

SENATE—Monday, September 25, 2000*(Legislative day of Friday, September 22, 2000)*

The Senate met at 12 noon, on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Dr. James D. Miller, First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa, OK.

We are pleased to have you with us.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, Dr. James D. Miller, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray together.

Almighty God, who flings galaxies into space, who plays with quarks and quasars—how stunning it is, as the prophet Isaiah puts it: that You call us each by name, and we are Yours.—43:1.

It's because of such grace, O God, that we choose to begin our work this day by commending these Senators, their families, and those who work most closely with them into Your care. And as we do, we remember especially those here today who come from home carrying personal burdens that have little to do with the pressures of public service. You know our individual needs, O God. Wrap Your arms around those who find this day difficult; surprise them with Your life-giving grace and strength.

Grant these Senators a heart for the people whom they serve, especially those Americans whose hopes are diminished today, whose dreams constricted, who wonder if there's any voice that really speaks on their behalf.

We thank You for blessings that come through those who serve with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love. Grant these leaders humility in discourse, courage to follow convictions, and wisdom to be led by conscience. May they be honoring of one another, and may the work done here bring honor supremely to You, Sovereign Lord, before whom all of us will one day stand and give account.

We offer our prayers from the different faith traditions in which we live, and as a Christian I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable PAT ROBERTS, a Senator from the State of Kansas, 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 ACTING
MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). The distinguished Senator from Oklahoma is recognized.

DR. JAMES D. MILLER, GUEST
CHAPLAIN

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I was very honored to have the opening prayer given by my pastor in Tulsa, OK—a church where my wife, who is present today, and I were married 41 years ago—when he was a very small baby, I might add. It is kind of unique, Mr. President. You know Oklahoma quite well. Oklahoma wasn't even a State until 1907, and yet the First Presbyterian Church started in 1885. For the first 15 years, the congregation was made up entirely of Cree Indian. It is an unusual type of church. I might also add that in all those years—that would be what, 115 years—there have only been six pastors of the First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa. Dr. Jim Miller is the sixth pastor. So once they come, they do not want to leave.

We are honored also to have with us his wife Diana and two of his children, David and Courtney, who are in attendance with my wife.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. REID. I also enjoyed the prayer.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 2 p.m.

SCHEDULE

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 2 p.m. Senator DURBIN will be in control of the first hour and Senator THOMAS will be in control of the second hour.

Following morning business, the Senate will begin debate on the motion to proceed to S. 2557, the National Energy Security Act. At 3:50 p.m. today, the

Senate will begin closing remarks on the Water Resources Development Act of 2000, with a vote scheduled to occur at 4:50 p.m. As a reminder, cloture was filed on the pending amendment to the H-1B visa bill on Friday.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate convene at 9:30 a.m. tomorrow; that the time until 10:30 be equally divided between the two managers; and that the cloture vote on the pending amendment to the H-1B visa bill occur at 10:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Chair hears none and it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. I thank my colleagues for their attention.

H-1B AND LATINO AND
IMMIGRANT FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on Friday I moved that we proceed to the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act, and my good friend, the majority leader, objected to our proceeding to that bill. I was disappointed, and I am sorry that we are not going to be able to debate this issue, and hope that there will come a time before this Congress ends when we will be able to do so.

Those who are watching for action on this important piece of legislation should understand why we are at this point; that is, why we are not debating the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act, but, rather, why we are now on H-1B only, and why tomorrow there is going to be a motion to invoke cloture on the underlying bill.

I consider myself to be one of the strongest supporters for increasing visas for highly skilled workers. I have spent an enormous amount of time over the past several years working on this legislation in an effort to expedite its consideration. As a matter of fact, this legislation should have been brought forward to the Senate many months ago. It should have been taken up and debated under the normal process of considering legislation. I believe an H-1B bill would have passed quickly and the legislation would have already been signed into law. But it also would have provided other Members opportunities, as is their right, to offer related immigration amendments for what we all agree is the only immigration bill that we would consider this year as a freestanding bill.