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Senate

The Senate met at 10 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.

Eternal Lord God, the Father of mercies, show mercy to our Nation and the world. In Your mercy, give our Senators a discerning spirit so that they will understand our times and know exactly what they should do. Lord, instruct them in knowledge that transforms, enabling them to guide others through exemplary living. Provide for their needs, lighten their burdens, and fill them with Your joy. Refresh them with Your presence as You equip them to serve You and humanity.

We pray in Your holy 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 legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 4, 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.

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. The Senate will be in a period of morning business for debate only until 12 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the first hour equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first 30 minutes and the Republicans controlling the next 30 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

SCHEDULE

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, the filing deadline for all second-degree amendments to S. 493, the small business jobs bill, is at 11 a.m. There will be up to two rollcall votes at noon. The first rollcall vote will be on the motion to invoke cloture on S. 493, the small business jobs bill. If cloture is not invoked on the bill, the Senate will immediately proceed to a second vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of John McConnell to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Rhode Island.

MIDWEST FLOODING

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, hundreds of local first responders, 500 National Guardsmen, and hundreds of volunteers in southern Illinois are working around the clock to try to protect homes and communities from the ris-

ing waters of the Ohio River and other rivers in the region.

I have a photo that shows the devastation, which I witnessed personally last Friday. This is an area of southern Illinois, one that has been hard pressed economically, has been struggling, and now is inundated with flooding.

A few days ago when I visited Olive Branch and Cairo, IL, near the southern tip of the State, I saw this flooding firsthand. Homes, barns, and roads were covered by floodwater. Voluntary evacuations have been called for in a dozen Illinois towns, and people are scrambling to find a place to stay with friends and family and shelters to wait out the flood.

They worry about what will happen, when they will get back in their homes, and when the kids will get back to school.

This is another photo which demonstrates the kind of floodwaters that people are struggling with in my part of the world in southern Illinois. My colleague, Senator KIRK, was in southern Illinois over the last couple of days and has witnessed this firsthand as well.

We are both prepared to do whatever we can to help our State and all of the States in the region that have been affected by this terrible flooding. In many cases this flooding is, unfortunately, going to be there for some time.

One of the properties I showed was in Cairo, IL. The water is already waist high and will continue to rise. It can be weeks before people can return home to see what, if anything, they can salvage.

Late Monday night, the Army Corps of Engineers made a very difficult decision. They blew a hole in a levee on the Missouri side of the Mississippi River near Cairo, IL, to relieve pressure on the levee and on other levees along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. That decision will flood farmland, and that flooding will relieve some of the pressure on the towns and communities,

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



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