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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 30, 2013, at 12 noon.

Senate

MONDAY, JULY 29, 2013

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, today let Your favor rest upon the Members of our government's legislative branch. Establish the works of their hands and strengthen them to honor You by serving others. Lord, let Your life-giving spirit move them to feel greater compassion for those in need. Use them to remove barriers that divide us, to make suspicions disappear, and to cause hatred to cease. May they strive to be agents of healing and hope, as they help us all live in greater justice and peace.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks there will be a period of

morning business until 4:15 today. Following that morning business the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1243, the Transportation bill.

At 4:30 the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of James Comey to be Director of the FBI. I am sorry to report there will be a cloture vote on him at 5:30 today. Our chief law enforcement officer and we had to file cloture.

THE SEQUESTER

Mr. REID. Every respectable economist has said that the shortsighted arbitrary cuts known as sequester will cost American jobs. Medical researchers say these painful cuts will set medical research in this country back decades, potentially costing the world a cure for cancer, flu, AIDS, and many other diseases against which we are on the cusp of making great headway. The sequester we know will cost us investments in education that give children a shot at success and keep American workers competitive. We also know the sequester will slash the safety net that keeps millions of senior citizens, children and veterans and low-income families from descending into poverty.

I know the sequester is as bad for national security as it is for the economy. These cuts have grounded one-third of U.S. combat aircraft, slashed troop training budgets, and kept an aircraft carrier that should have been headed to the Persian Gulf and other places stranded in port instead. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of civilian employees of the Department of Defense, employees who support mili-

tary missions carried out by servicemembers overseas, have been furloughed.

It is not too late to reverse these hard-hearted cuts, cuts that were never supposed to take effect in the first place. The sequester was designed to be so painful it would force Democrats and Republicans to compromise and find a smart, responsible way to reduce the deficit. There was compromise on one side with the Democrats and, of course, none, as usual, with Republicans on the other side.

But we have not given up on reversing these cuts and choosing that responsible path. We have cut the deficit in half over the last 3 years, by more than \$2.6 trillion. While there is more work to be done, we should be making targeted cuts while investing in that which makes America grow.

It is clear we have reduced the debt by \$2.6 trillion and the yearly deficit has been cut in half over the last 3 years.

The way to pursue this type of sound fiscal policy is through regular order—regular order of the budget process. While there is more work to be done in the cuts I have talked about, we should be making targeted cuts while investing in what makes America grow. The American economy is poised to grow. It is growing now—not strong enough, not fast enough, but it is growing. All we have to do is get out of the way.

According to a report released last week by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, reversing the sequester would create an additional 900,000 jobs. It would increase gross domestic product by one percentage point. That is 1

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



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