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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Creator and Sustainer of our world, every good and perfect gift comes from You. Give our lawmakers the wisdom to use Your generous gifts for the glory of Your Name. May this proper use of Your bounty provide them with the knowledge they need to solve the problems of our time, as they remember that without You they can do nothing.

As You have blessed us in the past, we trust You, Lord, for our future. Give all who labor for freedom a deeper insight and loftier courage that will empower them to work for the coming day of Your kingdom.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS 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. INOUE).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 31, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A.

COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COONS 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 be in a period of morning business until 4:30 today.

At 4:30, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Stephen Higginson to be U.S. circuit judge for the Fifth Circuit.

At 5:30, there will be a rollcall vote on confirmation of the Higginson nomination.

REBUILD AMERICA JOBS ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today, I join millions of Nevadans in commemorating the day, 147 years ago, that Nevada joined the Union. Granted statehood during the bitter years of the Civil War, in 1864, our mettle was tested from the very beginning.

Today, our State is once again tested. All over the State of Nevada, too many Nevadans are still out of work or underwater in their home mortgages during these tough economic times. But I know by facing our challenges together, we will once again demonstrate the collective strength that comes from being literally "battle born."

What is on this chart appeared in last week's New Yorker magazine. "I've got mine." "Change, Smange." "Leave Well Enough Alone." "Keep Things Precisely as they are." "I'm good, thanks."

The pictures portrayed are obviously caricatures of very rich people—top hats, vests, cigars. For me, this did not portray people who were rich as much as what is going on with our Republican colleagues. We know all that has been said about the 1 percent—how well they are doing. It was reported last week that during the last 25 years, their percentage of wealth in America has gone up almost 300 percent. So there will be a lot of attention focused on the rich, as it should be.

But also I think it should be directed to the Republicans in the Senate—not to Republicans around the country but those in the Senate—because Republicans around the country don't agree. They don't agree things are just fine. They don't agree we should leave well enough alone. They don't agree that just because the rich are doing so well, things are OK precisely the way they are. The vast majority of Americans disagree with that.

It is true that for a few lucky Americans, things in this country are going just fine. The haves have never had more. My colleagues in the Republican Party in the Senate are singularly focused on making sure it stays that way. Everything on this chart applies to what has happened in the Senate in the last 10, 11 months. The gap between the haves and the have nots has never been bigger. The middle class is falling further and further behind.

That is why, while Republicans advocate for millionaires and billionaires, Democrats are looking out for working Americans.

We have not forgotten that 14 million people are still out of work or millions more are struggling to make ends meet. We have not stopped fighting to get good-paying American jobs.

That is why Democrats will introduce the Rebuild America's Jobs Act tonight, legislation that will create hundreds of thousands of jobs by investing in our Nation's crumbling infrastructure. It would put men and

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



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