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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 8, 2011, at 2 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2011

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Lord God, the center of joy, thank You for the privilege of prayer. In a world filled with change and decay, Lord, we are grateful that we can always call to You, the changeless one. Today we ask You to guide our lawmakers. Shine the light of Your wisdom and truth upon their path. Give them patience to wait for Your clear guidance and courage to follow where You lead. Remove pride from their hearts and replace it with a spirit of humility and unity. We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS 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. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
President pro tempore,
Washington, DC, February 7, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order of the votes scheduled at 5:30 be as follows, and that the remainder of the consent remain in effect: Calendar No. 6 would be first; Calendar No. 3 would be second.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks there be a period of morning business until 3 p.m. At 3 p.m., the Senate will resume consideration of the Federal Aviation Adminis-

tration bill. There will be a short recess around 4:20 p.m. in order to welcome the Prime Minister of Slovenia to the Senate floor. At 4:30 the Senate will turn to executive session to debate concurrently three district court nominations. Those nominations are Paul Holmes of Arkansas, Diana Saldana of Texas, and Marco Hernandez of Oregon. At 5:30 there will be two rollcall votes on confirmation of the Saldana and Holmes nominations in the order that was just entered.

100TH BIRTHDAY OF RONALD REAGAN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Ronald Reagan's second inauguration was the first one I attended as a Member of Congress. It was bitterly cold that day. While the temperatures sank into the single digits, Reagan became the first and only President to take the oath of office in the Capitol Rotunda.

He said in an indoor inaugural address:

History is a ribbon, always unfurling. History is a journey. And as we continue our journey, we think of those that traveled before us.

Yesterday would have been President Reagan's 100th birthday. Today, we think of President Reagan and how he steered America's travels through history's journey. I first met President Reagan when he was Governor of California. I was the Lieutenant Governor of Nevada. We met in Heavenly Valley, on the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe, to watch the first annual "hot-dogging" skiing championship. As I said, I first

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



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met him and we had a wonderful visit. I enjoyed that day very much.

His own travels took him not only to Lake Tahoe in my State but through the entire State. California's Ronald Reagan was a close friend of Nevada's. In his earliest days as an actor, he entertained crowds at the Last Frontier on the Las Vegas strip. Decades later, the same week Ronald Reagan became Governor of California, Paul Laxalt became Governor next door in Nevada.

When Reagan first sought the Presidency, Laxalt managed his campaign, and when President Reagan worked down the street at the White House, Paul Laxalt worked here as Nevada's senior Senator. It was a special relationship, a unique relationship, one so close that some called Senator Laxalt the First Friend, and he was that.

I was fortunate enough to see firsthand President Reagan's appreciation for Nevada. After talking to Nevadans in Ely and across eastern Nevada, I came to the conclusion that I should drop some wilderness I was going to put in place and instead form a national park. Nevada did not have a national park, and we would call it the Great Basin National Park. After I introduced that legislation and it passed, President Reagan's Secretary of Agriculture recommended that he veto what would be Nevada's only national park. The Agriculture Secretary did not much like the idea of a young Member of Congress from the other political party putting such a bill on the President's desk.

I was worried about that. Word came to me that the President was going to veto this bill that was important to me. I asked for a meeting with his Superintendent of Parks, the National Parks Director. He had been the Superintendent of Parks for Ronald Reagan when Reagan was Governor of California. His name was Penn Mott. When he came to see me, he had been in the service of our country in many different ways. He was an elderly man when he came to see me. I explained to him what was happening and that I was told that President Reagan, upon recommendation of one of his Cabinet members, was going to veto my bill. That man looked at me and he said: President Reagan is not going to veto that bill. He said, when I was a young park ranger in 1928, Key Pittman, who was a famous Nevada Senator, very close to President Roosevelt, sent me to Nevada to find a place for a national park. He said: That is my park. I am the one who said it would go there. That is where it should go, and it never made it legislatively. But because of that meeting I had, and Ronald Reagan's understanding of what politics is all about, he did not veto my bill. He overruled his Secretary, and together, HARRY REID and Ronald Reagan created the Great Basin National Park.

