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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Lord God of the nations, Your word declares: "Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people." May our lawmakers and the citizens of this great land strive to please You through right living and submission to Your will. Help us to flee from the dead end path of transgression that leads to national ruin. Enable us to turn from thoughts, words, and deeds that violate Your precepts and commands.

Lord, fill our Senators with a hunger for holiness and a hatred of evil. Enlarge their influence and use them for Your glory. Reinforce them by the constant assurance of Your presence.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND 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 assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 2, 2011.

To the Senate:

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

appoint the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND 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 any leader remarks, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business until 11 a.m. today. During that time, Senators will be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each. The Republicans will control the first 30 minutes, the majority will control the next 30 minutes, and the remaining time until 11 a.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the final half.

At 11 a.m., the Senate will proceed to vote on passage of the 2-week continuing resolution. Upon disposition of that matter, the Senate will resume consideration of the America Invents Act. Additional rollcall votes in relation to amendments to the America Invents Act are expected to occur throughout the day.

BUDGETING AND JOBS

Mr. REID. Madam President, we have worked for weeks now in moving forward on this funding measure for the country. What Democrats have said for weeks now is that we are committed to working with all sides to find a middle ground that helps us move forward and move toward a fiscally responsible budget for the rest of the year.

Yesterday the House acted and soon the Senate will act as well. Our priorities are twofold: One, keeping the country running so essential services do not get interrupted—and certainly they should not be interrupted—at a time we can least afford it.

We have 2 more weeks to do this. We have heard today in the news that JOHN MCCAIN's economic adviser said if the Republicans continue going on the route they have talked about, it will eliminate 700,000 jobs in this struggling economy. Goldman Sachs issued a study yesterday indicating it would hurt the gross national product by up to 2 percent, and that is devastating.

So our priorities are twofold: One, keeping the country running so essential services do not get interrupted at a time we can least afford it; and, two, equally as important, we need to lay the groundwork with a budget that invests in what works and cuts what doesn't. We have to begin to bring down the deficit without forfeiting our future.

This has not been an easy process. But we need to set aside partisan motivations and remember we work for the American people, not our political parties. I am pleased the Republicans have agreed with the President's suggested cuts and dropped all those riders—provisions meant only to send messages, only to create unnecessary hurdles, and kill progress.

We are going to keep working toward a solution. This time around, it may not include everything Democrats want or everything Republicans want. But we need to have a compromise which will be part of an ongoing conversation. Just like our overarching priority when we budget—that we must live within our means—this next step recognizes that we must do the best with what we have.

Today we will also work toward finishing the patent reform bill. It is called the America Invents Act, a jobs bill. It is a priority. We have to finish

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



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this matter. This matter, this patent legislation, is important in returning America's economy to a position of strength.

As we speak, there are 750,000 patent applications that are stuck in the Patent Office because they do not have enough people to do the work. It is true to Democrats' agenda from day one: creating jobs and ensuring America can compete in the 21st century's global economy.

Now, Madam President, I see my friend from Oklahoma on the Senate floor. A couple of things he has done in recent days have been extremely important: first of all, the money that is collected in the Patent Office should be used in the Patent Office. I also think it is important people recognize we have an entity around here called the General Accounting Office, which is the watchdog of Congress. It is an important entity. It is available to both Democrats and Republicans.

My friend from Oklahoma wrote a letter, as he has a right to do, about a couple different areas finding where there was duplication of services. They studied this and came back with what I think are some matters to which we need to direct our attention.

Duplication in different entities around here has become untoward. So I commend and applaud my friend from Oklahoma in helping us go down this path that I think is going to be extremely important for us to work our way out of the problems we have.

I know we have a lot of work to do, and it is important we do that work. We are going to get this spending matter out of the way today. Then we will have, as I have indicated, a little over 2 weeks to work something out on a long-term basis. The President has said he would like a longer period of time. We could not work that out with our friends on the Republican side. I hope, I hope they do not need a government shutdown—and I am not referring to my friends in the Senate but the House. I hope they do not need a government shutdown to do what is necessary for this country. I think we should avoid that shutdown, and we can avoid that shutdown and still recognize that there are costs that need to be cut from government spending. It cannot all come from our domestic discretionary side of the ledger. There are Pentagon moneys that can be saved. There are other programs that have been untouchable in past years that we need to look at for a long-term solution to the country's problems.

AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES BY COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 15, S. Res. 81.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 81) authorizing expenditures by committees of the Senate for the periods March 1, 2011, through September 30, 2011, and October 1, 2011, through September 30, 2012, and October 1, 2012, through February 28, 2013.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements related to this resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 81) was agreed to, as follows:

S. RES. 81

Resolved,

SECTION 1. AGGREGATE AUTHORIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of carrying out the powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, and under the appropriate authorizing resolutions of the Senate there is authorized for the period March 1, 2011, through September 30, 2011, in the aggregate of \$70,790,674, for the period October 1, 2011, through September 30, 2012, in the aggregate of \$121,355,435, and for the period October 1, 2012, through February 28, 2013, in the aggregate of \$50,564,763, in accordance with the provisions of this resolution, for standing committees of the Senate, the Special Committee on Aging, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Indian Affairs.

(b) AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS.—There are authorized such sums as may be necessary for agency contributions related to the compensation of employees of the committees for the period March 1, 2011, through September 30, 2011, for the period October 1, 2011, through September 30, 2012, and for the period October 1, 2012, through February 28, 2013, to be paid from the appropriations account for "Expenses of Inquiries and Investigations" of the Senate.

SEC. 2. COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry is authorized from March 1, 2011, through February 28, 2013, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2011.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2011, through September 30, 2011, under this section shall not exceed \$2,800,079, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$200,000, may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 72a(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$40,000, may be expended for the training of the professional staff of

such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2011, through September 30, 2012, under this section shall not exceed \$4,800,136, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$200,000, may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 72a(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$40,000, may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2013.—For the period October 1, 2012, through February 28, 2013, expenses of the committee under this section shall not exceed \$2,000,057, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$200,000, may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946); and

(2) not to exceed \$40,000, may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 3. COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Armed Services is authorized from March 1, 2011, through February 28, 2013, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2011.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2011, through September 30, 2011, under this section shall not exceed \$4,749,869, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$75,000, may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 72a(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$30,000, may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2011, through September 30, 2012, under this section shall not exceed \$8,142,634, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed \$80,000, may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 72a(i))); and

(2) not to exceed \$30,000, may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2013.—For the period October 1, 2012, through February 28, 2013, expenses of the committee under this section shall not exceed \$3,392,765, of which amount—