



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 159

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JULY 18, 2013

No. 103

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ, a Senator from the State of Hawaii.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray. Gracious God, thank You for the love You give us each day. Great and holy is Your Name. Infuse our lawmakers with a spirit of humility that will empower them to do Your will. Lord, help them to embrace Your desire to bring healing to our world. Challenge the best in them so they will give You their supreme allegiance and love. Enable them to fill swift hours with meaningful and faithful deeds, to think clearly, to act kindly, and to make a better world.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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. LEAHY).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 18, 2013.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ, a Senator from the State of Hawaii, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. SCHATZ thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 99, which is the Transportation appropriations bill.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 99, S. 1243, making appropriations for the Department of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, there will be an hour of morning business, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans the final half.

Following morning business, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Thomas Perez to be Secretary of Labor. We hope to confirm both the Perez and McCarthy nominations today.

We are ready to move on this whenever my Republican colleagues say they want to. What would be the right thing to do would be to vote on Perez this morning and vote on the cloture motion I filed regarding McCarthy. Then this afternoon, after our lunches, we would vote on confirmation of McCarthy. However, whatever the Re-

publicans decide, I will be happy to work with them in whatever way is convenient.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 1315, S. 1316, AND H.R. 1911

Mr. REID. I understand there are three bills at the desk due for a second reading.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1315) to prohibit the Secretary of the Treasury from enforcing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010.

A bill (S. 1316) to repeal the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act providing for the Independent Payment Advisory Board.

A bill (H.R. 1911) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish interest rates for new loans made on or after July 1, 2013, to direct the Secretary of Education to convene the Advisory Committee on Improving Postsecondary Education Data to conduct a study on improvements to postsecondary education transparency at the Federal level, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to all three of these matters proceeding further at this time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bills will be placed on the Calendar.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today, as part of this week's agreement to process nominations, the Senate will vote on confirmation of the Perez nomination to lead the Department of Labor, and we will vote on the cloture motion on the nomination of Gina McCarthy to lead the Environmental Protection Agency.

I hope we can move forward on these matters as quickly as possible.

Gina McCarthy is an accomplished environmental official who has served under several Republican Governors, including Governor Romney. She has worked in Democratic administrations

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



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