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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK BEGICH, a Senator from the State of Alaska.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Our Father and our God, we hold before You the fears and hopes of our hearts. We confess that we haven't loved and trusted You as we ought, for You give perfect peace to those who keep their minds on You.

Lord, impart wisdom to our Senators. Help them remember that they aren't orphans beneath the sky but Your children and that all their ways are held in Your care. Give our lawmakers the glorious liberty that comes from knowing they are heirs of celestial blessings and that nothing can separate them from Your love. Let Your peace that passes understanding keep their hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of You. May they yield their attitudes and dispositions to Your control so that they might work effectively with each other.

We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK BEGICH 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, May 13, 2009.

To the Senate:

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

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BEGICH 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 leader remarks, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of David Hayes to be Deputy Secretary of Interior. There will be up to 1 hour for debate, equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, prior to a cloture vote on that nomination. The Senate will recess from 12:30 to 1:30 to allow for a special Democratic caucus meeting.

The reception for the spouses dinner at the Botanic Garden begins at 6:30 tonight, and Senators are encouraged to attend. This is a nice event. We don't have an opportunity to get together very often, so this is something we all look forward to, and I am confident it will be a very good evening for us all.

NOMINATION OF DAVID HAYES

Mr. REID. Senators with good intentions can disagree on issues. They can disagree with our Nation's leaders. But we should all be able to agree that the President and his Cabinet deserve a complete lineup when that team takes the field on the most important issues

we face. The American people deserve the leaders they asked for in November when they demanded we clean up the mess the last administration left behind.

One of those key players is a man by the name of David Hayes, the man President Obama has nominated to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior. Mr. Hayes served successfully in this same position during the Clinton administration and understands better than probably anyone else what it takes to effectively run a department of about 70,000 people; that is, the Department of Interior. As Deputy Secretary of Interior, Hayes would work closely with our former colleague, Secretary Ken Salazar, on important decisions about many issues.

No two States understand the importance of the Secretary of Interior more than Alaska and Nevada. Eighty-seven percent of the State of Nevada is owned by the Federal Government. Alaska is second. Other States have large amounts of land controlled by the Federal Government and the Secretary of Interior, and consequently his deputy would have some say over it. Secretary Salazar must make important decisions about developing renewable energy resources that will create jobs, protecting our wildlife, preserving our public lands for future generations, and keeping our water clean and accessible. David Hayes will play a central role in correcting the mistakes of the past and making important decisions for the future.

The past 8 years of the Interior Department were marked by mismanagement and scandal. Secretary Salazar's Department has inherited the unenviable task of getting the American people to once again trust an agency that manages one-fifth of the Nation's landmass and 1.7 billion acres off our coasts.

The Department is also moving us forward in critical ways. Secretary Salazar has made it clear that he will

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



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