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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, May 8, 2015, at 11 a.m.

Senate

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2015

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable DEAN HELLER, a Senator from the State of Nevada.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, Armenian Apostolic Church in America, from New York, NY.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Almighty God, we ask You to guide our reflection, our action, and all our endeavors, and we ask Your guidance, especially in the deliberations and decisions of this noble body because strong, wise, and visionary leadership is essential for the well-being of nations.

This year is the centenary of the Armenian genocide—the first genocide of the many that followed in the 20th century. In commemorating 1½ million Armenian martyrs, we claim justice. Indeed, justice is a gift of God, and violation of justice is a sin against God.

We beseech You, O Lord, to bless the United States of America and its people. Empower them to continue serving humanity through Your goodness, as they did when they sheltered the remnants of the Armenian nation and all those who sought freedom and justice.

O Lord, give Your children wisdom, love, and compassion so that they may live and prosper with the gifts of Your

Spirit: justice, truth, freedom, and righteousness.

May Your Name be praised forever and ever. 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 legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 7, 2015.

To the Senate:

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

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

ENSURING TAX EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS THE RIGHT TO APPEAL ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to H.R. 1314.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion. The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 58, H.R. 1314, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a right to an administrative appeal relating to adverse determinations of tax-exempt status of certain organizations.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 1314, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the right to an administrative appeal relating to adverse determinations of tax-exempt status of certain organizations.

Mitch McConnell, Bob Corker, Joni Ernst, Bill Cassidy, John Cornyn, Thad Cochran, Shelley Moore Capito, Deb Fischer, John McCain, James Lankford, Patrick J. Toomey, Roy Blunt, Ron Johnson, Pat Roberts, David Perdue, David Vitter, Ben Sasse.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Rhode Island.

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I am honored to be here today to welcome His

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



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Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia.

Since 1995, His Holiness has served as the leader of Armenian communities across the globe, including many members of the Armenian diaspora in my State of Rhode Island.

His Holiness will be visiting Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church in Providence on May 30, and members of the Armenian community in Rhode Island look forward to welcoming him.

He is an accomplished scholar, a devoted humanitarian, and a strong spiritual shepherd.

Recently, we marked the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, which claimed the lives of nearly one and a half million Armenians, exiled over a half a million survivors, and deeply impacted all Armenians throughout the world.

On this centennial, we reflect on this exceptionally grave tragedy, and looking to the future, continue to work to promote both peace and human rights worldwide.

And there is no one better to help us do so.

It is indeed an honor to welcome His Holiness, to hear his words of prayer and reflection, and to go forward knowing that he is a powerful force for tolerance and decency. I thank him for being here today and for sharing his words of wisdom with the Senate and the Nation.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is good to see that the Senate—

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if I could ask the distinguished majority leader if he would be willing to go into a quorum call for a brief conversation.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT AND BIPARTISAN CONGRESSIONAL TRADE PRIORITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is good to see that the Senate will soon be passing another important piece of bipartisan legislation.

The Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act offers the best chance for our constituents, through the Congress they elect, to weigh in on the White House's negotiations with Iran. And make no mistake—they need to have that opportunity.

The American people were led to believe these negotiations would be about ending Iran's nuclear program and—and—its enrichment capabilities. But the current interim agreement makes one thing very clear: These talks have

devolved into something else altogether. Instead of ending Iran's nuclear program, the interim agreement would actually bestow international blessing for Iran to continue it. Rather than meaningfully roll back Tehran's enrichment capability and dismantle its nuclear infrastructure, the interim agreement would actually permit Iran to become a nuclear threshold state poised right at the edge of obtaining a nuclear weapon.

Iran would love nothing more than for the international community to recognize its threshold program. The Iranian regime would also love to be rid of the crippling sanctions that forced it to the table in the first place. Iran would, of course, divert those new funds to support the Assad regime, finance terrorist proxies such as Hezbollah, modernize its conventional capabilities, and further support the Houthis in Yemen. This would only reaffirm the fears of moderate Sunni allies that America is withdrawing—withdrawal—in the face of Iran's determined effort to expand its sphere of influence.

For all this, what would the United States gain from such an agreement from Iran? We would have given up our best leverage over the regime. And for what? That is a very good question—a very good question.

If a final agreement is reached that looks much like the interim agreement we have seen, it is not hard to perceive the possibilities of negative consequences. But let me be clear. A bad agreement seems far more likely to eventually lead to the kind of military conflict everyone wants to avoid than no agreement at all. President Obama would also be leaving the task of dealing with violations of an agreement to his successor.

I say all this to underline the need for the bipartisan Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act which is before us today.

If we didn't face the threats of filibusters or the blocking of amendments or the specter of Presidential vetoes, this bill would be a heck of a lot stronger, I assure you. But the truth is, we face all those things. We do. That is the frustrating reality. The response to this should not be to give the American people no say at all on a deal with Iran; the response should be to overcome these challenges in a way that will give Congress and the American people the best possible chance to review any possible deal and affect its outcome.

