

SENATE—Thursday, December 7, 2006

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, our stronghold in times of trouble, bless today our Senators. Lord, 65 years ago, America experienced a day of infamy. As we remember Pearl Harbor, our hearts turn toward the men and women of our Armed Forces and their families. Thank You for their investment in freedom and their sacrifices for our liberties. Comfort those who mourn and those who bear the scars of battle. Be a companion to those who must stare at an empty chair during this holiday season. Defend those in harm's way with Your heavenly grace, and give them courage to face perils with trust in You. Give them a sense of Your abiding presence, wherever they may be.

We pray in Your sovereign 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 PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION**NOMINATION OF ANDREW VON ESCHENBACH TO BE COMMISSIONER OF FOOD AND DRUGS, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Andrew von Eschenbach, of Texas, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Andrew von Eschenbach to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this morning the Senate will vote on the motion

to invoke cloture on the nomination of the FDA Commissioner, Andrew von Eschenbach. Senators can expect to have this vote around 10:30 to 10:45 this morning, following the 1 hour for debate. As I mentioned yesterday morning, this is a very important position, and to have this confirmation finally being accomplished will be a great achievement for this Congress.

Once cloture has been invoked, we will try to schedule that vote on confirmation early in the day. There are several critical items the Senate must act on before we adjourn sine die, and therefore Senators should adjust their travel plans to be here voting over the coming days.

I will be working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to wrap up our business for the Congress, and I appreciate Senators' willingness to work together on a number of legislative and executive matters.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

MOVING THE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Andrew von Eschenbach is cleared on this side, so as far as we are concerned there is no need for a cloture vote. We look forward to working with the distinguished majority leader today, maybe tomorrow, maybe Saturday, to try to get as much cooperation out of Senators as possible. I know the finance folks have worked long and hard to try to come up with something that is very important for the country. We will continue to monitor that and do everything we can as we try to move this legislative agenda forward.

PROTECTING AMERICAN VALUES

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I will be very brief. I want to speak on another matter. I know we want to get to the hour of pre-vote time here shortly.

Hopefully, tomorrow will officially end the 109th Congress. At the end of the day tomorrow, if we do our work today successfully, and tonight, the Senate will be able to adjourn. That will also mark, once we adjourn, this official change in leadership and change in the Senate agenda. I know many of my colleagues and many of my conservative allies view this change with a bit of trepidation, but change is good, change is constructive. It can be difficult, it can be painful, and it can be messy, but change forces us all to reexamine who we are, where we are, and where we want to go; what we know, what we believe.

I believe it is our responsibility to protect traditional, commonsense American values. I believe when we

give the American people the freedom to invest their money as they choose, the economy is going to flourish. It is going to have more freedom to grow. At the end of the day, I believe good leaders don't talk about principles—don't talk about them—but good leaders lead on principle. They act, and they act with solutions, even if they don't know that the outcome is going to be 100-percent successful every time a bill is taken to the floor.

I think that is one of the things that at least I tried to do, is not say let's only take to the floor what will necessarily pass but what is the right thing to do, on principle; what is the right thing for us to be considering.

During my tenure in public office, it is what I tried to do, to lead on principle and act with solutions. It does come from that surgical approach of fixing things, of operating, of action.

For example . . . for 10 years, we grappled with the issue of Internet gambling. We watched the industry mushroom from a \$30 million industry in 1996 to a \$12 billion industry today. We watched an addiction undermine families, dash dreams, and fray the fabric of a moral society.

So we acted with a solution . . . by passing the Internet Gambling Prohibition and Enforcement Act to provide new enforcement tools to prosecute illegal Internet gambling.

Let me give you a few more recent examples of how we have led on principle, and acted with solutions.

We passed the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act . . . which creates a national sex offender registry, strengthens measures to prevent child pornography, and reinforces laws against child porn.

We passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, which renewed the first federal law to strengthen prosecution efforts against human traffickers.

We passed legislation securing the right to prayer in U.S. military academies.

We passed legislation protecting the Mount Soledad Memorial Cross.

We passed the Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act, which allows for the 10-fold increase of FCC fines for indecency violations.

We passed Cord blood legislation that harnesses the power of stem cells in cord blood to develop new cures for life-threatening diseases.

We passed the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act, which prohibits the gestation of fetal tissue in order to use it for research.

We passed the Stem Cell Research Alternatives bill, which provides federal