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Senate

The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God in whom we live and move and have our being, we need You every hour, in joy and in pain, in prosperity and in adversity, in success and in failure, in the moment of prayer and in the hours of toil.

To the human strivings of our Senators, add Your divine strength. Restrain and correct them when they do wrong and confirm and strengthen them when they do right. Guide them by Your spirit and support them by Your grace. Then in quietness and confidence may they leave the consequences to Your unerring judgment, remembering that Your judgments are "true and righteous altogether."

We pray in Your wonderful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND 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 bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 18, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND 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. Madam President, following Leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for up to 1 hour. Senators will be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each. The majority will control the first 30 minutes and the minority will control the final 30 minutes.

Following morning business, the Senate will proceed to consideration of the concurrent resolution relating to an apology for slavery. There will be up to an hour for debate, equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees prior to a vote. We do expect that vote to be a voice vote.

Upon disposition of the concurrent resolution, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2346, the emergency supplemental appropriations bill. We hope to reach an agreement that will allow us to vote on motions to waive points of order and a time for a vote on adoption of the conference report. But if we are unable to reach an agreement, there will be a cloture vote on the conference report tomorrow morning.

We will resume consideration of the travel bill upon disposition of the supplemental conference report.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Republican leader is recognized.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, Americans certainly want health care reform. There is no dispute about that. People are frustrated with the high cost of care, and many are worried about losing the health care coverage they already have. Some can't afford care or have to choose between basic necessities and the treatments they need. These are some of the things that are wrong with the current system, and they need to be fixed.

But while all of us recognize that serious reform is needed, we should also recognize the necessity of getting it right. Before we rush to pass just anything in the name of reform, such as the bill introduced in the HELP Committee this week, Americans have a right to ask some very basic questions: How much will it cost? How will we pay for it? What will this mean for me and for my family?

As to the first question, Americans have good reason to be concerned about what the bill would cost. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that just a portion—just a portion—of the HELP Committee bill would spend \$1.3 trillion over 10 years. That doesn't even include major portions of the final proposal, including a massive expansion of Medicaid, which will cost untold billions of dollars. These are staggering amounts of money for taxpayers to contemplate, which is why it

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



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