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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, March 16, 2012, at 10 a.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2012

The Senate met at 10 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.

Eternal God, sovereign of our Nation, by whose will the world and all creation have their being, we magnify Your Name. We know that You are mighty and we are weak, but we take heart in the knowledge that we can rely on Your strength.

Inspire our Senators today to know the constancy of Your presence, to be aware of the certainty of Your judgment, and to lift their hearts in frequent prayer to You, worshipping as they work. Guide them by Your higher wisdom and fill them with Your peace. May this be a day when we serve You with gladness because Your joy has filled our hearts.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York, 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 assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 14, 2012.

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.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
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 1 hour, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half. Following morning business the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1813, the highway bill. Senators should expect three rollcall votes at 11:30 a.m. on two remaining amendments to this bill that we have been working on for such a long time and to final passage of that bill.

Upon disposition of that, the Senate will be in morning business until 2 p.m.

At 2 p.m., the Senate will be in executive session. At 2:30 p.m., there could be up to 17 cloture votes unless an agreement can be reached on those nominations.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ACT

Mr. REID. Madam President, it is a real accomplishment for this Senate to pass this highway bill, and it will happen. We worked through all these amendments, different tones and variations of subject matter, many of them not having anything to do with the highway bill, but as everyone knows, that is what the Senate is all about a lot of the time.

I now call upon my friend, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to move this bill over there as quickly as possible. He has indicated that they likely will take up the Senate bill. I hope that is, in fact, the case.

At the end of this month the highway bill expires, which could lead to the laying off and termination of a little more than a million people. This bill, when it is signed by the President, will save or create 2.8 million jobs. It is important to get this done.

As for the judges, there have been conversations with me and a number of different combination of Senators, and I am hopeful we can work something out on this. If not, as I indicated, we will go ahead and have these judges votes. We need to get something done here. We have 17 judges—this does not count the appellate judges—that is, the circuit court judges—and there are 4 of those. I am hopeful we can work our

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



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