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## Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Lord of life and love and laughter, You are the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. Thank You for the miracle of a new day. We pause to acknowledge Your sovereignty and to admit that because of You we live and move and breathe and have our being.

Show us how to use this day's fleeting minutes for Your glory. Make us Your instruments to bring deliverance to captives and sight to the blind. Open our ears to cries of despair all around us and forgive us for our premature declarations of peace. Sanctify our thoughts, words, and deeds throughout this week and in all the days of our lives. We pray this in Your Holy 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.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### PROTECTION OF LAWFUL COMMERCE IN ARMS ACT

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1805, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1805) to prohibit civil liability actions from being brought or continuing

against manufacturers, distributors, dealers, or importers of firearms or ammunition for damages resulting from the misuse of their products by others.

Pending:

Hatch (for Campbell) amendment No. 2623, to amend title 18, United States Code, to exempt qualified current and former law enforcement officers from State laws prohibiting the carrying of concealed handguns.

Kennedy amendment No. 2619, to expand the definition of armor piercing ammunition and to require the Attorney General to promulgate standards for the uniform testing of projectiles against body armor.

Craig (for Frist/Craig) amendment No. 2625, to regulate the sale and possession of armor piercing ammunition.

Levin amendment No. 2631, to exempt any civil action against a person from the provisions of the bill if the gross negligence or reckless conduct of the person proximately caused death or injury.

Warner amendment No. 2624, to improve patient access to health care services and provide improved medical care by reducing the excessive burden the liability system places on the health care delivery system.

Lautenberg amendment No. 2632, to require that certain notifications occur whenever a query to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System reveals that a person listed in the Violent Gang and Terrorist Organization File is attempting to purchase a firearm.

Lautenberg amendment No. 2633, to exempt lawsuits involving injuries to children from the definition of qualified civil liability action.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Idaho is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, today, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1805, the gun liability bill. The unanimous consent agreement from Friday provides for approximately 4 hours of debate in relation to two proposed amendments that will be voted on tomorrow. The debate today will center around the gun show loophole amendment and the assault weapons ban amendment.

I will manage time on our side during this period, so Senators are welcome to come to the floor to speak.

Following the debate, at 4 p.m. today, Senator BINGAMAN will offer his amendment relating to definition. Under the order, that debate will go until 5 o'clock, at which time we will vote in relation to the Bingaman amendment. Therefore, the first vote of today's session will occur at 5 o'clock.

The consent agreement governing the remaining consideration of the gun manufacturers' liability bill allows for further debate tomorrow morning prior to a series of stacked votes on a number of amendments. There will be as many as seven stacked votes, including final passage, in that series of votes, which will begin at 11:35 a.m. on Tuesday.

Members can therefore expect final passage of S. 1805 tomorrow afternoon.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, Senator FEINSTEIN will be managing the first hour of the debate today on assault weapons; and Senator JACK REED from Rhode Island will be the manager of the second hour relating to gun show loopholes.

Let me wish my colleagues a good afternoon.

### THE BUDGET FOR VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. President, I want to talk, on my leader time, about an issue that will be the subject of a good deal of attention next week; and that is the budget, especially as it relates to our veterans.

The budget this year has many reasons for concern for all of us. I will address many of those concerns at a later time. But I want to focus, this afternoon, if I can, on just one; that is, the budget for Veterans Affairs.

The legislation before the Budget Committee would increase the Veterans Affairs budget by about 2 percent. Unfortunately, that represents about a \$700 million increase in health care for veterans going from approximately \$28.5 billion to \$29.2 billion—a \$700 million increase for veterans health.

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



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