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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. 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.

Almighty God, our refuge and strength, a very present help in the time of trouble, we thank You that You have set the star of hope in our life's sky, that in the darkness we can see Your brightness, that in times of shadow we can enjoy Your leading and guiding.

Lord, yesterday we were again reminded that life is fragile. As alarms sounded and brave people prepared for the worst, we could sense the uncertainty of our existence. Remind us daily that human flesh is as fleeting as fading flowers and withering grass. Teach us to number our days, to labor not simply for time but for eternity.

Protect our Senators in their going out and coming in, in their rising up and lying down. Give them the wisdom to believe that nothing can separate them from Your love. In a special way, bless our Capitol Police who daily labor with courage, competence, and commitment.

We pray this in Your powerful 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.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business for up to 60 minutes, with the first half of the time under the control of the majority leader or his designee and the last half under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this morning we will have a 1-hour period for the transaction of morning business. Following that time, we will begin an hour of debate prior to the vote on invoking cloture on the substitute amendment to the highway bill. Senators can expect the cloture vote to begin sometime between 11:30 and 11:45 this morning. I expect cloture will be invoked and we will then be on a glidepath to finishing the bill. Once cloture is invoked, if invoked, I will be consulting with Chairman INHOFE and the Democratic leader to determine how much work is left before we are able to complete the bill.

I anticipate votes on amendments throughout the day today and into the evening, if necessary, to bring the bill to a close. Although a large number of amendments were filed to the highway bill yesterday, I believe Members will show restraint and not offer many of those that were submitted to the desk.

We are closing in on our second week of consideration of the highway bill and I look forward to completing the bill and getting this measure to conference as quickly as possible.

VISIT TO CAIRO, EGYPT

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, the past 2 days I have taken the opportunity to

come to the Senate to discuss my recess trip last week to the Middle East. As I mentioned yesterday, it was a fascinating experience that allowed me a firsthand glimpse of the complicated challenges facing the region. At each of my stops I had the opportunity to meet with top officials, community leaders, and I made a point of visiting with opposition candidates. With each conversation I became more convinced that despite the deep differences that divide them, each party wants peace, wants prosperity, and each side knows that dialog is the way forward.

Tuesday I spoke of my meetings in Israel. Yesterday I reported on my visit to the West Bank. Today I will briefly comment on my time in Cairo, Egypt.

We arrived on May 5 to a jam-packed city of over 20 million people. We first met with President Hosni Mubarak, a lively and engaged and obviously well-informed man. We had an open and frank discussion about many of the issues facing the country, as well as the region at large.

In particular, President Mubarak expressed his strong belief in American leadership in the issues surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts. We both agreed America is uniquely positioned to help both the Israelis and the Palestinians bridge their differences. We also agreed Egypt is critical to advancing this peace. As the regional Arab power broker and the first Arab country to make peace with Israel, this will be particularly true in the period following Israel's disengagement from Gaza.

There is great concern among Israelis that once they withdraw, Gaza will be used as a platform to launch attacks into Israel. President Mubarak stressed to me his commitment to keep this from happening. He stressed it is in Egypt's own interest to prevent Gaza from descending into chaos and lawlessness. That is why his country is prepared to field a border security force of 750 guards to stop weapons

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



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