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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, a Senator from the State of Connecticut.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Lord of life, hear our prayers. Fill us with Your spirit so that we may please You. Today, empower our lawmakers. Help them not to have an excessive focus on temporary things while ignoring the eternal. May their lives bring glory and honor to Your Name as they receive Your approbation for their faithfulness. Lord, create in them humble and contrite hearts that are willing to serve You and humanity. Shelter them in their coming in and going out, so that You can use them to advance the work of Your kingdom.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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. LEAHY).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 7, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, a Senator from the State of Connecticut, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. MURPHY 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 my remarks and those of the Republican leader, if there are any, the Senate will be in morning business until 5 p.m.

At 5 p.m. the Senate will resume H.R. 3979, as amended, the unemployment insurance extension, postcloture.

At 5:30 p.m. there will be a rollcall vote and passage of that legislation.

SPONSORING AMERICANS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, NASCAR fans can easily find their favorite drivers simply by looking at the cars as they fly by because of corporate emblems on the hood of the car. In fact, they are all over the car. For our clothing here in the Senate, we don't bear any commercial logos. Many Republican leaders these days may as well wear the Koch Industries insignia, but as Members of the Senate, there should never be any doubt as to our sponsors—the American people.

We are in the Senate for one reason: To give Americans a fair shot at providing for their families and having their voices heard, but Republicans seem more willing to identify themselves by their billionaire sponsors. While they don't wear Koch Industries ties and jackets, they display their sponsors proudly through their actions in the Senate. So it comes as no surprise Republican Senators stood on the Senate floor and voiced their support for Charles and David Koch. Senate Republicans depend on the Koch brothers to make their job easier.

I appreciate the forthrightness of those who expressed their support of the Koch brothers. The chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee came to this floor praising the richest brothers in the world. If Charles and David Koch helped Republican Members in this Chamber, they should not be ashamed to defend the Kochs' power. If the Koch brothers have bankrolled efforts to keep Senators in their seats, those Members should publicly acknowledge their providers.

If my Republican colleagues find my criticism of the Kochs' shadowy influence unjust, they should take their case to the American people. Senate Republicans should come to the Senate floor and take up the cause of the persecuted multibillionaires, but Senate Republicans shouldn't expect Americans to be easily fooled into ignoring the fact that the Koch brothers are trying to sweep middle-class families under the rug.

Regardless of the words Charles Koch espouses, for example, in his Wall Street Journal op-ed last week, he and his brother don't have the interests of average Americans in mind. They have in mind increasing their wealth and hiding their efforts behind words such as dignity, respect, equality, and freedom. That ran throughout the column they wrote.

Dignity? What about the dignity of struggling, long-term unemployed families? The Koch brothers continue closing plants and laying off employees in Alaska, Arkansas, North Carolina, and other places, devastating the economies in those communities. Americans need a fair shot at getting back on their feet and finding work, but Koch-backed groups are actively opposing the extension of benefits for the long-term unemployed.

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



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