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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 11, 2010, at 12:30 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, MAY 10, 2010

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty everlasting God, in Your light we would see life. Open the eyes of our lawmakers so that they can see the path on which You want them to travel. Lord, strengthen them for their daily work and minister to their deepest needs. In their moments of perplexity, fill them with the spirit of Your wisdom so that their decisions will reflect Your guidance. Use our Senators to discover and communicate Your answers to our Nation and world.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK R. WARNER 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 10, 2010.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 3 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Tennessee.

TENNESSEE FLOODING

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, there is no bigger, no more heart-wrenching, no more inspiring story today than what happened in Nashville in the 48 hours on May 1 and 2, over that weekend, when 2 to 4 inches of rain were expected and up to 17 inches came. As a result of that—from the Opryland Hotel outside Nashville to the Millington naval station near Memphis—all across Tennessee there have been devastating floods.

It is, according to the Weather Service, a 1,000-year rainfall event. I do not know how anybody knows what a 1,000-year rainfall event is—that is a long time—but this was not a 20-year flood or a 100-year flood, this was a 1,000-year rainfall event that overtook the people of Tennessee.

As a result, our Governor, Phil Bredesen, has asked the President to identify 52 counties—from the Nashville area to all the way across our State to the Mississippi River—as disaster areas. The President has responded swiftly. Forty-two of those 52 counties have been designated as disaster areas.

Some people say to me: Well, there has not been so much news about this Tennessee flood. There are two reasons for it. One is, there has been a lot of other news. Greece has been collapsing. A bomber tried to blow up Times Square. There is turmoil over immigration in Arizona. There is the gulf oil-spill which threatens to be the worst in history.

But it is important for the American people to know the Tennessee flood last weekend is by far the largest disaster in our country since President Obama came into office, except for the oilspill in the Gulf of Mexico, and it may be that the Tennessee flood affects more people than what is happening in the Gulf of Mexico.

The other reason we have not heard so much about it is this: Tennesseans have been busy cleaning up and helping each other instead of complaining and looting. So people are hurt. Thousands of people are hurt. But they are going

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



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