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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JON TESTER, a Senator from the State of Montana.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Lord, our God, You have called us to represent You. May our lives bring honor and glory to your holy Name. Strengthen our lawmakers with Your spirit's power. Empower and guide them to serve You by serving the lost, the lonely and the least. Be in their minds and understanding. Be also in their mouths and their speaking.

Fill them with Your truth and give them sufficient abilities to deal with the changing issues they face. Lord, show them the doors of opportunity through which You would have them pass. And, Lord, we ask that You would be with the cyclone victims of Myanmar. We pray in Your wonderful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JON TESTER 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. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 6, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable JON TESTER, a Senator from the State of Montana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Washington State is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today there will be a period of morning business for up to 1 hour, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees. The Republicans will control the first half, the majority will control the final half.

After morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2881, a bill to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration. At 2:30 p.m., there will be a rollcall vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the substitute amendment.

As a reminder, the filing deadline for second-degree amendments on the FAA bill is 1:30 p.m. today. If cloture is not invoked on the substitute, we expect to vitiate the cloture vote on the underlying bill and immediately proceed to a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to S. 2284, a bill to restore the financial solvency of the national flood insurance fund.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2972 and S. 2973

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I understand that there are two bills at the desk for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the titles of the bills for a second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2972) to reauthorize and modernize the Federal Aviation Administration.

A bill (S. 2973) to promote the energy security of the United States and for other purposes.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I object to any further proceedings with respect to these bills en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bills will be placed on the calendar.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

FAA MODERNIZATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the underlying FAA bill that came out of the Commerce Committee had wide bipartisan support. The provisions that came out of the Finance Committee that are directly related to aviation financing have wide bipartisan support.

This bill was on a fast track to passage and to improving airline safety in our country. Unfortunately, our friends across the aisle bogged it down with extraneous provisions that do nothing to improve airline safety and that do not belong on this bill.

And then, to prevent any changes to those provisions, they used a procedure that used to be rare to block amendments and improvements to the bill. So rather than quickly passing an airline safety bill that has broad bipartisan support, our friends on the other side have decided it is more important to fight for a few pet projects.

Rather than quickly finish the bill and move on to gas prices, they have decided to dig in and fight for a few extra provisions for a few extra Senators. The right choice is clear: We should quickly pass the bipartisan aviation-related portions of the FAA bill and move on to legislation that addresses the high price Americans are paying at the pump.

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



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