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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.

Holy God, who sustains us with Your love, keep our Nation with Your powerful protection and incline the hearts of its citizens to do Your will.

Use our lawmakers as instruments of Your providence. Heighten their gratitude for the blessings You have bestowed upon them, as You deepen their humility. Broaden their sense of justice to include the deprived and forgotten of our world. Lengthen the outreach of their compassion to include all who suffer, the homeless and the hungry, the persecuted, and the oppressed. Make them advocates of the voiceless, the weak, the poor, the elderly, and the neglected. Lord, sensitize them to the hurt of all people at home and abroad. We pray in Your matchless Name. 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, April 2, 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, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 3221, the legislative vehicle for the housing bill, postcloture. The Republican leader and I will visit in just a few minutes. The staffs and Senators DODD and SHELBY worked through most of the night, and I think a lot of progress was made this morning. I am hopeful and confident we can get to this legislation quickly.

Mr. President, I have another topic about which I feel inclined to say a few words.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL MICHAEL P. BARBERO

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the U.S. Army will soon say farewell to one of its most honorable officers, COL Michael P. Barbero. The colonel will retire after 26 years of service to the Army and to the Nation. For the last 5 years, I have come to know him as Chief of the Army's Senate Liaison Office.

Throughout his career, Colonel Barbero has always put the well-being of our soldiers and our country first. Of primary concern to him and his team at the Liaison Office has been helping soldiers, Guard and Reserve, navigate

the bureaucracy to solve the problems that can be common to a soldier's life.

Sometimes this has meant guiding them through the bureaucracy to access Government benefits for their families. Sometimes it has meant dealing with a family emergency during deployment. Sometimes it has meant helping whistleblowers who report fraud or abuse that needs further investigation.

No matter what the challenge, Colonel Barbero always treated our citizen soldiers who seek help from Congress with care, fairness, and the respect they deserve.

As Senate minority and majority leader, I had the privilege to ask the Army to support my foreign travel. For the last several years, Colonel Barbero was a central part of these efforts. He handled high-profile and sensitive congressional delegation visits that I led to Israel, Jordan, Iraq, Georgia, Ukraine, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Colombia, Mexico, and Guatemala. These missions were successful because of the careful planning of Colonel Barbero and his excellent team.

On these long trips, I also came to know Mike Barbero as a person, not as a soldier. He is a gourmet chef. He remembers birthdays and makes sure there is a cake—even when it means the cake is packed on dry ice and stored for 6 days on an airplane.

I also learned he is a loving father and husband. In sacrifice for his service to our country, his wife Vicki and his daughter Mary and son Michael have not seen as much of him as probably they wanted.

Our loss with his retirement will be his family's gain, and, hopefully, they will soon get their father back for all the ball games and school events that his duties here have required him to miss.

We in the Senate honor the service and contributions of COL Michael Barbero.

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



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