United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 154 WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2008 No. 154

Senate

(Legislative day of Wednesday, September 17, 2008)

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable SHERROD BROWN, a Senator from the State of Ohio.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, the giver of every good and perfect gift, provide our Senators with strength and wisdom for today's journey. Give them faith that Your sovereign providence will lead them and that they can accomplish all things through Your strength. Remind them that You are still in charge of our world and that no weapon formed against Your faithful servants will prosper. Give them patience and humility. Help them to be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. May they utter the right words at the right time. Lord, empower them to make decisions that will bring honor to Your Name and will permit truth and justice to prevail.

Keep the United States in Your holy protection, as its citizens cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to Your will.

You are our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable SHERROD BROWN 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, September 26, 2008.

To the Senate:

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

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

SENATOR DICK DURBIN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I came to the floor and waiting was my friend, Senator DURBIN of Illinois, the assistant Democratic leader. He is always available. Whenever the Senate needs him or I have a problem, he is the first person I call. He gets little notoriety or credit for all the work he does.

We came to Washington together in 1982 as freshmen Members of the House of Representatives. I have had the good fortune of being able to serve with him for some 26 years. He is such a good friend, such a great orator, has such a great mind. He is such a great asset to the Senate, to me, and, of course, to the State of Illinois.

I appreciate calling him, as I do many mornings, and he is there very quickly. He helps me work through the day's issues. I publicly acknowledge what a good Senator he is and what a good friend he is.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following the remarks of the leaders, if there are any, we will be in a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

I ask that on the Democratic side—we are going to try to do this on a rotating basis—on the Democratic side Senator HARKIN and Senator SCHUMER be the first speakers.

Negotiations on the agreement to vote in relation to the stimulus legislation is ongoing. If we have a vote on that legislation, it will be at 11 or 11:30 a.m. today. That will be the only vote today. We hope to reach agreement so we can have that vote, as I indicated.

We also should tell everyone we are working very hard to do something on the bailout of our financial institutions. We know we have an obligation to do that. A lot of Senators have a lot of questions about where we are in this situation.

We were at the White House last night. Our meeting was reconvened on the second floor of the Capitol last night, and Secretary Paulson was here, Senator DODD, Senator GREGG, Chairman FRANK, and Chairman BAUCUS. They worked into the nighttime and finished at 10:30, 11 o'clock last night. They are going to reconvene this morning.

Right now, out of 100 percent of the Congress—we have the Democrats in the Senate, Republicans in the Senate, Democrats in the House, Republicans in the House—we only have three of those Members trying to work something out. The House has basically walked away from everything. We were doing pretty well until the meeting at the White House yesterday.

We are going to continue to work hard. We understand the urgency of addressing this situation. We will have more to say about this issue later. We are doing our very best.

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

Printed on recycled paper.