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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, our inability to solve our problems persistently reminds us of our need of Your mercy and power. Manifest Your power on Capitol Hill, doing for our lawmakers what they cannot do for themselves. Break down the barriers that seem impenetrable, enabling them to walk by Your Spirit toward the accomplishment of goals that will bless and protect America. Lord, divert them from the strategies that lead to dead ends, guiding them toward unity and consensus. Shine forth with Your power during this challenging season.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN 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. INOUYE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 19, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a

Senator from the State of New Hampshire, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUYE,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. SHAHEEN 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 any leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for up to 2 hours, with the two sides alternating 30-minute blocks, with the Republicans controlling the first block. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2055, the military construction bill. The Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. today for our caucus luncheons. We continue to work on amendments to the military construction appropriations bill. We hope to complete that bill within the next day.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, today Members of the House of Representatives will have a chance to stand up and be counted. They will show with their votes whether they believe in freezing Washington's current spending habits in place and raising job-killing taxes or whether they believe, as I do, that the reckless spending and debt of the past 2 years has brought us to this point of crisis, and that something serious must be done to rein it in without damaging a fragile economy with job-killing taxes.

Frankly, it is that simple. Those who support cut, cap, and balance that the House takes up today will be voting for getting our fiscal house in order and against an unsustainable status quo. Those of us who have been calling for serious short- and long-term action to cut spending, rein in our debt, and preserve entitlements congratulate those who support it.

We look forward to voting on the same legislation here in the Senate soon. Before we do, it is important to remember how far we have come in this debate. A few months ago, the President's primary goal was to raise the debt limit without any spending cuts or long-term fiscal reforms at all—nothing but more debt. Now he is claiming not only to support cuts but a proposal he likes to call “a big deal.” Anyone who has looked at the figures knows it is not. But the larger point here is that the American people have already won this debate. No one, not even the President, can claim to support the status quo anymore, even when, in fact, he does.

But, of course, winning the debate is not nearly as important as achieving the reforms that are needed to convince the world we are actually serious about getting our fiscal house in order. That is why Republicans continue to hold out for significant reforms, and that is why we will continue to fight

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



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