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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Our Father in Heaven, Your grace continues to sustain us in times of misfortune or prosperity. We are grateful for Your loving purposes that continually crown our years with goodness. Today, enable our lawmakers to see with faith's eyes each blessing that comes disguised as adversity and each temptation that hides beneath the mask of prosperity. Make them grateful for disasters averted and advancements made. Lord, let Your love touch our world because of their labors as You make them ambassadors of Your purposes. Protect our Senators and teach them Your paths. Prosper the work of their hands as You keep them from stumbling or slipping.

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. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 21, 2015.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable TOM COTTON, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COTTON thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, President Obama recently proclaimed this to be National Crime Victims' Rights Week, a stark reminder of the countless victims of modern slavery who continue to suffer horrifying exploitation at the hands of human traffickers, a stark reminder of the need to pass the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act.

It is a bill that victims groups and advocates call "the most comprehensive and thoughtful piece of anti-trafficking legislation currently pending." It provides unprecedented support to domestic victims of trafficking who are all too often invisible and underserved. This group further said: "As leaders in the anti-trafficking, anti-violence, child welfare, civil rights, runaway and homeless youth, and human rights movements, we urge Congress to pass this critical piece of legislation."

There have been good-faith negotiations to resolve the impasse that has prevented the Senate from moving forward on this bill. I am glad that we can now say there is a bipartisan proposal that would allow us to complete action on this important legislation so we can provide help to the victims who desperately need it.

As soon as we finish the trafficking bill, as I have indicated for some time

now, we will move to the President's nominee for Attorney General—hopefully, in the next day or so.

I particularly want to thank the senior Senator from Texas for leading these negotiations and for his continued diligence on this important issue. There is really no stronger advocate for victims of human trafficking than Senator CORNYN.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, after weeks of stalling a bipartisan human trafficking bill, our Republican colleagues have now agreed not to expand the scope of the Hyde language. Democrats and Republicans have come to an agreement on a path forward out of this pointless contrived fight.

It also rejects an expansion of the Hyde language to any taxpayer dollars where it did not apply before. This is really good news. I thank the senior Senator from Washington, PATTY MURRAY, for the work she put into brokering this compromise. But I have to say and throw a bouquet to AMY KLOBUCHAR, who has worked so hard on this for weeks and weeks. She has been very relentless in working toward an agreement on this.

She has worked consistently to arrive at the conclusion that we have arrived at. I express my appreciation to Senator LEAHY on the Judiciary Committee, who has been available for us at any given time to help us work through these issues.

It was not easy, but their efforts—the Senators I have mentioned—have been extremely important to fight human trafficking, which is really very, very

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



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