United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 108th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 149 WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2003 No. 155

Senate

The Senate met at 9 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.

Majestic God, from whom we borrow heartbeats, Your mercies endure forever. Today, we acknowledge our dependence on You. Lord, thank You for directing our steps and for protecting our loved ones. When darkness overtakes us, illuminate our path.

Let Your peace rest upon us today. Teach us to love wisdom and accept Your guidance. Keep us from traps that destroy our joy. Give us the humility that leads to honor and let Your justice reign in the Earth.

Guide our Senators, cheer them in their work, and keep them faithful to the end. Thwart the hopes of our Nation's enemies and bless those who each day risk their lives for liberty. We pray this in Your holy 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.

RECOGNITION OF ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, we will have the opening statement from the leader ready in a moment. He has been detained, but he will be here. I will review the schedule.

I do believe the first schedule of events would be statements regarding the nominee to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, Judge Charles Pickering of Mississippi. I believe we will be ready to begin with that momentarily.

Mr. President, this morning we will be proceeding to the debate, as I just outlined, on the nomination of Charles Pickering to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. There will be an hour of debate prior to the vote on invoking cloture on this nomination. The vote will occur sometime shortly after 10 a.m.

Following the vote, the Senate will return to debate on S. 139, the climate change legislation. There will be 2 additional hours for debate prior to the vote on that legislation.

Following the vote, the Senate will resume consideration of the Healthy Forests bill. We expect to have rollcall votes on amendments to that bill throughout the afternoon and hopefully we can complete action on the bill today. It sounds to me as if those involved in that legislation made real progress on the bill. It would be very positive if we could complete that action today.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting minority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as has been indicated by Senator LOTT, we have a lot to do today. There are a lot of different balls in the air regarding this Senate. I think we have them all where we can balance them quite well. We have, as the Presiding Officer knows, a conference report that has been completed after 2 long, hard days, the supplemental. We are making progress; the Interior appropriations bill has been done. I am hopeful we can finish the Energy and Water appropriations bill. So things are moving along quite well. I hope we can continue our momentum.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF CHARLES W. PICKERING, SR., OF MISSISSIPPI, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE FIFTH CIRCUIT

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 400, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Charles W. Pickering, Sr., of Mississippi, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be 60 minutes equally divided between the chairman and ranking member, with the final 10 minutes divided, with the first 5 minutes under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee and the final 5 minutes under the control of the majority leader or his designee.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the nomination Charles W. Pickering, Sr. to be a Circuit Judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. I am pleased that the Majority Leader has brought this nomination to the floor, as it has been nearly 2½ years since Judge Pickering was first nominated to this position. Since then, his record has been carefully considered. He appeared before the Judiciary Committee in not one, but two lengthy hearings. So there has been plenty of opportunity to consider the qualifications of Judge Pickering.

We have received hundreds of letters of support for Judge Pickering from the public, members of the bar, as well as political, academic, and religious

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

Printed on recycled paper.