

## SENATE—Thursday, May 4, 2000

The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Sovereign God, ultimate ruler of this Nation, the one to whom we are joined with millions of Americans across the land in humble repentance on this National Day of Prayer, we know that repentance is confessing our needs and returning to You. In so many ways we have drifted from You, Holy Father. Forgive us when we neglect our spiritual heritage as a Nation. Help us when we become dulled in our accountability to You and the moral absolutes of Your commandments. Without absolute righteousness, morality, honesty, integrity, and faithfulness, our society operates in frivolous situational ethics while the prosperity of our times camouflages the poverty of the soul of our Nation.

May this day of prayer be the beginning of a great spiritual awakening. Wake us up to the realization that all we have and are is Your gift. Draw us back into a relationship of graceful trust in You that will make our motto "In God We Trust" not just a slogan but a profound expression of our dependence on You to guide and bless this Nation. We confess our false pride and express our full praise. Today we renew our commitment to You as Lord of this land and of our personal lives. Hear the urgent prayers of Your people and bring us back home to Your heart where we belong.

Today, gracious God, we join the Nation in mourning the death of John Cardinal O'Connor. We thank You for his leadership, for his prophetic powers, and for his obedience to follow You in social justice.

Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MIKE CRAPO, a Senator from the State of Indiana, 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 PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today the Senate will immediately begin consid-

eration of the Abraham-Mack amendment regarding merit pay for teachers. Following that debate, Senator MURRAY will be recognized to offer her amendment regarding class size. No time agreements have been made with regard to these amendments, and therefore votes will occur at a time to be determined in the future. Senators will be notified as votes are scheduled.

The Senate will not be in session tomorrow. However, it is expected that debate on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act will continue next week.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

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

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ABRAHAM. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAPO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

### EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 2, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2) to extend programs and activities under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 3117

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk on behalf of Senator MACK, myself, and Senator COVERDELL, and I ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Michigan [Mr. ABRAHAM], for himself, Mr. MACK, and Mr. COVERDELL, proposes amendment numbered 3117.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Amendments Submitted.")

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I have a unanimous-consent request regarding debate on this amendment. I think we will probably go back and forth, but on the Democratic side, after Senator KENNEDY and Senator MURRAY speak, I ask unanimous consent I follow them in sequence as we alternate back and forth.

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

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, my assumption is that the unanimous-consent agreement that was entered into and envisioned, we would alternate between sides if there are speakers on each side, but that it would govern the order in which the Democratic side speakers would address the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is the Chair's understanding. The Chair, under the unanimous-consent request, will alternate between sides. The speakers on the Democratic side are Senator KENNEDY, Senator MURRAY, and Senator WELLSTONE, in that order.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, title II of the bill before the Senate today includes a provision called the Teacher Employment Act—or TEA. This provision combines the current ESEA, title II, Eisenhower Professional Development Program and the class-size reduction program, for a total of \$2 billion, which is then made available to states and local education agencies for teacher development programs.

Our amendment would amend the TEA provision—and expand the scope of allowable uses of title II professional development funds to allow states and local education agencies to use these funds for the development and implementation of teacher testing, merit-based pay, and tenure reform programs.

Mr. President, I believe that a qualified, highly trained, and highly motivated teacher is the key to a quality education for America's children. Most of our colleagues would agree.

Teachers play a special and indispensable role in our children's education. Nothing can replace the positive and long-lasting impact a dedicated, knowledgeable teacher has on a child's learning process.

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future found that while class size reduction has the least impact on increasing student achievement and that teacher-education—teacher quality—has the most impact on student achievement.

Our amendment is designed to improve the quality of our teachers. It puts into practice the common sense we all share—the sense that teachers