



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 157

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2011

No. 172

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, our Father, You have commended the light to shine out of darkness. Accept our gratitude for Your bountiful mercies.

As our Nation prepares to celebrate another Veterans Day, we praise You for the heroism of those who died to keep America free and for Your loving providence that continues to sustain this land we love. Lord, thank You for the legacy of service and sacrifice perpetuated by our military members and their families, and we ask You to continue to protect those in harm's way. As we honor the memories of those who gave the last full measure of devotion, infuse us with a greater determination to protect and preserve the liberties upon which our Republic was founded.

Use our Senators today as instruments of Your peace.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM UDALL 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 bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, November 10, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico 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, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 10 a.m. At 10 a.m., the Senate will begin consideration of the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 27, with 2 hours of debate.

Around noon, there will be two rollcall votes on the motions to proceed to the joint resolutions of disapproval regarding net neutrality and cross-border air pollution.

An additional series of votes in relation to H.R. 674, the 3% Withholding Repeal and Job Creation Act with the veterans jobs amendment, and a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to H.R. 2354, the Energy and Water appropriations bill, will occur later in the afternoon. These votes are currently scheduled for 2:30 p.m. today, but we expect to get a unanimous consent agreement to begin those as early as 1:45 p.m. today.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time under the previous order for resumption of con-

sideration of H.R. 674 be modified for the Senate to resume consideration of the bill at 1:30 p.m., with all other provisions of the previous order remaining in effect; further, that all after the first vote be 10 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. With this agreement, the Senate will resume consideration of the bill at 1:30 p.m., with up to 15 minutes of debate prior to the votes. There will be a series of up to four rollcall votes beginning around 1:45 p.m.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

JOBS CREATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I would like to start today on a positive note. Later this very day, the two parties will come together to do something we haven't been doing enough of around here: we will pass a jobs bill on a bipartisan basis, and then we will send it back to the House, where we hope it will pass shortly. In other words, we are going to legislate. I know that might sound a little like a groundbreaking idea to some of my colleagues on the other side who would rather spend all of their time putting together legislation aimed at sending a political message, but hopefully today's votes will help change that.

As I have been saying for weeks now, we have two choices: We can either acknowledge the fact that we live in a two-party system and work together on legislation both parties can embrace or we can spend our time, as Democrats have for the past 2 months, putting together legislation that is designed to fail.

House Republicans have chosen the former approach. Since taking over the

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



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majority earlier this year, they have searched for common ground when it comes to jobs legislation, and they have found it, passing more than 20 bills aimed at spurring the economy and creating jobs that have attracted strong bipartisan support.

Meanwhile, the Democratic majority here in the Senate has opted for the latter approach. Taking their cues from the political team down at the White House, Senate Democrats have spent most of their time trying to make Republicans look bad instead of looking for ways to work with us on meaningful jobs legislation.

But today they have taken a break from all that, and I am pleased to say the two parties will pass two important pieces of jobs legislation: Senator BROWN's 3 percent withholding bill, which eases the burden on government contractors, freeing up more money they can use to expand and to hire, and a veterans bill sponsored by Senator MURRAY that not only helps returning veterans but the businesses that hire them.

On their own, these bills won't solve our jobs crisis—far from it. No single piece of legislation can. But this attempt at bipartisanship that has been used to get them over the finish line represents our best shot at making progress on jobs and the economy as long as Republicans have the majority in one half of Congress and Democrats have the majority in the other. We can still improve on the process, of course, through greater consultation within the committee of jurisdiction, but it is a good start nonetheless. This is how divided government works—through genuine cooperation and a search for common ground. It is what Republicans on the joint committee have been doing these past several weeks, and it is what House Republicans have been doing for the past year on legislation of the kind we will actually pass today.

This isn't to say we shouldn't have open, full-throated debates that showcase our differences. The two parties clearly have different points of view when it comes to restoring the economy and creating jobs. That is why we will also have a vote today for the McCain-Paul-Portman bill, which aims at unleashing the private sector instead of shackling it with more government, as our Democratic friends propose. The McCain-Paul-Portman bill is a clear alternative to the President's failed model of endless stimulus. Members should have a chance to express their support for it, and I am glad we will, even as we vote on things on which we can all agree.