So I would urge Members of both of our parties here in the Senate to join me in supporting this bill. And make no mistake—that will not be the end of the story, either. This Congress is determined to pursue other avenues to address Iran's aggressive campaign of expansion and intimidation in the months to come.

On the topic of aggressive campaigns in pursuit of expansion and intimidation, there are several other countries around the world that come to mind—

China, for one. China is determined to dominate its neighbors. China wants to diminish American influence in the Pacific. And China wants to substitute American-style rules of global economic fair play for Chinese-style rules of monopolistic cartels and mercantilism. That is not an outcome any American should be willing to accept.

We are a Pacific nation. We have important allies in the region—nations such as Japan, Australia, South Korea, and New Zealand—that are today just as much of a modern, democratic, and market-oriented West as we are.

The 21st century also promises to be an Asia-Pacific century. If we care about preserving and extending American leadership globally, then we cannot cede the most dynamic region in the world to China. One way to preserve our leadership would be to invest in the weapons systems and platforms that would fulfill the Obama administration's would-be pivot to Asia. Another important way would be to demonstrate our economic leadership. That is just one more reason why passing the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act is so important.

The United States is currently negotiating an agreement with a whole host of Pacific nations—not just Japan and Australia but also countries such as Canada and Chile—that would cement and enhance our role in the world's fastest growing region. The so-called Trans-Pacific Partnership would lower unfair trade barriers to American-made goods and American produce sold in the Pacific. That would represent a huge win for American workers and American farmers, to say nothing of the far-reaching geopolitical implications for our country. But our trade negotiators cannot bring this Pacific agreement back to Congress for careful review and deliberation unless Congress assures our trading partners that the agreement is going to get a fair up-or-down vote. That is just what the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act would do.

This bipartisan bill would also force America's trade negotiators to meet congressional objectives and consult with Congress regularly throughout the process. It would ensure that an agreement such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership could not be enacted without explicit congressional approval.

It is a commonsense bill that was supported by a large number of Republicans and Democrats in committee, passing by a vote of 20 to 6. So there is no reason we shouldn't turn to this bill and then pass it.

The other countries in the region have made clear that they will have regional trade agreements with or without us, whether we participate or not. And if we walk away, China will step right in, no question about that.

So we will soon turn to the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act, and when we do, we will have a choice to make:

Would we rather seen Chinese workers and Chinese farmers or American workers and American farmers reap the economic benefits of selling more to this dynamic region?

TRIBUTE TO DON RITCHIE

Mr. President, on one final matter, I would like to bid a fond farewell to one of the smartest guys around here, Don Ritchie, who will be leaving us later this month. He has been the Senate's Historian since 2009. Don is only the second one we have ever had. His immediate and only predecessor, Richard Baker, hired him when the Senate Historical Office came into being in the mid-1970s. There were a lot of applicants to be Baker's No. 2 back then, but Don quickly rose to the top of the heap. Baker said he received "several extremely heartfelt letters" of recommendation for Don that were just literally "over the top." One, he said, was from "a leading diplomatic historian . . . who said that in his whole 30-odd years of teaching he had never encountered a more perceptive or diligent . . . [or] brighter student than Don."

"No more superlatives," he said, "could have been used." Apparently, no more superlatives were needed because Don Ritchie got the job, and, so it is clear, he hasn't disappointed, even though he did have to wait three decades for the big promotion.

Don came into the Senate with all the hype of New Coke, but his performance and staying power have had more of a Coke Classic feel. Don likes to say he has "a front-row seat to the best show in town."

Don is the only one we turn to when we want to learn more about where the Senate has been so we can chart a better course for where it is going. He has been a great resource for my staff and me over the years. Don's office is there as a resource for the American public, too. He is the guy you see on TV explaining the historical significance of events such as swearing-in ceremonies and inaugurations.

I don't think any of us would want to face him on "Jeopardy." His depth of knowledge really is something to behold. I am sure he has gained a lot of that knowledge from the part of his job he loves the most, which is conducting the Senate Historical Office's Oral History Project. He has interviewed just about everyone you could imagine, from Senators, to clerks, to police officers. He even got to interview a man who once worked as a congressional page—listen to this—during the Presidency of William Howard Taft. That page provided "some very good information," Don said, even if he kept "falling asleep several times during the interview."

Here is how Roll Call once described Don Ritchie: the Senate's "memory keeper."

It is fitting, then, that the Senate voted recently to designate Don Ritchie as Historian emeritus. It is not as though he plans to slow down in retirement, anyway. "Historians never re-

tire," Don says, "they just have more time to research."

