



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 158

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2012

No. 61

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Rev. Joel Osteen, senior pastor of the Lakewood Church in Houston, TX.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Father we receive Your blessings today with grateful hearts, and thank You for the favor that You show us.

As we pray for those who lead our Nation, we ask that You bless this body and those who serve in it. We thank You that these lawmakers serve with honor and integrity, and that You will continue to bless our Nation through them. Give them wisdom that they will make good decisions, courage that they will hold fast to Your truth, and compassion that all should prosper from their laws. We receive Your presence here today, Father, and pray that these lawmakers will remain mindful of You and that they will honor You in everything they do.

In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM UDALL 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, April 26, 2012.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, 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.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2011

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1925, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows.

A bill (S. 1925) to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

GUEST CHAPLAIN JOEL OSTEEN

Mrs. HUTCHISON. It is my pleasure to be able to introduce our guest Chap-

lain, Joel Osteen, pastor of Lakewood Church in Houston. He is a native Texan and attended Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, OK.

For 17 years, Pastor Osteen worked behind the scenes for his father John, who founded Lakewood Church in 1959.

In 1999, after his father passed away, Pastor Osteen accepted God's call to service in the church and took over the reins as senior pastor, despite having only preached once in his life.

It was soon clear that this new, young preacher had a natural gift for speaking and was able to personally connect with diverse audiences with the inspirational message of God's love. Since that time, he and his wife and copastor Victoria have led Lakewood through extraordinary growth.

In 2005, the Osteens moved Lakewood Church from its original home in northeast Houston to the former home of the Houston Rockets basketball team. With this space, Pastor Osteen now delivers a message of hope and encouragement to 38,000 people a week, with millions more across the country tuning in on their televisions.

Pastor Osteen has reached millions more as a best-selling author. His first book, "Your Best Life Now," was released in 2004 and remained on the New York Times bestseller list for 2 years.

His most recent book, "Every Day a Friday," offers commonsense advice on how to be happy by applying the principles of God's word to your daily life. Pastor Osteen has spoken throughout the world, and that is what brings him to the Capitol today.

On Saturday the Osteens will lead thousands in what is billed as "a night of hope" at Nationals Park in Washington. That message of hope and encouragement is what has attracted me and my family to watch Pastor Osteen on Sunday morning. I have been to his church. He welcomed me and my daughter, Bailey—whose 11th birthday is today—at Lakewood Church 2 years ago, and I got to see this awesome

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



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