

Actions of U.S. Senators and the President of the Senate have consequences, just as Carl's actions had consequences. In the Senate we make decisions. We have a lot more time to make these decisions than Carl had deciding to go back down in the hole. The decisions we make touch the lives of Americans. People all over America are affected by what we do in the Senate.

The citizens are counting on the Senate to make sure public schools are institutions that we as Americans are proud of. The American people are counting on us to make their life better by making medical care easier for them to come by. People are counting on the Senate so a child's ability to go to college will not be determined by how much money the parents have. People are counting on Congress to make sure Social Security is a stable fund they can depend on. People are counting on Congress to make sure the environment is good, so the water we drink is pure, the air we breathe is good. Women are depending on us. They are counting on us to make sure their wages are no longer 75 cents of every dollar we make as men. There is an article in the Washington Post today discussing a problem with more unintended pregnancies than we anticipated. They are depending on us to do something about that. Citizens are depending on us to make sure our fiscal house is in order. They are depending on us to do our work in a bipartisan fashion to effect change in our country to the good.

I spoke to Senator FRIST this past week. We are working on items for when we return in late January, items we can work on, on a bipartisan basis, to show the American people that, yes, we can work together. There are issues we can work on—maybe the highway bill. We did not do it last Congress; maybe we can do it this time. There are many other issues the leader and I talked about.

There are bipartisan opportunities, and I as the new Democratic leader speak on behalf of 45 Democratic Senators. We are here with our arms open to work with the administration, the Speaker, the Republican leader, to accomplish good for this country. There is much we can do that is going to make this country a better place.

Our decisions will affect the American people. We should never as a Senate forget that what we do has an impact on everyone.

I look forward to this new Congress, that we can forget what went on in the past, only call upon that which was positive in the past and look to the future with a greater day, a nicer day, a more pleasant day ahead.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader is recognized.

INFORMING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES THAT A QUORUM OF EACH HOUSE IS ASSEMBLED

Mr. FRIST. I send a resolution to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 1) informing the President of the United States that a quorum of each House is assembled.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, the resolution is agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 1) reads as follows:

Resolved, That a committee consisting of two Senators be appointed to join such committee as may be appointed by the House of Representatives to wait upon the President of the United States and inform him that a quorum of each House is assembled and that the Congress is ready to receive any communication he may be pleased to make.

Mr. REID. I move to reconsider that vote and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Pursuant to Senate Resolution 1, the Chair appoints the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. FRIST) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) as a committee to join the committee on the part of the House of Representatives to wait upon the President of the United States and inform him that a quorum is assembled and the Congress is ready to receive any communication he may be pleased to make.

INFORMING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THAT A QUORUM OF THE SENATE IS ASSEMBLED

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I send a resolution to the desk.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 2) informing the House of Representatives that a quorum of the Senate is assembled.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, the resolution is agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 2) reads as follows:

Resolved, That the Secretary inform the House of Representatives that a quorum of the Senate is assembled and that the Senate is ready to proceed to business.

Mr. FRIST. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. REID. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

FIXING THE HOUR OF DAILY MEETING OF THE SENATE

Mr. FRIST. I send a resolution to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:
A resolution (S. Res. 3) fixing the hour of daily meeting of the Senate.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, the resolution is agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 3) reads as follows:

Resolved, That the hour of daily meeting of the Senate be 12 o'clock meridian unless otherwise ordered.

Mr. FRIST. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. REID. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

TO PROVIDE FOR THE COUNTING OF ELECTORAL VOTES FOR PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. FRIST. On behalf of myself, Senator REID, Senator LOTT, and Senator DODD, I send a concurrent resolution to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 1) to provide for the counting on January 6, 2005, of the electoral votes for President and Vice President of the United States.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, the concurrent resolution is agreed to.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 1) reads as follows:

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That the two Houses of Congress shall meet in the Hall of the House of Representatives on Thursday, the sixth day of January 2005, at 1 o'clock post meridian, pursuant to the requirements of the Constitution and laws relating to the election of President and Vice President of the United States, and the President of the Senate shall be their Presiding Officer; that two tellers shall be previously appointed by the President of the Senate on the part of the Senate and two by the Speaker on the part of the House of Representatives, to whom shall be handed, as they are opened by the President of the Senate, all the certificates and papers purporting to be certificates of the electoral votes, which certificates and papers shall be opened, presented, and acted upon in the alphabetical order of the States, beginning with the letter "A"; and said tellers, having then read the same in the presence and hearing of the two Houses, shall make a list of the votes as they shall appear from the said certificates; and the votes having been ascertained and counted in the manner and according to the rules by law provided, the result of the same shall be delivered to the President of the Senate, who shall thereupon announce the state of the vote, which announcement shall be deemed a sufficient declaration of the persons, if any, elected President and Vice President of the United States, and, together with a list of the votes, be entered on the Journals of the two Houses.

Mr. FRIST. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. REID. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The chair appoints the Senator from Mississippi, Mr. LOTT, and the Senator from Connecticut, Mr. DODD, on the part of the Senate to count electoral votes.

TO EXTEND THE LIFE OF THE JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES

Mr. FRIST. I send a concurrent resolution to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 2) to extend the life of the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies under the provisions of S. Con. Res. 93 and S. Con. Res. 94 for the 108th Congress.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, the concurrent resolution is agreed do.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 2) reads as follows:

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring). That effective from January 3, 2005, the joint committee created by Senate Concurrent Resolution 94 (108th Congress), to make the necessary arrangements for the inauguration, is hereby continued with the same power and authority provided for in that resolution.

