

SENATE—Tuesday, July 24, 2001

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. BYRD].

PRAYER

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

Almighty God, Sovereign of our Nation and personal Lord of our lives, thank You for the gift of prayer. It is awesome that You who are Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer of all, know each of us by name and know our needs before we ask You. In this sacred moment, we realize that we need You more than anything You can give us. You created each of us to know and enjoy You as our Master and Friend. You who are so mighty are also magnanimous in our friendship with You. You love us, give us security, and replenish our hope. Time with You changes everything: Our stress and strain are healed by Your peace; our worries are resolved by trusting You; our burdens are lifted off our backs; our souls are replenished by Your indwelling Spirit. You care for us so much that You confront us when we are tempted with pride, anger, or impatience. You change our thinking when it gets muddled or confused. You have challenged us to pray and care for each other across party lines. You give us the courage to put the needs of the Nation first, above political advantage. Bless this Senate with unity, civility, and productivity today. You are our Lord and Saviour. 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today we will resume consideration of the Transportation Appropriations Act. Senators MURRAY and SHELBY are anxious to move this as quickly as possible. There will be rollcall votes on amendments throughout the day.

The two leaders met yesterday to discuss what the remaining schedule would be for this week and next week. There are certain things that have to

be done prior to the recess. The two leaders recognize that. I am sure there will be announcements made in the near future as to what those items are.

The Senate will recess from 12:30 to 2:15 today for the weekly party conferences.

I am brought back to the prayer by Reverend Ogilvie where he said, among other things, that he hopes today is a productive day. I do, too. We have so many things to do, not the least of which is this Transportation appropriations bill, which is important for every State of the Union. I hope we can move through this bill expeditiously and, as the Chaplain said, be very productive today.

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

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the order previously entered, the Senate will now resume consideration of H.R. 2299, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2299) making appropriations for the Department of Transportation and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Murray/Shelby amendment No. 1025, in the nature of a substitute.

Murray/Shelby amendment No. 1030 (to amendment No. 1025), to enhance the inspection requirements for Mexican motor carriers seeking to operate in the United States and to require them to display decals.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I will speak on the matter of the Transportation bill.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator may proceed.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, may I inquire of the Senator how long he intends to speak?

Mr. NELSON of Florida. About 3 minutes.

Mrs. MURRAY. I thank the Senator. Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, Floridians who travel Interstate 4 between Tampa and Orlando need relief. The congestion they encounter on the I-4 corridor is paralyzing, and it is

not just a problem for our residents in Florida. It is also a nuisance for the millions of tourists who visit central Florida each year. With each new tourist attraction comes another traffic snarl. We must find ways to relieve the gridlock, but double-decker highways are not the answer.

Last year, Florida's voters approved an initiative in a statewide referendum that requires the State to build a high-speed train linking five of our largest urban areas, and the spending measure that is now before the Senate, particularly today—and we hope to complete it today—will begin to start helping Florida meet that goal.

I am very grateful to our colleagues for including in this Transportation appropriations bill \$4.5 million for bullet train planning in the corridor from Orlando to Tampa. Senator GRAHAM and I fought for this funding because we knew that our traffic problems could not be solved by adding more lanes to our highways. And we have an excellent opportunity in this high-traffic corridor between Tampa and Orlando, where you can't build your way out of the problem with new lanes, of creating a model for a new kind of transportation corridor with specialized lanes and a high-speed rail running down its center.

The State of Florida has also committed \$4.5 million in planning money to a high-speed rail authority, and with this kind of partnership between the State government and the Federal Government, we can make this high-speed train a reality in that corridor that needs it so desperately. The benefits could be enormous. A high-speed train between Tampa and Orlando could travel more than 120 miles an hour, providing commuters with a safer and faster alternative to their daily battles with the traffic gridlock and the traffic jams.

I commend the Senator from Washington, the chairman of the appropriations subcommittee, and her ranking member, the Senator from Alabama. I am so pleased the committee has provided this important funding, and I am going to continue to work with my colleague from Florida to see that this money is included in the final version of this bill.

Mr. President, I thank you very much for this opportunity to state something that is so important to Florida.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CARNAHAN). The Senator from Washington is recognized.