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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 12, 2015, at 12 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, MAY 11, 2015

The Senate met at 3 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.

Sovereign Lord, You are our light and salvation so we will not fear. You are the strength of our lives so we will be unafraid. Lord, we are grateful for Your steadfast love and unchanging mercy. Each day You provide us with Your power and compassion.

Sustain our lawmakers today, strengthening them in their challenging work of striving to find creative ways to solve the problems of our time. Inspire them to trust You without wavering, acknowledging You in all they do. Lord, be gracious to them, guiding them with Your wisdom as You gladden their spirits with Your eternal presence.

Send down Heaven's peace into all our hearts.

We pray in Your merciful 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

THE SENATE AT WORK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I took a trip up to Boston this weekend to address the Kennedy Institute. It was really a unique experience.

I was there in a full-scale representation of the Senate Chamber to discuss how the real Senate is beginning to get back to work. I explained how committees are working again so Senators can have more of a stake in the legislative process. I explained how we are allowing more open floor debate and more amendment opportunities so Senators can better represent the voices of their constituents. And I explained how we are getting the fundamentals back on track, such as passing a budget.

This doesn't mean we have ironed out all the Senate's challenges. It doesn't mean a new era of good feelings beckons just around the corner. And it doesn't mean an exertion of will won't be necessary every now and then. But it does mean that we are beginning to open the Senate back up, and in a way that will make shared achievement more likely.

Recall just last week, when we overwhelmingly passed a bill to give the

American people more of a say in President Obama's negotiations with Iran. Although we weren't able to consider nearly the number of amendments I would have liked to have seen considered to strengthen the bill, the legislation did provide for congressional oversight of any comprehensive agreement.

The White House had been threatening to veto that bill, but it passed with the bipartisan support of 98 percent of Senators anyway.

Later this afternoon, we will take up another Iran-related measure that I hope we will pass with similar bipartisan enthusiasm.

The resolution of the junior Senator from Idaho is simple. It calls on the administration to use the tools it has in pursuit of what should be a bipartisan goal: securing the release of American citizens being held as hostages by the regime in Iran.

One of those Americans, Saeed Abedini, has reportedly been held prisoner for what would appear to be the supposed crime of attempting to build and operate an orphanage—the supposed crime of building and operating an orphanage.

Beaten, denied access to medical care, and locked away in solitary confinement—that is apparently how the Iranian regime deals with those who dare to show love and compassion to others. No American should find this acceptable, just as no American should find it acceptable to imprison unjustly a reporter or a grandson coming to see his grandmother.

I think we can all agree that, at the very least, the American people should

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



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