Along with research, Don also plans to spend more time with his three beloved grandchildren and to do some traveling with his wife Anne. The Senate wishes him the very best in retirement and sends its heartfelt congratulations to a man who has been an institution around here for four decades—four decades.

The Senate would also like to offer its congratulations to Betty Koed, who has just been announced by the Secretary of the Senate as our next Senate Historian. We also wish Kate Scott well in her promotion to Associate Historian.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

TRIBUTE TO DON RITCHIE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, three decades ago, when Senator Robert Byrd began drafting a series of lectures on the history of the United States Senate, to whom did he go for help? Don Ritchie. Ten years ago, when Dan Brown, the popular author of the best-selling "DaVinci Code," wanted information about the Capitol for his new novel, to whom did he go? Don Ritchie. Even now, when famed historian and biographer Robert Caro needs facts for his five-volume work on Lyndon Johnson, he goes to Don Ritchie. Well, for 39 years, any person needing valuable insight into the United States Senate and its history has known where to go—the Senate Historian, Don Ritchie. And Don has obliged, sharing his wealth of knowledge with anyone who asked—Senators, staff, authors, historians, and visitors.

But after four decades of service, Don will officially retire from the Senate Historical Office at the end of this month.

As the senior Senator from Kentucky stated, from his first day here in the Senate, Don Ritchie made this institution a better place. The first-ever Senate Historian, Don's predecessor, Richard Baker, once said, "March 8, 1976—that's a date, like my wedding anniversary, that I remember." Indeed, that was the day Don Ritchie was hired as an Associate Historian in the newly formed Senate Historical Office.

Don Ritchie, a former marine, was fresh out of graduate school at the University of Maryland, having received his Ph.D. in history just a year earlier. He was getting his start in the profession, driving all over the DC area, teaching at George Mason, Northern Virginia Community College, and University College. He was also working part time with the American Historical Association. When offered a job in the Senate Historical Office, he jumped at the chance. The rest is, as they say, history.

Don has served honorably as Senate Historian. Prior to that, he worked as Associate Senate Historian for 33 years. Over the combined 40 years of

service, Don has authored 12 books, 3 textbooks, and a fourth is now on the way. He has lectured on Senate history at just about every major historical society in America. He has become a fixture on C-SPAN. But his crowning achievement would be his development of the Senate Oral History Project. Don has recorded countless interviews with people who worked in the Senate, from Parliamentarians, to clerks, to pages. Future generations of historians will better understand the Senate of the 20th and 21st centuries because of Don Ritchie's Oral History Project. That is an accomplishment which will stand forever.

On a more personal note, I have so appreciated Don's insight and expertise. Every week, I begin my caucus by calling on the Senate Historian, and he talks to us about so many fascinating things, things we do not ordinarily know about, but they are all interesting, whether it is Prohibition, whether it is events that took place in the first or second Roosevelt administration—it does not matter what it is. These are times I look forward to, and, quite frankly, it shuts up my caucus. When he shows up, they are suddenly attentive. I would like to think they are not more attentive to him than to me, but I would think that is the case. As I said, our lunches can be fairly boisterous, and they stop all conversation to listen to Don Ritchie. That is because so often Senators walk away from his lectures with a better understanding and appreciation of the Senate.

He has been invaluable to me and every other Senate Democrat. As we heard from the majority leader, he also has been very good for the Republicans.

As he prepares for a new chapter in his life, I wish him the very best. It is good news that he and his wife Anne will be jumping into retirement together. As we have heard, for historians, retirement only means more time to pore through books and find out what someone else missed and try to take another run at writing something that is interesting.

After a successful career as an architect and historian, his wife Anne is retiring from the National Gallery of Art. Together, Anne and Don will have plenty of time to spend with their two daughters, Jennifer and Andrea, and their three grandchildren, Cami, Jack, and Boone.

Even in retirement, Don will continue reading and researching about this institution he and I love so dearly—the Senate. After all, as Don himself points out, "Historians don't retire"—as Senator MCCONNELL said—"they just get more time to research."

Thank you, Don Ritchie, for your four decades of service to the Senate and your country. You really will be missed.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

Mr. REID. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, may I ask the minority leader if it would be possible to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in a quorum call.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Through the Chair, I ask my friend from Indiana how long the Senator wishes to speak as in morning business.

Mr. COATS. No more than 10 minutes.

Mr. REID. I do not care. I would just like to know. That is fine.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Indiana be recognized for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COATS. I thank the minority leader for this opportunity.

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT

Mr. President, recently on this floor, I spoke about the need to pass the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act with robust, veto-proof, bipartisan majorities. That is asking a lot, but I did so because this is the only chance we have to prevent President Obama from having a free and totally independent hand to conclude a flawed agreement with the Government of Iran. We cannot allow that to happen.

This Congress has pleaded for and worked for and will achieve the opportunity to play a major role in this decision, which is a decision of historic consequence.

