



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 151

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2005

No. 113

Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.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.

O God our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, on yesterday millions remembered our kinship of loss because of September 11, 2001, and we paused to acknowledge Your authority over our lives.

Without You, we cannot function as a people or Nation. Without Your shield of protection, our efforts to defend ourselves will fail. Unless You bless our Nation, we labor in vain.

Keep us from the arrogance that places its confidence in weapons made by human hands. Infuse us with a national awareness that righteousness exalts a Nation and sin brings shame.

Today, as Senators work for freedom, give them an awareness of Your abiding presence and steadfast love. Help them to remember that those who love You are never alone.

And, Lord, in these challenging times, bless our military people who routinely give their tomorrows for our todays. We pray in Your mighty 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 pe-

riod for the transaction of morning business until the hour of 3 p.m., with the time equally divided.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, we will begin today's session with a period for morning business that will extend for an hour, until 3. At 3, we will resume consideration of the Commerce-Science-Justice appropriations bill. We are prepared for Members to come forward to offer their amendments to the bill so that we can complete action early this week.

We reached an agreement to limit amendments to the bill, and now is the time for Senators to come and debate their amendments. There is a vote scheduled for this evening. At 5:30, we will begin a 1-hour period of debate prior to a vote at 6:30 on the motion to proceed to the resolution of disapproval on regulations relating to mercury. If that motion is not agreed to, we would return to the Commerce appropriations bill. If the motion is agreed to, then we would begin 2 hours of debate on the pending resolution.

Having said that, we will be continuing the appropriations process this week, with many of these bills having disaster-related language. It is important that we continue to expedite our efforts on all fronts, and therefore we will be voting throughout the week.

In addition to our floor business today, Chairman SPECTER opened the hearings on the nomination of Judge Roberts at noon, now 2 hours ago. We will make every effort to not interrupt those hearings as we continue our work on the floor, and therefore we will be looking to stack votes around lunchtime each day or later in the evening throughout the week.

CLEANUP PROGRESS SINCE HURRICANE KATRINA

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I am pleased to report that hour by hour, day by day, we are making steady progress in the rescue and recovery efforts in response to the natural disaster witnessed now a week and a half ago. As I speak, there are 20,000 Active military personnel on the ground, along with 50,800 National Guard, 4,000 Coast Guard, and 8,900 FEMA responders. There are over 1,000 uniformed commissioned public health personnel on the ground as we speak.

Law and order in New Orleans has been completely restored. Power is back for most of the city's central business district. City hall has running water and electricity. The Army Corps of Engineers reports that the city will be completely drained by early October. Hundreds of city engineers have been working around the clock, even sleeping on the floors of their pumping stations, to drain the toxic flood waters out of the city.

Aaron Broussard, president of Jefferson Parish, is seeing continual progress. In his words, we are feeding more people, we are recovering more people, the infrastructure is more improved, we are clearing more roads, we have more power—every day more victories.

Meanwhile, the Federal Government remains committed to helping shoulder the burden. To date, Congress has allocated more than \$62 billion in aid for rescue relief and recovery efforts. President Bush has granted the hurricane survivors special evacuee status which will make it easier for the storm victims to collect Federal benefits such as food stamps, childcare, and Medicaid wherever they are in America.

FEMA has begun distributing \$2,000 per household so that the survivors can start to get back on their feet and meet their immediate needs. This week, Congress will continue to clear

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



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