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Senate

The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable DAVID VITTER, a Senator from the State of Louisiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's prayer will be offered by the former Senate Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Gracious God, You have chosen us to be present to Your presence in each moment of this day. Our souls snap to attention. We salute You as sovereign of our beloved Nation and personal Lord of our lives.

Lord, on behalf of the people of this Nation, I pray for the women and men of this Senate and all who serve with them. Continue to put a bellows on the red embers in the hearth of their hearts. Set them aflame again with the passion of patriotism. Rekindle in them a sense of their divine election by You. You have made work in government one of the highest callings. Our times demand greatness—the greatness of seeking Your best for our Nation, dependence on Your supernatural guidance, and commitment to unity as Americans.

On this day of the State of the Union Address by our President, we ask for Your special blessing on him. We renew our loyalty to him as our President, our attentiveness to listen to him, and our prayerful reflection on his vision for the awesome issues before our Nation and our terrorism-turbulent world. As he stands before the joint session of Congress and our Nation, clear the prayer channels as we join with Americans everywhere in prayer for Your guidance for him.

Today, Lord, we praise You for the courageous life of Coretta Scott King, so faithfully committed to the cause of human rights and equality.

And now, Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on the Senators as they seek to work together with civility and mutual respect. You are Jehovah Shammah who promises to be present

with us, Immanuel, our Saviour, who will never leave nor forsake us.
Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable DAVID VITTER 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 31, 2006.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable DAVID VITTER, a Senator from the State of Louisiana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. VITTER thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this morning we will have the final closing remarks with respect to the confirmation of Judge Alito to be Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. The vote on the confirmation is scheduled for 11 o'clock this morning. I remind all of our colleagues to be seated at their desks in the Senate Chamber for this historic vote.

Following the confirmation vote, we will consider the nomination of Ben Bernanke to be a member and the Chairman of the Federal Reserve to succeed Chairman Alan Greenspan. Under the time agreement, we will have 1 hour of debate under the control of Chairman SHELBY and the ranking member, Senator SARBANES. No rollcall vote is necessary on the Bernanke nomination, and we will have a voice vote on the confirmation.

Finally, this evening the Senate will gather in the Senate Chamber at 8:30 and proceed as a body to the House Chamber at 8:35 to hear the President's annual State of the Union Address. Members are asked to please plan their schedules accordingly for today's events.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

ALLOCATION OF TIME

Mr. REID. Mr. President, before the majority leader leaves the floor, we have an hour of time divided before the 11 o'clock vote. I know the short amount of time we have is allocated to the very second. I am wondering if it would be appropriate to have a full hour prior to the vote. I guess my question is, How much time do you need on your side?

PATRIOT ACT REAUTHORIZATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, a small number of provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act are due to expire. Senate Democrats stand ready to provide law enforcement with all necessary tools to keep Americans safe from terrorism. Democrats supported the original PATRIOT Act that was passed in 2001. We supported the reauthorization bill that passed the Senate unanimously this past summer. And we support reauthorization of the PATRIOT Act now with modest improvements.

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



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