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Senate

The Senate met at 4:30 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, thank You for Your un-failing love. Purify our hearts, making us fit vessels for Your use.

Lord, You know the many challenges that confront this legislative body, so guide our Senators with Your wisdom. Encourage them to live worthy of Your Name. Remind them that ultimately they will be judged by their productivity, for Your Word declares, "By their fruits You will know them." Today let Your presence continue to be felt on Capitol Hill.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The majority leader is recognized.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

Mr. McCONNELL. This weekend President Obama's Chief of Staff lamented that the Senate has taken several weeks to debate an infrastructure project, the Keystone jobs bill. I agree it is about time to bring the Keystone debate to a positive conclusion, and we will do that soon. We have had a lot of floor discussion. We have considered Democratic and Republican amend-

ments. All in all, the last few weeks have been time well spent. The debate has been good for our country. But tonight is our chance to notch another win for the middle class by supporting cloture and then actually passing this bipartisan jobs bill.

We have heard rumors that some in the Democratic leadership are pressuring rank-and-file Democrats—even Democrats who cosponsored this bill—to block Keystone's jobs with a filibuster instead. This is really disappointing when you consider all that our friends on the other side have been saying about the filibuster for so many years.

What is most disappointing, though, is the apparent reasoning for the Keystone filibuster. The Democratic leadership is claiming that there haven't been enough opportunities to consider amendments. Yet nine current Senate Democrats voted for the Keystone project just a few weeks ago without having the opportunity to offer or debate even a single amendment. Nine current Senate Democrats just a couple of months ago voted for the Keystone project without having the opportunity to offer or debate even a single amendment.

This time around, the new Republican majority allowed more amendment rollcall votes on just this one bill—this one bill—than the previous leadership allowed on every single bill from last year combined. Altogether, there were more rollcall votes on this bill than we got on amendments on the Senate floor all of last year combined.

I would also note that a majority of amendments we have taken rollcall votes on were also offered by the minority, by the Democrats. We also offered our friends on the other side an opportunity to consider more amendments just a few days ago. They objected to it at the time. Even so, it is still my hope that we will be able to consider more amendments from both sides of the aisle. Instead of filibus-

tering this bill or blocking their own amendments, which we experienced the other night, I am asking my Democratic friends to work with the bill manager, Senator MURKOWSKI—who has done a fantastic job on this bill—to get amendments lined up.

Let's keep up the positive momentum generated by a more open legislative process that actually clearly has benefited both parties. A Keystone filibuster cannot succeed without the support of Democrats who voted for a Keystone bill just a few weeks ago without any amendments—any amendments—and who are cosponsoring the jobs bill today. I truly hope these Democrats won't vote to block Keystone jobs now just because a different party controls the Senate. The American people voted decisively against this type of partisan gridlock back in November. They want us to work together to get things done. Why don't we just continue to do that?

The debate over this bipartisan bill has already had so many positive effects on the Senate as an institution. It has shown Senators the benefits of a more open process, it has given a real voice to the minority, and it represents a decisive change from the broken Senate of recent years.

Here is how the assistant Democratic leader put it just a few days ago:

We are in a healthy environment on the floor of the Senate where we are pursuing amendments and active debate.

It is "great to see" this happening, he said. I couldn't agree more. That is exactly the way we ought to operate.

I would urge the Senate not to fall into the old partisan habits. Let's keep working together. Let's cooperate to get this important infrastructure project over the finish line and onto the President's desk.

I am calling on all of my colleagues—especially the cosponsors of this bipartisan bill, especially those who have supported Keystone without any amendments in the past—to vote for jobs and progress tonight, not the kind

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



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