

SENATE—Monday, April 30, 2001

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable HARRY REID, a Senator from the State of Nevada.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The prayer will be offered by the guest Chaplain, Rev. Richard Foth, Falls Church, VA.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, Rev. Richard Foth, offered the following prayer:

We stand in Your presence today, Almighty God, in awe of Your creation. No season reflects Your heart like springtime, with its songbirds and cherry blossoms, old memories and young love. Just outside this building, all nature shouts Your glory, Your grace, and Your creative power.

But, we need Your grace and creativity here, too, in this Chamber. For, in the lives of 100 Senators, we see men and women with whom we have something in common. Though elected to govern us, many grapple as we do in balancing work with family. They have spouses and children and grandchildren whom they love and dream for. On this spring afternoon, we ask Your blessings on the families of these public servants. Give them perspective and patience and protection. Where pain is real or frustration mounts, wrap them in Your arms, we pray, and hold them with a grip like all eternity.

As for the business of this week, we ask wisdom. Debate will be intense about money and programs. Differences will show up quickly and good thinkers will speak strong words in strong ways. Give our chosen leaders grace to bring more light than heat to the Senate floor in the next 4 days and, in so doing, to move us ahead as a nation.

In the springtime of 2001, let the actions of this body help us to know one more time that we really are "one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

We ask these things in that name which is above every name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK DAYTON, a Senator from the State of Minnesota, 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. THURMOND).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 30, 2001.

To the Senate:

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

STROM THURMOND,
President pro tempore.

Mr. DAYTON thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 3 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes.

Under the previous order, the time until 2:30 p.m. shall be under the control of the Senator from Illinois or his designee.

The Senator from Nevada.

CONSIDERATION OF THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this week we are going to take up one of the most important pieces of legislation that will occur this entire Congress—not this year, not next year, but the entire Congress. That is the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—extremely important.

In the last Congress, we did not complete it. We were refused the opportunity to debate and amend this legislation—we, the Democrats, in the minority. Things have changed now. The Senate is divided 50–50. The time has come that we work together on this and all legislation.

Last week, we did some very important work. We only had one vote last week, but it was an extremely important vote. It was on brownfields legislation, legislation that will allow people all over the State of Nevada and all over the State of Minnesota to clean up spots that are lightly polluted. They are not Superfund sites, but they are

sites that right now people are afraid to go onto and develop a shopping center or a park, the reason being, if they go upon the land, there will be a liability under the Superfund legislation. So the brownfields legislation, which passed last week 99–0, will allow these approximately 600,000 sites all over America to be cleaned up. It will create over half a million jobs. It will create tax revenues for local governments of about \$2.5 billion. It is important legislation. It is not the number of votes we have; it is what we do with them.

There is presently pending before the Senate a cloture vote. We are scheduled to take that tomorrow morning. I hope that will be vitiated, that we can just go to consideration of the bill.

There have been negotiations on this bill that continued even during the weekend. Staff and members of the committee worked very hard to come up with something on which we can all agree. There has been, as I understand it, general agreement on the substance of the bill. And that is important.

So I repeat, I hope we will be able to vitiate the cloture vote scheduled tomorrow. The cloture vote is not only unnecessary; it is unproductive. It is counterproductive. All the parties have been working in good faith in a bipartisan manner to work out the differences, just as we did with the brownfields legislation.

When this bill was reported out of committee, there were some problems with it. It passed 15–3, but there were still some minor problems. Even though we had an overwhelming majority when it came out of the committee, we said to those people who had some concerns, let's try to work them out; and we did. That is why the bill passed 99–0. The same can happen with this education legislation. People worked in good faith, in a bipartisan manner. Let's try to copy what happened in brownfields legislation.

There are two key areas in this legislation. The language differences I understand are pretty well resolved. There are some funding differences, and they have not been resolved. But I think we should do it the American way, the way we have been doing it in this country for over 200 years. Let's bring this bill to this body, and then we will have votes as to what we should do for the children of America as it relates to education.

It would be most unfortunate to not turn to the bill. It seems to me it is wrong not to work on this legislation, debate it, however it needs to be debated. We need to work out the policy differences. It is my understanding that that has pretty well been done.