Let me repeat what I just said. This bill is the only chance we have now to prevent President Obama from having a completely free hand, with no opportunity to address it in a bipartisan way, to achieve success in rejecting a bad agreement.

Passage of the bill before us will result in either forcing critical and absolutely necessary improvements in the deal now being cooked with our Secretary of State and the President and his people or defeating a bad deal if a bad deal is presented to us.

The stakes in this game are beyond calculation. I personally regard this as the most consequential issue of my entire public career. Our failure to have an opportunity to have this Congress—the representatives of the American people—bring before the American people what is in this deal and the consequences if this deal is not a good deal that will prevent Iran from having nuclear weapons capability—this is absolutely essential. The only chance we have to exercise our constitutional

right, which I believe, but our right to address something of this consequence is to pass the Corker-Cardin bill.

It is not the perfect bill. It is not the bill that I think perhaps even Senator CORKER would have preferred. But it is where we are. The only way we could get here and get bipartisan support for this was to do this.

This gives us the opportunity to do the following: A Congressional review period will be provided before implementation. An opportunity for Congress to vote on the agreement will be provided under Corker-Cardin.

A limitation on the President's use of waivers to suspend sanctions that have been put in place by this body will be taken away. A requirement that Congress receive the final deal will be lost. The requirement that the President certify that Iran is complying will be taken away. A mechanism for Congress to rapidly reimpose sanctions in the event of violations will be lost. Reporting on Iran support for terrorism, ballistic missile development, and human rights violations will be lost. All of this is lost if we do not stand together and insist on the right to engage in this. We must pass this or the defeat will be of historical consequence.

This bill is the only chance, as I said, that Congress has to weigh in on a potential agreement. The stakes are too high. The consequence is too great to engage in changes. Many well-intended statements have been made by my colleagues, and I endorse every word of what has been said. Amendments have been offered that, had they not been offered by someone else, in a different fashion, I would have wanted to offer. We can still offer those going forward.

But in order to achieve the bipartisan support necessary to deny the President the opportunity to have a free hand in cutting any deal he wants and the concessions already given—this should raise alarms in each of us in terms of support for this bill which is before us.

What are the stakes? What are the consequences? Former Secretaries Kissinger and Shultz and other foreign policy experts did a recent Wall Street Journal piece and said this:

If the Middle East is "proliferated" and becomes host to a plethora of nuclear-threshold states, several in mortal rivalry with each other, on what concept of nuclear deterrence or strategic stability will international security be based?

They continue:

It is in America's strategic interest to prevent the outbreak of a nuclear war and its catastrophic consequences. Nuclear arms must not be permitted to turn into conventional weapons. The passions of the region allied with weapons of mass destruction may impel deepening American involvement.

In closing, I want to address statements offered by some who argue that passing this bill is unnecessary because in 2017 we will have a new President in the White House and that President will be a Republican. Well, I hope that is so, but there is obviously no guarantee of that. But in the meantime—in

the meantime—Iran will achieve a free hand to go forward with newly acquired wealth, the will to achieve and the technical capability to achieve nuclear weapons capability.

Let me conclude by supporting a statement that was made by Max Boot, a respected foreign policy analyst:

Skeptics about the looming nuclear accord with Iran may be taking comfort from the promises of Republican presidential candidates to tear up the treaty as soon as they reach the Oval Office. They shouldn't be. Even assuming a Republican wins the White House next year—

Which, as we know, is not a certainty. Hopefully, from our standpoint, we hope that is the case—

pulling out of the agreement won't necessarily fix its defects. In fact, it could make the situation even worse.

The U.S. would then get the worst of both worlds: Iran already would have been enriched by hundreds of billions of dollars of sanctions relief—and it would be well on its way to fielding nuclear weapons with de facto permission from the international community. To avoid this nightmare scenario, the best play from America's standpoint could well be to keep the accord in place to at least delay Iran's decision to weaponize.

In short, don't expect salvation in 2017. If the accord is signed its consequences will be irrevocable. Whatever a future president does or does not do, Iran's hard-line regime will be immeasurably strengthened by the agreement. That makes it all the more imperative to stop a bad agreement now—not two years from now.

I urge my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, to vote to give Congress—this Congress—the right and the opportunity to scrutinize every single word of what is being negotiated with the Iranians, to inform the American people, and then achieve what I would hope would be an overwhelming rejection of the agreement if it does not achieve the goal of denying Iran its nuclear weapons capability. This is a very important vote before us. I think we need to look at what the end goal is and how we can best get there under the circumstances which we now are in. We would all like to be in a different position. But to achieve and get to this particular point, we are looking at this particular bill to give us a say—a meaningful say—and an opportunity to reject a bad agreement which at this particular point in time, in my view, does not achieve what we need to achieve and should be thoroughly scrutinized by us and the American people.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1191, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows: