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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, September 11, 2000, at 12 noon.

Senate

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2000

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Gracious Father, in whose presence the dark night of the soul of worry is dispelled by the dawn of Your love, we thank You for helping us overcome our worries. You have taught us that worry is like interest paid on difficulties before it comes due. It's rust on the blade that dulls our capacity to cut through trouble and lance the infection of anxiety. Your Word is true: Worry changes nothing but the worrier and that change is never positive. Worry is impotent to change tomorrow or redo the past. All it does is tap our strength. We confess that we fear the problems and perplexities that we may have to face alone. Our worry is really loneliness for You, Dear God. In this moment of prayer we surrender all our worries to You and thank You for Your triumphant promise: "Do not be afraid—I will help you. I have called you by name—you are Mine. When you pass through the deep waters, I will be with you; your troubles will not overwhelm you."—Isaiah 43:1-2 Contemporary translation. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JUDD GREGG, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire, led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, today the Senate will resume debate on the China PNTR legislation. Amendments are expected to be offered throughout the day. Any votes ordered with respect to those amendments will be scheduled to occur on Monday or Tuesday of next week.

If significant progress can be made during today's session, votes will be postponed to occur on Tuesday morning. Therefore, those Senators who have amendments are encouraged to come to the floor during today's session. It is hoped the Senate can complete action on this important trade bill as early as Wednesday of next week.

On behalf of the leader, I thank my colleagues for their attention.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GORTON). The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, senior citizens need a drug benefit under Medicare. They've earned it by a lifetime of hard work, and they deserve it. It is time for Congress to enact it. The clock is running out on this Congress, but it is not too late for the House and Senate to act.

AL GORE and George Bush have proposed vastly different responses to this challenge. The Gore plan provides a solid benefit under existing Medicare. The Bush plan, by contrast, cannot pass the truth in labeling test. His plan is not Medicare—and it is not adequate. It is too little, too late. It puts senior citizens needing prescription drug coverage at the mercy of unreliable HMOs.

And it is part of a proposal to privatize Medicare that will raise premiums and force the most vulnerable elderly to give up their family physician and join HMOs.

Senior citizens need help now. AL GORE's plan provides prescription drug coverage under Medicare for every senior citizen in 2002—the earliest date such a program could realistically be implemented.

Under the Bush plan, there is no Medicare coverage of prescription drugs for four years. Instead, Governor Bush proposes a block grant to states for low-income seniors only. Less than one-third of seniors would even be eligible. Only a minority of those who are eligible would participate. Senior citizens want Medicare, not welfare. AL GORE's plan recognizes that. George Bush's plan does not.

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



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