



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2007

No. 33

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. 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.

Almighty God, to whom we must account for all our powers and privileges, guide the Members of this body so that they will be faithful stewards of Your will. Give them understanding and integrity that human rights may be safeguarded and justice served. Teach them to rely on Your strength and to serve You with honor. May each Senator in her or his daily work know the joy of partnership with You.

Lord, we pray today also for the men and women of our Armed Forces. Defend them with Your heavenly grace and give them courage to face perils with trust in You. Give them a sense of Your abiding presence wherever they may be. Strengthen and sustain their loved ones.

We pray in Your sovereign 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 27, 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 THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m. During the period of morning business, Senators will be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each. The first 30 minutes will be controlled by the Republicans and the second 30 minutes will be controlled by the majority.

At 12:30, the Senate will recess until the hour of 2:15. Upon reconvening at 2:15, the Senate will resume debate on the motion to proceed to S. 184. The cloture vote will occur at 2:30, with the time until then equally divided and controlled between the two leaders and their designees.

As I indicated yesterday prior to the Senate adjourning, the Republican leader and I have had discussions about the 9/11 Commission recommendations legislation, and while the time has been set for the cloture vote on the motion to proceed to S. 184, we will continue our discussions to ascertain whether we can vitiate that cloture vote. If we are able to do that, we would switch to S. 4, which is the Homeland Security-reported matter reported by Chairman LIEBERMAN and Ranking Member COLLINS.

I would say, as I said last night, whichever vehicle comes to the floor—I would hope we could speed things up by 30 hours by doing S. 4—we need to get to this legislation. I had indicated prior to the recess, and indicate today, it is open to amendment. I, in fact, even have the first Democratic Senator who wants to offer an amendment. I am sure the minority has a lot of amendments they want to offer.

9/11 COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. President, I want to bring to the attention of the body letters Senator MCCONNELL and I received. They are dated yesterday. The letter to me states:

It has been exactly 14 years since the first attack on the World Trade Center; over 5 years since the terrorist attacks of 9/11; and over 2 years since the 9/11 Commission released a blueprint for strengthening America's security. The pace of Congressional response to these wake-up calls has been glacial.

Now, I am not going to read the other three paragraphs of this letter other than to say this letter is signed by different groups—widows and orphans—Carol Ashley, representing a group called VOICES of September 11th, who is the mother of Janice, who was killed in that 9/11 occurrence; Beverly Eckert, representing a group called Families of September 11, and who is the widow of Sean Rooney, who was 50; Mary Fetchet, the founding director and president of VOICES of September 11th, who is the mother of Brad, who was 24, who was killed in the incident; and Carie Lemack, the cofounder and president of Families of September 11, who is the daughter of Judy Larocque, who was 50 years old, who died in that terrorist attack.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

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



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