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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, in whom we live and move and have our being, as we grieve the loss of life in the Newtown, CT, shooting, show us Your way and teach us Your path. Make us all responsible stewards of Your most precious gift of time by teaching us to number our days that we may have hearts of wisdom.

May the incomprehensible destruction of lives still framed by springtime remind us of the importance of not delaying in seizing our opportunities to do good. Make our lawmakers willing to act promptly, remembering that time is fleeting and that they shall not pass this way again.

Bless those who mourn, eternal God, with the comfort of Your love that they may face each new day with hope and with the certainty that nothing can destroy the good that has been given them. May their memories become less painful as You encircle their lives with Your love.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS 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, December 17, 2012.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate observe a moment of silence for the tragedy.

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

(Moment of silence)

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 3 p.m. today.

Following morning business, we will begin consideration of H.R. 1, the legislative vehicle for the supplemental appropriations bill. That bill will be managed by Senator PAT LEAHY.

At 5 p.m. the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the Olguin and Durkin nominations, both to be U.S. district judges of Illinois and California, respectively.

At 5:30 p.m., the Senate will vote on confirmation of the nominations. It is expected there will be a rolloccall vote on

the confirmation of the Durkin nomination and a voice vote on the confirmation of the Olguin nomination.

NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT TRAGEDY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this afternoon the families of Newtown, CT, are burying two 6-year-old boys—Noah Pozner and Jack Pinto. Noah turned 6 last month. Even though he was only 6, Jack was a New York Giants fan.

In the days to come, many of their classmates will also be laid to rest—the victims of a tragedy too terrible to comprehend. Twenty little girls and boys, twenty tiny daughters and sons, sisters and brothers, friends and playmates, twenty children who will never grow up to learn to drive, go on a first date or graduate from high school, twenty 6- and 7-year-olds who will never have the chance to fall in love, get married or have children of their own: Noah and Jack, Charlotte, Daniel, Olivia, Josephine, Ana, Dylan, Madeline, Catherine, Chase, Avielle, Jesse, Grace, Emilie, Caroline, Jessica, Benjamin, Allison, and James.

No words of condolence could possibly ease the pain of families who lost cherished little children, but I hope it is some small comfort that the entire Nation mourns with them. My heart and warm wishes go out to all those affected by Friday's massacre. My thoughts are with the students and faculty of Sandy Hook who witnessed such unspeakable violence.

Newtown and the Nation have seen great evil. We have also seen incredible bravery.

In her final act on Earth, 27-year-old Victoria Soto hid the children of her first grade class in closets and cabinets and then sacrificed herself to save them.

Dawn Hochsprung, the principal, forcibly—as the word goes—attacked the assailant, and he killed her.

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



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