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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, the splendor of Your presence delights us. You have been our help in ages past. You are our hope for the years to come. Thank You for leading us beside the still waters of Your wisdom and through the green pastures of Your peace.

Empower our Senators for the tasks of this day. May they put right before expediency, others before self, principle before partisanship, and You before all else. Lord, keep our lawmakers under the canopy of Your care, sustaining them with Your grace amid all sunshine and shadow.

Lord, thank You that America still stands with lamp held aloft as a beacon of freedom for our world.

We pray in Your sacred 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 PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, later this morning the Senate will have an opportunity to pass the FAA reauthorization and security bill, which aims to secure our airports and look out for American travelers.

This legislation received bipartisan support from the start, and it shows what is possible with a Senate that is back to work. Under the guidance of Senator THUNE, the Commerce Committee chairman, and Senator AYOTTE, the Aviation chair, this FAA reauthorization and security bill incorporated ideas from both sides as it moved through the legislative process. I also appreciate the work of Ranking Member NELSON and Ranking Member CANTWELL in working with them to advance it.

After 7 hearings and nearly 60 amendments accepted, the bill passed the Commerce Committee by a voice vote. On the floor, the bill managers continued listening and working with Senators from both sides to process more amendments that Members thought would make this good bill even stronger. For instance, they worked to include a number of additional security measures in an amendment that earned bipartisan support. That amendment aims to enhance inspections and vetting of airport workers to improve security for international flights arriving at U.S. airports and to help ensure perimeter security is reviewed.

In addition to these important security provisions, we accepted an amendment from Senator HEINRICH to shore up security in prescreening zones, which could be particularly vulnerable to attacks. We also adopted an amendment from Senators TOOMEY and CASEY that addresses the security of cockpit doors. I appreciate these and other Senators who put forth ideas to make the final product something both sides can support.

The FAA reauthorization and security bill will make important strides for our national security and for travelers. It does so without increasing fees or taxes on passengers. It does so without imposing heavyhanded regulations that can stifle consumers' choices. I look forward to supporting this legislation later this morning.

ENERGY POLICY MODERNIZATION BILL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, moving forward, the Republican-led Senate will have another opportunity to pass bipartisan legislation—legislation aimed at modernizing America's energy policies. The Energy Policy Modernization Act is the result of more than a year's worth of work by our Energy and Natural Resources Committee chair Senator MURKOWSKI, and ranking member Senator CANTWELL. These Senators know it has been nearly a decade since the Senate considered major energy legislation, so they worked to do something about it. They also know that good policy results from good process, as this bill certainly demonstrates. It has meant working through countless listening sessions and oversight hearings; it has meant working through numerous amendment votes and debate hours; it has meant working to move this bipartisan Energy bill to final passage.

The Energy Policy Modernization Act aims to bring our energy policies in line with the demands of today and to position us to benefit from the energy opportunities of tomorrow. Here is how it can help achieve that goal: It expands domestic supply and improves efficiency. It addresses aging infrastructure and enhances safeguards. It promotes accountability and cuts through needless redtape. This broad, bipartisan bill does all these things. It builds on technological progress in order to strengthen and sustain America's energy advances. It protects our environment at the same time. It does all of this without raising taxes or adding a dime to the deficit.

Here is what that means for our country: It will help Americans save energy. It will help Americans produce more energy. It will help Americans pay less for energy. And, like the airport security legislation I mentioned earlier, the Energy Policy Modernization Act will help keep Americans safe.

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



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