

RAILROAD RETIREMENT TECHNICAL IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2006

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 630, H.R. 5074.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5074) to amend the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 to provide for continued payment of railroad retirement annuities by the Department of the Treasury, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the bill be read the third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 5074) was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, will the majority leader yield?

Mr. FRIST. I am happy to yield.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to say to the majority leader by way of a question that I have been working with Senator CHAMBLISS, the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, on the reauthorization of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and we have worked out what I consider to be a fair apportionment of time and amendments. We have been ready to go, prepared, waiting for that propitious moment, hoping that the majority leader would smile our way and give us that opening, that hour or two to get this important legislation passed. I would like to ask the majority leader if he has been thinking about that.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, through the Chair, in fact, I will need to turn to the distinguished assistant leader as to how much time—I remember we had it locked down to an amount of time. It is about 7½ or 8 hours. We have a challenging week. We have to get to the DOD appropriations, we have to get to the Homeland Security appropriations, we need to get to the terrorist tribunal legislation, we need to get to the port security legislation, and we need to get to the border fence legislation. We will do our best. I do understand the importance of the legislation, and I want to congratulate the managers and the chairman and ranking member for their great work. I do understand the importance of it.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if I might ask again of the majority leader—I certainly understand this might not be the week, but I hope when we return you would consider putting this up soon. I appreciate it, and I am sure Senator CHAMBLISS does as well.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I recognize the importance of the issue, and we are doing our best to get everything we possibly can do.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2006

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until 9:45 a.m. on Tuesday, September 26. I further ask that following the prayer and the pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved, and the Senate proceed to a period of morning business for up to an hour with the first 30 minutes under the control of the majority leader or his designee, and the final 30 minutes under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee; further, that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 6061, the Border Fence Act. Further, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess from 12:30 until 2:15 to accommodate the Democratic policy luncheon; I further ask that it be in order to file first-degree amendments as provided for under rule XXII until the hour of 2:30 on Tuesday.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I just went through a host of issues that we need to consider over the course of this week and our intention to complete our work by Friday or Saturday. It is going to take cooperation, and everybody is working together, as the Democratic leader and I implied a few minutes ago, in how we will address the legislation surrounding the military tribunals. Again, we did file, or I just a few moments ago filed cloture on the Hamdan language as well as on the underlying border security bill. We will work, as we just discussed on the floor, very hard to come to an agreement on how we can address the Hamdan legislation with the appropriate number of amendments. The first of these votes would occur Wednesday morning, as the Democratic leader pointed out, and as I said earlier. If we are able to get an agreement, we could actually be voting tomorrow.

Mr. LEVIN. Will the majority leader yield for a question?

Mr. FRIST. I would be happy to.

Mr. LEVIN. Is the Hamdan language which has been filed in the amendment the same as the Hamdan language that was agreed upon by the three Republican Senators with the administration?

Mr. FRIST. Yes. Yes, it is. I think what the Democratic leader said is that there are some changes, but as to what was introduced—Friday, I believe? Friday—so there are some small changes in that, but it has been agreed to by all the parties concerned.

Mr. LEVIN. In your judgment there is no substantive change between that amendment and the language that was agreed upon?

Mr. FRIST. That is correct.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank the majority leader.

Mr. FRIST. The reason I am turning around is, as the Democratic leader said, people have been working very aggressively since the agreement was reached. And every change, we have really tried to go to both sides—to the House, to the Senate, to the administration—so that we can have as much agreement as we possibly can on this bill. So the changes that have been made have been minor, as just reported to me.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if the majority leader would, when he completes the motion to close for the night—if he would allow the Senator from Illinois to speak for 15 minutes, prior to our going out?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. As in morning business.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order, following the remarks, up to 15 minutes, as in morning business, by our distinguished colleague from Illinois.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Illinois.

HEARING ON THE IRAQ WAR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader and the Democratic leader for their cooperation in asking for this short period of time.

Mr. President, today there was a hearing that was held by the Democratic Policy Conference under the chairmanship of Senator BYRON DORGAN of North Dakota. It was a historic hearing. It is rare for hearings to occur on Mondays. Usually the business of the Senate and House is concentrated on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. But this hearing was held on Monday in an effort, by the Democratic Policy Conference, to call witnesses before our Senate to discuss an issue which is on the mind of most Americans. That issue, of course, is the war in Iraq.

Senator DORGAN extended an invitation to this hearing to the Republican majority leader as well as the chairman of the Republican Conference, Senator KYL of Arizona, in an effort to have a bipartisan hearing on the war in Iraq. Unfortunately, neither of those Senators could attend. But Republican Congressman WALTER JONES of North Carolina did come over and join us in this hearing, so there was representation from the Republican House and Democratic Senators at this Democratic Policy Conference.

The reason I bring this to the attention of those who are following the business of the Senate is that I believe this hearing was historic. I believe it is