So my message is this: Let's keep it up. Let's build on today's success and move on to some of the other jobs bills that have already passed the House on a very broad bipartisan basis. I have highlighted two of them already. Today, I will highlight two more: the Access to Capital for Job Creators Act, H.R. 2940, and the Entrepreneur Access

to Capital Act, H.R. 2930—two bills that make it easier for small businesses to raise money in innovative ways from small donors, generally over the Internet, often through social media. Here is a way to enable the little guy to raise money for his or her business and let small investors get into the game too. We all know access to capital is one of the key ingredients to economic growth. Here is a way to make it easier for folks to get that capital that also creates new avenues for the little guy to invest. Senators THUNE and SCOTT BROWN have companion bills here in the Senate. We should take them up and we should pass them.

You don't hear a lot about Republicans and Democrats agreeing on legislation these days, but here is some on which we do actually agree. So I would say let's take them up, pass them, and send them to the President for his signature. The Obama administration has already said it supports these ideas, and 169 Democrats in the House voted for one of these bills last week, with 175 voting for the other. Republicans support both overwhelmingly as well. So let's do it. Let's build on the momentum we have today, after passing the 3-percent withholding and the Veterans bill. Let's show the American people we have discovered and embraced a formula for success around here.

VETERANS DAY 2011

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, tomorrow is a very important day—Veterans Day—a day we set aside to honor the service and sacrifice of the heroic men and women who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. America remains a beacon of freedom throughout the world today because of the commitments and sacrifices they have made. Over the years, many brave Americans donned their country's uniform to ensure we would remain safe and free here at home.

My own State of Kentucky has a proud and honorable military history and today is home to both Fort Knox and Fort Campbell, which together house thousands of soldiers. The Commonwealth is also home to scores of brave National Guard members and reservists. The efforts of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines from Kentucky and all 50 States continue today, as our fighting forces courageously defend freedom from dangerous enemies all around the world.

I have been honored to meet with the families of Bluegrass State servicemembers who have been lost in war. I would like to share with my colleagues a little of what they have told me about how proud they are of their loved ones' service.

One soldier's son said:

Nobody wants to see their father die . . . but to have it be while doing something of this significance, we're proud of him.

Another soldier's widow told me:

There are no great words in a time of deep tragedy. But surely there are great men in the midst of great tragedy.

And I will never forget what a preacher said of his lost congregant:

[He] didn't want to die, he didn't intend to die. But he was willing to lay down his life. That's what a hero is.

On Veterans Day, we pay tribute to everyone who ever bore arms in service of this Nation. We can express our thanks and our gratitude to those who are still with us. And we must honor in our memories those who did not return home.

We pay tribute to the families of our servicemembers, too, because they have made a sacrifice as well by loaning America their sons, daughters, husbands, and wives.

And we pay tribute to the indomitable American spirit that is essential to the survival of liberty. It is thanks to America's veterans and their exceptional service that we have upheld this spirit.

Lastly, I would like to offer best wishes for a happy birthday to our marines deployed across the globe, especially to our Kentucky marines who have been such a source of pride to the Commonwealth.

RECOGNIZING EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. On a related matter, Mr. President, I would like to recognize Eastern Kentucky University, located in Richmond, KY, for all the school has done on behalf of Kentucky's Veterans. EKV has been named one of the top two universities in the Nation for veterans for the second consecutive year. The recognition was given to EKV by the Military Times EDGE magazine for the university's commitment to helping military veterans advance their education.

EKV has made a concerted effort over the past several years to make the institution more hospitable to America's brave veterans. These initiatives include dropping admission fees for undergraduate veterans, granting in-state tuition to all out-of-State veterans, giving priority registration to veterans, designating housing specifically for student-veterans, and creating a helpful withdrawal and readmission process for veterans.

EKV's commitment to better education for our Nation's heroes has, by all accounts, been a huge success.

In addition to receiving national recognition from the veterans community, the university has seen its veteran population grow by some 40 percent in the last year.

So today, on the eve of Veterans Day, I wish to honor Eastern Kentucky University for its dedication to better serving our country's brave veterans, and to congratulate the university and President Doug Whitlock on this well-deserved recognition.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.