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Senate

(Legislative day of Thursday, July 17, 2008)

The Senate met at 3 p.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable CLAIRE MCCASKILL, a Senator from the State of Missouri.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Father of love, as we live this day, give us wisdom, strength, and love to serve You in all we do. We acknowledge You, Lord, as the creator and sustainer of our destinies, so show us how to do Your will.

Guide our Senators. Lead them by Your wisdom, as they seek to follow You. Illuminate their path with the light of Your truth and keep them from sin. Help them to overcome the temptation of trying to make it on their own strength and, instead, guide them until they yield to the inflow of Your wisdom, insight, and vision.

And Lord, continue to protect our military men and women in harm's way. We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable CLAIRE MCCASKILL 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 legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 21, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CLAIRE MCCASKILL, a Senator from the State of Missouri, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. MCCASKILL thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following the remarks of the two leaders—I have talked to Senator MCCONNELL; my remarks are longer than his, and I thought it would be appropriate that he go first, so he will go first, and when he finishes, I will say a few words—we are going to resume consideration of the motion to proceed to the energy speculation bill. As we have announced before, there will be no roll-call votes today. The cloture vote will take place before noon tomorrow.

In addition to considering the energy speculation bill, we are going to return as soon as we can to the housing reform legislation. That has to be finished in the House. I understand they will do a rule tomorrow and perhaps vote on that on Wednesday or maybe on Tuesday.

There will be a classified briefing for Senators at 4 o'clock on Wednesday with National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley in S-407.

As Senators have known now for well more than a month, we are going to

work this weekend. We have work to do this weekend. Exactly what we will be doing depends a lot on what happens during the week, how time sequences out because of cloture and other such things, but we will be here this weekend. There is a lot to do.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

ENERGY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I thank my good friend the majority leader for allowing me to go ahead. My remarks will be briefer than his.

All across the country, Americans are feeling the sting of record high gas prices at the pump. The cost of food is rising along with the price of gas. Truckers and stay-at-home parents and commuters and vacationers are frustrated at paying more for gas than any of them ever imagined.

The situation is urgent. It demands our full attention, and it demands a serious legislative response.

And though a barrel of crude oil costs roughly three times what it did when Democrats took over Congress a year and a half ago, so far, the Democrat leadership has been timid about solutions. They have treated high gas prices as a distraction. But the time for timidity has passed. Americans are demanding that Congress do something to lower the high price of gas, and they won't be fooled by gimmicks or half-measures.

The majority leader has moved to a bill that only addresses the issue of speculation. But no serious person thinks passing this legislation alone will fix the problem. I don't know of any reputable economists who think

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



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