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Senate

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

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by the Reverend Mac Richard, Senior Pastor of Lake Hills Church in Austin, TX.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our Lord and our God, we thank You for Your favor and Your goodness to our Nation. Lord, in this room where decisions are made on behalf of millions of people, we pause to acknowledge Your power and to thank You for the gift of good government.

Thank You, Lord, for each woman and man who has chosen to serve and lead in this place. I ask that You would bless them, bless and protect their families who also sacrifice so that they might serve. Father, we come to You and ask that You would grant wisdom in this place. Give our leaders eyes to see what might be and the courage to truly lead our Nation.

Lord, You have blessed us with so much prosperity, so much opportunity. May we be faithful with the responsibility these blessings carry. Thank You for the promise of this new day, for the freedom to approach and worship You, and for the ultimate liberty we enjoy in relationship with You.

Father, I ask this prayer in the powerful Name of Jesus. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK L. PRYOR 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, September 24, 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 L. PRYOR, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. PRYOR 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, there will be a period of morning business, for up to 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each. We will have the morning hour extended until 10:30 so the Democrats and Republicans can divide up that time because we have a cloture vote set for 10:30. The Republicans will control the first half and the Democrats will control the second half.

Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the Interior appropriations bill. Mr. President, I have spoken to the necessary parties this morning, and I think we are going to be able to work out an agreement so we will not have to have the cloture vote. I hope that is the case. If, in fact, that is the case, we

will vitiate the cloture vote and what we will do—because of the heavy workload of the Finance Committee, and I have spoken to the necessary folks in this regard—we will schedule a time this afternoon to have a block of votes so they can come over at once and not have to keep going back and forth. We hope to work that out.

We made progress on this legislation yesterday, and if we can get these block of votes out of the way, we will move on to our next appropriations bill, which will be the Defense appropriations bill. This comes at a very important time in the history of our country, with troops coming out of Iraq and the situation we have developing in Afghanistan. Mr. President, you can announce morning business now.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business for up to 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the second half.

The majority leader.

FILING DEADLINE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I forgot to announce that the filing deadline for second-degree amendments is at 10:30 this morning.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee.

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



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