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Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the Honorable JON TESTER, a Senator from the State of Montana.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal spirit, who taught us it is more blessed to give than receive, as we prepare to celebrate President's Day, thank You for the great gift of leadership. Make this wonderful ability to mobilize people toward shared objectives become the strength of our legislative branch.

May our Senators find the correct balance that leads to true influence. Give them the wisdom to prefer listening to speaking and learning to teaching, as they seek to make bipartisan progress. Remind them that in leadership what they do speaks more profoundly than what they say.

As they strive to represent You and country, empower them to make pleasing You and faithfully serving others their top priorities. Infuse them with the serenity to accept the things they cannot change, the courage to change the things they can, and the wisdom to know the difference. We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JON TESTER 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. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 16, 2007.

To the Senate:

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

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF MAJORITY LEADER

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today the time until 12:30 will be divided equally between me and the Republican leader. Then at 12:30 the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business with Senators allowed to speak for up to—well, they will be in 30-minute blocks of time. We will alternate back and forth between the respective sides, the majority controlling the first 30 minutes beginning at 12:30.

Yesterday a cloture motion was filed to proceed. That cloture vote will occur tomorrow at 1:45. There will be no rollcall votes during today's session of the Senate.

I would say, for the information of Senators who are watching this, that I am not going to use my 15 minutes, so if a Democrat wants to come and speak, they can have my 15 minutes.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 641

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand that S. 641 is at the desk and due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title for a second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 641) to express the sense of Congress that no funds should be cut off or reduced for American troops in the field which would result in undermining their safety or their ability to complete their assigned missions.

Mr. REID. I object to any further proceedings with respect to this bill at this time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 12:30 shall be equally divided and controlled by the two leaders.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if I understand the order of business, it is that Members may speak until 12:30, with equally divided time for the remaining 25 minutes; is that correct?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. That is correct.

Mr. DURBIN. Thank you very much.

IRAQ

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, as we gather in the Senate for this session today, there will be no recorded votes, but an important vote is scheduled to take place across the Rotunda. We know what that vote is about. It is about a war that is now in its fourth year, a war that has lasted longer than World War II.

We were told recently that advisers to the President told him that at this stage of the war, there would be as few as 5,000 American troops in Iraq maintaining the limited interests that will remain for the United States. The reality is so much different. Over 130,000 Americans troops are still there for the fourth year of this war. We are activating Guard units, Reserve units, and redeploying those in active military

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



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