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## Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JEFF MERKLEY, a Senator from the State of Oregon.

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O Lord, God of hosts, thank You for making Yourself known to us in the radiant lives of men and women. We are inspired by the acts of sacrifice and service that we witness each day on Capitol Hill. Thank You for the labor of our lawmakers. May they seek to give their best ability to the people's good, rising above bitterness by an unshakable faith in the unstoppable power of Your providence. So may they be Your obedient servants who shall not become discouraged by the inevitable setbacks they encounter. May they also commit their way to You, put their trust in You, and know that You will bring to pass what is best.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JEFF MERKLEY 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, October 21, 2009.

To the Senate:

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

appoint the Honorable JEFF MERKLEY, a Senator from the State of Oregon, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. MERKLEY 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. Mr. President, following leader remarks, there will be a period of morning business for 2 hours, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each. The Republicans will control the first hour and the majority will control the second hour.

Following morning business, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Roberto Lange to be a U.S. district judge for the District of South Dakota. Under an agreement reached last night, debate on the nomination will be limited to 2 hours, equally divided and controlled between Senators LEAHY and SESSIONS or their designees. At 2 p.m., the Senate will proceed to vote on confirmation of the nomination.

Upon disposition of the Lange nomination, Senators should be prepared to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 1776, the Medicare Physician Fairness Act.

Last night, I filed cloture on the conference report to accompany the Department of Defense Authorization Act and on the nomination of William Sessions to be Chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission. Senators will be notified when these votes are scheduled.

### COMMENDING SENATOR JOHN KERRY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the prayer of the Chaplain today was right on point for something that has taken place in the last 3 or 4 days. In Afghanistan, we are at a critical juncture. For Afghanistan to move forward and win the fight against the Taliban, the country must have a legitimate government.

The first round of elections in Afghanistan was tainted by allegations of significant fraud, and we faced the possibility of a potential political crisis in Afghanistan. I am pleased President Karzai has recognized the need for a runoff election.

The reason I mention sacrifice and service is in relation to Senator JOHN KERRY. If you look at his life, it has been one of sacrifice, it has been one of service to our country—whether in the jungles of Vietnam, where he was wounded three times and received a Silver Star for his heroism, or whether it was in his capacity as the Democratic nominee for President or whether it has been as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

He took off for Afghanistan and Pakistan at a time when he was badly needed. I missed him here. We had some votes I wish JOHN KERRY could have been here for. I told him that when he called me. But he explained what he was doing there, and immediately upon his hanging up, I received a call from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, saying: He is doing extremely good work there. Don't be upset at him because he can't be here because what he is doing in Afghanistan is something that is vitally important to not only our country but to the world.

That sacrifice and that service—and also the Chaplain mentioned labor—this man worked very hard. He has labored, as chairman of this Foreign Relations Committee, as I have never seen. He has been so involved in what is going on there. Not only is he dealing with the issues we see every day—

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



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