SEC. 2. Effective from January 4, 2005, the provisions of Senate Concurrent Resolution 93 (108th Congress), to authorize the rotunda of the United States Capitol to be used in connection with the proceedings and ceremonies for the inauguration of the President-elect and the Vice President-elect of the United States, are continued with the same power and authority provided for in that resolution.

Mr. FRIST. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. REID. I move to lay that motion on the table.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I have 13 unanimous consent requests which have been cleared on the other side. The requests are the routine requests agreed to at the beginning of each Congress and include the allocation of leader time, floor privileges, the filing of reports, and the like. I now ask unanimous consent that the requests be agreed to en bloc and that the requests be printed separately as part of the RECORD.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The unanimous consent requests agreed to en bloc are as follows:

1. That for the duration of the 109th Congress, the Ethics Committee be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate;

2. That for the duration of the 109th Congress, there be a limitation of 15 minutes each upon any rollcall vote, with the warning signal to be sounded at the midway point, beginning at the last 7½ minutes, and when rollcall votes are of 10-minute duration, the warning signal be sounded at the beginning of the last 7½ minutes;

3. That during the 109th Congress, it be in order for the Secretary of the Senate to receive reports at the desk when presented by a Senator at any time during the day of the session of the Senate;

4. That the Majority and Minority leaders may daily have up to 10 minutes each on each calendar day following the prayer and disposition of the reading of, or the approval of, the Journal;

5. That the Parliamentarian of the House of Representatives and his five assistants be given the privileges of the floor during the 109th Congress;

6. That, notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXVIII, conference reports and statements accompanying them not be printed as Senate reports when such conference reports and statements have been printed as a House report unless specific request is made in the Senate in each instance to have such a report printed;

7. That the Committee on Appropriations be authorized during the 109th Congress to file reports during adjournments or recesses of the Senate on appropriations bills, including joint resolutions, together with any accompanying notices of motions to suspend rule XVI, pursuant to rule V, for the purpose of offering certain amendments to such bills or joint resolutions, which proposed amendments shall be printed;

8. That, for the duration of the 109th Congress, the Secretary of the Senate be authorized to make technical and clerical corrections in the engrossments of all Senate-passed bills and resolutions, Senate amendments to House bills and resolutions, Senate amendments to House amendments to Senate bills and resolutions, and Senate amendments to House amendments to House bills or resolutions;

9. That for the duration of the 109th Congress, when the Senate is in recess or adjournment, the Secretary of the Senate is authorized to receive messages from the President of the United States, and—with the exception of House bills, joint resolutions and concurrent resolutions—messages from the House of Representatives; and that they be appropriately referred; and that the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the Acting President pro tempore be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills and joint resolutions;

10. That for the duration of the 109th Congress, Senators be allowed to leave at the desk with the Journal Clerk the names of two staff members who will be granted the privilege of the floor during the consideration of the specific matter noted, and that the Sergeant-at-Arms be instructed to rotate such staff members as space allows;

11. That for the duration of the 109th Congress, it be in order to refer treaties and nominations on the day when they are received from the President, even when the Senate has no executive session that day; and

12. That for the duration of the 109th Congress, Senators may be allowed to bring to the desk bills, joint resolutions, concurrent resolutions, and simple resolutions, for referral to appropriate committees.

13. That it not be in order to introduce bills or resolutions until January 24, 2005.

FINAL ASCERTAINMENT OF ELECTORS

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Chair lays before the Senate communications from the Archivist of the United States transmitting, pursuant to law, certified copies of the final ascertainment of the Electors for President and Vice

President, which are ordered to lie on the table.

EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY AND PLEDGING SUPPORT OF THE UNITED STATES FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE TSUNAMI THAT STRUCK SOUTH ASIA, SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND AFRICA

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I send a resolution to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 4) expressing the sympathy and pledging the support of the United States Senate and the people of the United States for the victims of the powerful earthquake and devastating tsunami that struck Bangladesh, Burma, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, the Maldives, the Seychelles, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, and other areas of South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa, on December 26, 2004.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, the resolution and its preamble are considered and agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 4), with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 4

Whereas on December 26, 2004, a tremendous earthquake, registered at 9.0 on the Richter scale and centered 100 miles off the coast of Northern Sumatra, Indonesia, triggered a deadly tsunami that swept throughout the Indian Ocean and beyond, devastating cities, towns, and communities, and killing or injuring persons in Southeast Asia and South Asia, through the island nations of the region, to Eastern Africa;

Whereas, as a result of the earthquake and ensuing tsunami, more than 140,000 people have lost their lives to date, tens of thousands of people are injured or missing, and the final death toll could climb into the hundreds of thousands;

Whereas the victims also include thousands of nationals who were visiting the region when the tsunami hit, including significant numbers from Europe and North and South America;

Whereas millions of people throughout Southeast Asia and South Asia have been left without food, shelter, or clean water, and now face deadly diseases such as cholera, dengue fever, dysentery, malaria, and typhoid;

Whereas thousands of children have been killed or injured, by this disaster;

Whereas, as a result of this tragedy, thousands of children have been separated from their families or orphaned and are in need of re-unification or adoption;

Whereas whole coastal communities and cities throughout the region were obliterated;

Whereas recovery, reconstruction, and clean-up of the devastated areas likely will take years, billions of dollars, and the concerted leadership of the United States working together with the international community;

Whereas the people of the United States immediately responded and expressed their sympathy and concern by sending financial aid and other assistance currently totaling more than \$100,000,000, through nongovernmental organizations and other means, to the victims of this disaster, and by offering to volunteer in the disaster rescue, recovery, and rebuilding;

Whereas soon after the earthquake and tsunami hit the region, the United States