

SENATE—Saturday, September 27, 2008*(Legislative day of Wednesday, September 17, 2008)*

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable MARK L. PRYOR, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Creator of the universe, all loving, all wise, all powerful, move on Capitol Hill today. Your lawmakers need You for such a time as this, and You have promised to supply their needs. Supply their need for wisdom. Illuminate their minds as they seek to do the right thing. Infuse them with supernatural power to make sense out of the riddles that baffle so many. May they be able to look back over today's labors knowing they have glorified You. Lord, astound them with new thoughts and fresh insights they could not conceive without Your blessing.

We pray in the Name of Him who is the truth. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK L. PRYOR 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. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 27, 2008.

To the Senate:

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

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following the remarks of the leaders, if any, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the House message to accompany H.R. 2638, the continuing resolution. The time until 10 a.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the leaders or their designees. At exactly 10 a.m., the Senate will proceed to a rollcall vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 2638.

As those of us here have seen, in trying to make entry to the Capitol, there is something of a bicycle race or performance of some kind. It has really slowed things up, so we are not going to terminate the vote in the normal 15-minute time schedule. We are going to make sure people have an opportunity to get here.

I say to all Members, unless something can be resolved by consent, we are going to file cloture today on the Department of Defense authorization bill, which will be a Monday vote. Hopefully, there does not have to be a vote tomorrow. Thirty hours after cloture was invoked on this matter will be sometime tomorrow afternoon. There are a number of ways we can do that. People wanting the extra 30 hours could waive that or they could let us have a voice vote tomorrow. As I understand it, there is only one Senator holding up this bill now. We will work on that during the next hour or so. It appears we may have to be in session tomorrow, with a vote on Monday. I know there is a holiday on Monday starting at sundown and going to sundown on Tuesday.

The staff worked until about 3 a.m. this morning on the bailout. They made significant progress. There are probably 15 issues still left outstanding. Senators are going to have to get together and resolve those. We hope sometime tomorrow evening we can announce that there has been some kind of an agreement in principle so the only thing that will have to be done is to write the legislation. We are still a long way from completing it, but we have made significant progress, as I just indicated. We will keep Senators advised on a timely basis as well as we can.

CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER ACT OF 2008

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 611, H.R. 5159.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5159) to establish the Office of the Capitol Visitor Center within the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, headed by the Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services, to provide for the effective management and administration of the Capitol Visitor Center, and other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. DEMINT, Mr. President, I rise to speak on the newest addition to the U.S. Capitol, the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center.

I have been told by the Architect of the Capitol that the CVC is scheduled to open its doors to the public for the first time on December 2 of this year. I have toured this impressive facility, and I believe it will be a vast improvement in the experience visitors will have when touring the Capitol Complex. I look forward to the opening of this long awaited addition; it will be a momentous and historic occasion.

However, in addition to providing security and functionality, the CVC also provides an educational experience designed to tell the story of our Nation's Capitol. I believe it is critical that this history appropriately and accurately reflects the traditions and history of the Capitol.

We want our constituents and visitors from around the world to get an accurate portrayal of the Capitol's history and, as much as possible, to understand the motivations and inspirations of those who have led our branch of Government since its establishment 220 years ago.

Tragically, as the CVC exists now, they will get a much different experience.

In touring the CVC, I found the exhibits to be politically correct, left leaning, and secular in nature. The secular aspects were especially surprising because of the deep connection between faith and the Capitol, and our Judeo-Christian traditions. But despite this connection and our traditions, the doors to the CVC are flanked with a quote from former Congressman Rufus Choate that says, "We have built no temple but the Capitol. We consult no common oracle but the Constitution." Even a brief reflection on our Nation's history will show this quote is not accurate and, in my opinion, grossly inappropriate.

The first thing you are confronted with once you have entered the CVC is