



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 159

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2013

No. 146

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Sovereign God, creator and sustainer of us all, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Thank You for Your faithfulness, even when we are unfaithful.

Lead our lawmakers this day so they may work in a way that Your Name is honored. Lord, point out to them the road they should follow, as You give them the wisdom and courage to do their duty. Help them not to be dominated by what they have been, rather than by what they could become. May they never forget their accountability to You as servants and stewards of Your purposes.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

DEFAULT PREVENTION ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 211, S. 1569, the debt limit bill.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 211, S. 1569, a bill to ensure the complete and timely

payment of the obligations of the United States Government until December 31, 2014.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate will recess from 12:30 to 2:15 to allow for weekly caucus meetings.

There are productive negotiations going on with the Republican leader. I am confident we will be able to reach a compromise agreement this week in time to avert a catastrophic default on the Nation's bills. The Republican leader and I will keep our Members informed as to how negotiations are going.

I express my appreciation to everyone for their patience.

RESERVATION OF LEADERSHIP TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved. Under the previous order, Senators are permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the distinguished Presiding Officer is, like myself, a New Englander and knows what fall is like in our part of the country. Late last month, I was fortunate to enjoy the most lovely settings I think can be found anywhere at any time, as Vermont's hillsides are painted orange, yellow, and red by peak fall colors set against powder blue skies. Vermonters love these sublime few weeks. We happily welcome visitors around the United States. Actually, we welcome visitors from around the world. It is interesting to walk down the streets in some of our cities and hear several different languages being

spoken as visitors come here. They share the experience, and they hike and bike and fish, and they hunt in our extensive preserved natural areas.

But these best of times have become the worst of times, as Vermonters and visitors alike have found closed signs on their favorite natural areas due to the tea party shutdown of the Federal Government. The window is quickly closing in Vermont for the Fish and Wildlife biologists and national forest rangers who have work that must be done before the first snow falls. We know how Washington can close down for an inch or two of snow. In Vermont, we are talking about 10, 15, or 20 inches of snow. These Fish and Wildlife biologists and national forest rangers' schedules are dictated by the changing seasons and the biological clocks of nature. The House Republican leadership has been no more able to undo the law of the land—which is the Affordable Care Act—than they would be able to slow or stop Vermont's changing seasons.

Insisting on tying a repeal or a defunding of the Affordable Care Act to reopening the government is doing real and lasting damage to Vermont's economy and natural resources as fall quickly becomes winter.

The 26,000-acre Nulhegan national wildlife refuge in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom is among the best upland bird hunting areas in New England. There is plenty of room for everyone, but just days after the opening of grouse season, the refuge has been forced to hang up a closed sign and lock its gates. This has dealt a blow to the tourism economy of the small towns around the refuge that depend on these annual visitors and hunters.

The Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge on the shores of Lake Champlain is, without a doubt, the best and most extensive freshwater duck habitat in New England. Huge meadows of wild rice attract thousands of migrating waterfowl and legions of bird watchers

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



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