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## House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, May 25, 2012, at 10 a.m.

## Senate

THURSDAY, MAY 24, 2012

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, the giver of every good and perfect gift, thank You for all that makes life worthwhile. Thank You for tasks to do, for health of body, for accuracy of hand and eye, for skill of mind, and for friends and loved ones.

Today, equip the minds of our Senators with three assurances to sustain them. Remind them of Your sovereignty, Your power, and Your love. Give them the wisdom to believe that there is no problem or circumstance beyond Your control. May this knowledge guide their thinking, speaking, and decisions in a way that will glorify You.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM UDALL 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 clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, May 24, 2012.

*To the Senate:*

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,  
*President pro tempore.*

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico 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, we are now considering S. 3187, the FDA user fees legislation. There is an agreement now reached to complete this legislation today. Under the agreement, debate time will expire at 2 p.m. today, but if we are able to yield back time, up to 12 rollcall votes could begin earlier in order to complete action on the bill and to have a couple of votes in relation to the student loan interest rate hike. We will notify everyone if time is yielded back, but people should be aware of the need to come here—we hope before noon—to have a couple of votes. There will be no votes between 1 and 2 o'clock because of meetings both sides have.

We also worked out a tentative agreement yesterday on flood insurance, which is important to 6 million people. We need to get that done today also. I hope we can get that done.

I was pleased yesterday to reach an agreement with the Republican leader on how to move forward with this FDA bill. This legislation addresses shortages of lifesaving medicines by establishing a protocol to accomplish just that. It will ensure that FDA resources are there to approve new drugs and medical devices quickly and efficiently. We are going to consider, as I indicated, a number of relevant amendments. I am optimistic we will pass this strong, bipartisan bill.

This week has been productive. We have not had to break or try to break a single Republican filibuster. That is a good day in Washington. It doesn't happen very often. I hope it happens more often. If this trend continues, we could return to the way we used to be; that is, do what is good for the country and not be trying to stop everything that comes along.

I am also hopeful that this week the Senate will be able to find a path ahead to temporarily renew the Flood Insurance Program, as I have already indicated. We need a long-term solution to this problem. We have about 40,000 loans every day that are approved, and they are approved because you can make that check that you do have flood insurance. If there is no way to buy flood insurance, you cannot make that check in that box and you cannot get a loan. This would be devastating to our fragile economy, so we have to

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



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