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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, December 19, 2011, at 10 a.m.

Senate

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2011

The Senate met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, a Senator from the State of Connecticut.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Today, O God, we magnify Your Name for Your purity, holiness, and justice as the Judge of the universe. Let Your purity, holiness, and justice be seen on Capitol Hill today. Bind our lawmakers together in the oneness of a shared commitment to You, a passionate patriotism, and a loyal dedication to find Your solutions for the concerns that confront and often divide us. May the words of our Senators and the meditations of their hearts be acceptable to You. Use their labors so that justice will roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable RICHARD BLUMENTHAL 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. INOUE).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, December 17, 2011.

To the Senate:

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

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

VOTE COMPROMISES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as happens once in a while here, we do not have a final score on part of the payroll tax issue that we have, the legislation. Joint Tax, CBO said they will have the score by 10 o'clock today. Therefore, we are going to reverse the order of what we are doing. We are going to vote on the matters relating to the omnibus first. However, I ask unanimous consent that if the Reid-McConnell substitute amendment is not agreed to—that is the payroll tax issue—the Senate's action with respect to the conference report to accompany H.R. 2055 and H.R. 3672 be vitiated and the majority leader be recognized.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, what was the parliamentary procedure the leader just referred to?

Mr. REID. We do not have a final score on the payroll tax matter. There is something dealing with SGR that is not quite right, so we want to make sure everything is totally paid for. We are going to get a score in just a few minutes, probably by 10 o'clock for sure, and we want to reverse the order. We are going to do all the omnibus stuff because people have things to do and want to leave. But if by some happenchance the payroll tax does not pass, then all this stuff, the votes on the omnibus, would be vitiated.

Mr. CORKER. I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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