It was not the last time President Reagan and I worked together to preserve our West. I introduced legislation that was important legislation. It in-

involved two Indian tribes, two endangered species, it involved Lake Tahoe, and it involved two rivers, the Truckee and Carson Rivers—I think I mentioned the two Indian tribes—a huge wetlands that had gone from a couple of hundred thousand acres to maybe less than a thousand very putrid acres. Birds died eating and drinking there. The wetlands basically had dried up.

It was a very important piece of legislation, but I got it passed. I got it passed here. Then it went to the House and got passed. Again, President Reagan's advisers recommended he veto that bill. Part of it was because of who pushed the legislation through. But President Reagan knew how important it was to Lake Tahoe, and one of his assistants, Sig Rogich, talked to him. Sig is a long-time Nevadan, worked very closely with President Reagan and with President Bush, and he talked to him about this important legislation. It was not vetoed. He signed this bill in spite of people recommending that this not be signed.

President Reagan's help in ending this water war meant a lot to me because he knew that when Americans are all in this together, even local issues, even statewide issues, are all of our concern. I remember how he signed my bill to establish this park because his view of that national park embodied his vision of the Nation.

He never looked at the legislation as a map of red States and blue States and purple States but as a landscape of States colored by green forests and brown deserts and clear waters.

My legislation, entitled the Negotiated Settlement, has changed that part of the country. Lake Tahoe is better off. The Indian tribes are better off. We preserved a lake, Lake Pyramid. It was landmark legislation. It could not have been done without his signature.

He knew when the Sun breached the horizon each day, the morning that dawned in America was a morning for all Americans and for families of all backgrounds. He said in that second inaugural address, "we have worked and acted together, not as members of political parties, but as Americans."

Ronald Reagan was a Republican President from the West, who cherished a famously close friendship with Tip O'Neill, a Democratic Speaker of the House from the East. Ronald Reagan was a patriot who created a friendship with Mikhail Gorbachev, the leader of a nation he called an Evil Empire. He would make certain America could defend herself but quietly sent a diplomatic team to start negotiating with the Soviet Union the minute he took office.

Ronald Reagan knew politics has always been and always will be about compromise, and that compromise can only happen when politicians share personal relationships. He knew public servants worked better as partners rather than partisans. And as much as he criticized government, he knew it was not a faceless machine. He appre-

ciated that government exists, as Lincoln said, of, for, and by the people.

That is why he was more beholden to simple pragmatism than stubborn principle. That is why he, a staunch conservative, raised taxes 11 times when the economy needed revenue. It is why he viewed the challenge of immigration through a practical lens. It is why he knew America could be strong and would be stronger still in a world without nuclear weapons.

He was not perfect. I did not agree with many of his politics or policies. But I always admired the way he captured our country's imagination. I always respected his honest assessment of his strengths and limitations alike. He was somebody who could look at himself and we would all smile a little bit.

One time he was running for Governor of California and someone asked him: Do you think you will be a good Governor? He said: I do not know. I have never acted the part.

That is who he was. He honestly assessed who he was, his strengths and limitations, and I admired the way he humbly surrounded himself with good, smart people.

A century after his birth Ronald Reagan's legacy remains as enduring as anyone who has ever unfurled the long ribbon of our Nation's history. That legacy lives not merely in his policies, and to honor it, it is not enough to try to apply his solutions of 30 years ago to the problems we confront today; rather, we should remember how he respected his colleagues and his constituents. We should try to emulate the confidence he communicated.

Ronald Reagan was a proud neighbor of Nevada, who united and motivated us by reminding us that all Americans live in the same neighborhood. That is a lesson I still remember today. That is a lesson I remember best about our 40th President, Ronald Reagan.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 3 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.