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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JIM WEBB, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God, by whose Providence our forebears brought forth a nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to equal justice for all, give the Members of this body that same spirit as they seek to make a better world. May this quest for justice motivate them to eliminate those things that obstruct the coming of Your kingdom. Lord, each day may they give primacy to prayer, seeking Your guidance as they strive to make decisions that honor You. Guide them by Your higher wisdom so that they will not give in to disappointment, doubt or despair.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JIM WEBB 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, January 26, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JIM WEBB, a Senator

from the Commonwealth of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period for the transaction of morning business until 4 p.m. today. Senators will be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

At 4 p.m., the Senate will turn to executive session to consider the nomination of Timothy Geithner to be Secretary of the Treasury, with the time until 6 p.m. equally divided and controlled between the chair and ranking member of the Finance Committee, Senators BAUCUS and GRASSLEY, or their designees. At 6 p.m., the Senate will proceed to vote on the confirmation of the Geithner nomination.

Following executive session, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 2, the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009.

At approximately 12:30 p.m. tomorrow, KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND will take the oath of office and become a Senator from the State of New York.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in the last Congress, the Senate passed an extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program with an overwhelming majority of 69 votes. In a Congress too often marred by partisan divide, this strong vote last session in favor of healthy children briefly stood as a bright example of the good that comes from Gov-

ernment—putting people ahead of politics.

Regrettably, President Bush chose to veto our bipartisan children's health legislation and because of a few too many loyal House Republicans in a narrowly divided House, that veto was upheld.

In Nevada, low-income families have been forced to put their children on waiting lists for future health coverage. In the year and a half since the veto, millions of children have been shut out of regular checkups, medicine, and hospital trips.

From coast to coast, more than 4 million children who would have been covered if our legislation had passed are not getting regular checkups or the care they need when they get sick.

Jeopardizing the health of American children is not a political victory for anyone. It is a loss for everyone, and it is long past time we corrected it.

This week, we have the chance, beginning tonight, to keep our promise to America's children by passing a new Children's Health Insurance Program. With the support of Democrats and Republicans in Congress and a new President in the White House poised to sign this bill into law, we can ensure that more low-income families can provide their children with the medical care they need to grow up strong and healthy.

Our legislation give States the resources and ability to insure an additional 4 million children. Our legislation covers the lowest income children first by giving States new tools to enroll uninsured children who qualify for Medicaid and rewarding States for successful enrollments in the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Our legislation doesn't just provide more children with health care but also improves the quality of care they receive.

In Nevada and across America, the number of uninsured children is rising. The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that for every 1-point rise in our

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



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