



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 154

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 2008

No. 42

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Sovereign Lord, how great You are. You have created the heavens and the Earth. You can't be contained in temples made with hands.

Make Your presence felt in the Senate today. Expand the horizons of our Senators and their staffs until they see things that are not and ask, why not. Intensify their consciousness of Your love and speak clearly to them of Your will. Lift them beyond the power of sin and establish them with righteousness.

Fill us all with the gratitude that befits Your wondrous deeds, as You bring our lives into line with Your purposes. Lord, clear away the cobwebs of complacency, empowering us to be Your ambassadors in these challenging times.

We pray in the Name of Him in whom is all power in heaven and on Earth. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN 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 legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. CARDIN 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, this morning, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 70, the concurrent resolution on the budget.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

WHO IS RICH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Democrats have campaigned hard on the promise of tax relief for the "middle class." They say any tax hikes they propose would only affect "the rich."

This, of course, raises a question. Who exactly are Democrats calling rich? Let's take a look.

According to Democrats, the "rich" include single workers who earn \$34,000 a year. First year schoolteachers in Jefferson County, KY, earn \$35,982 a year. I don't think they are rich.

According to Democrats, couples are rich if they earn \$63,000 a year. I doubt that couples with children who make \$63,000 a year think that they are rich.

The fact is, under the Democratic plan, a lot of people will wake up happy to hear they are rich, only to realize the only change in their lives is a hefty tax sock to their wallets. So much for the good news. It is what Patrick Moynihan might have called "defining wealthy down".

But there is a purpose behind the rhetoric. Democrats couldn't support their \$1.2 trillion in spending—and the largest tax hike in history—unless they cast their tax hike nets far and wide.

So they have proposed to raise taxes on tens of millions of individuals and families that they call "rich."

Under the Democratic plan for taxing the "rich," a single mother who earns \$45,000 a year would see her taxes go up.

Under the Democratic plan for taxing the "rich," 7.8 million low-wage earners will be added, back to the tax rolls, workers who are now considered too low-income to pay any income tax at all.

Under the Democratic plan for taxing the "rich," 43 million families would be hit with an average tax increase of \$2,300 next year.

These are the people that Democrats in Washington are calling "rich"—folks who would laugh if you told them that after a monthly budgeting session around the kitchen table.

One would think that as the economy slows and fears spread about the cost of fuel, health care and food rising even higher, our friends on the other side could resist reverting to type.

The last thing middle-class families can afford is a higher tax bill this year.

So as the debate over the budget continues, let's be clear about who will be picking up the tab for the largest tax hike in U.S. history. It is not just the rich.

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S1915