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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God, the fountain of all goodness, our hearts rejoice with every remembrance of You. Make us eager to do Your bidding and worthy of Your generous mercy. We thank You that You hear and answer our prayers, providing us with the privilege of entering Your throne room whenever we desire.

Today, inspire our lawmakers with Your wisdom, infusing them with the steadiness of purpose that glorifies You. Give them power to follow after goodness, striving passionately to please You in their thoughts, words, and deeds. Lord, bless all their undertakings and cause them to prosper.

We pray in Your merciful 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 PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The majority leader is recognized.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 1206 AND H.R. 4885

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I understand there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1206) to prohibit the hiring of additional Internal Revenue Service employees until the Secretary of the Treasury certifies that no employee of the Internal Revenue Service has a seriously delinquent tax debt.

A bill (H.R. 4885) to require that user fees collected by the Internal Revenue Service be deposited into the general fund of the Treasury.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bills on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will be placed on the calendar en bloc.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, the top Democrat on the Appropriations Committee recently said that the energy security and water infrastructure funding legislation before us marks an “excellent kickoff” to the appropriations process.

This is the first bill of the “Appropriations Committee to come to the floor,” she said, and “it signals that we are ready to do regular order.” I share Senator MIKULSKI’s sentiment. It has been good to see colleagues working across the aisle expressing an interest and working cooperatively this appropriations season because we know continued cooperation will be essential to a successful appropriations process.

We have seen plenty of positive signs in the Appropriations Committee already. The committee has already approved one-third of the 12 funding bills on a bipartisan basis. With continued cooperation, we will have an opportunity to pass the first of these bills on the floor this week. The energy security and water infrastructure funding legislation before us is the result of many hours of hard work and research. It will reduce wasteful spending, it will bolster national security, and by ad-

vancing priorities like public safety, waterway infrastructure, economic development, and energy innovation it will impact all 50 of our States.

This excellent kickoff to the appropriations season enjoys bipartisan support. It advanced out of committee by a unanimous vote. It represents yet another example of what is possible in a Senate that is back to work. I thank the subcommittee chairman, Senator ALEXANDER, for working with Ranking Member FEINSTEIN to move this important bill out of committee. Let’s continue our work today to get one step closer to passage.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic Leader is recognized.

COMMENDING THE PRESIDING OFFICER

Mr. REID. Madam President, I commented to my able assistant who is at my desk with me, Bill Dauster—I have always—whenever the Presiding Officer says the Pledge of Allegiance, I am amazed at how she stands at attention. It brings back her old military mind, I am sure. Very impressive.

FBI INVESTIGATION

Mr. REID. Madam President, as each day passes, the senior Senator from Iowa further distinguishes himself as the most political and partisan Judiciary Committee chairman in history. Last Friday, Senator GRASSLEY took his political partisanship to a new low when he encouraged the FBI to join the political crusade against Secretary Hillary Clinton.

The Senator from Iowa is confused about the role of the FBI. By law, the FBI is obligated to do its job and conduct an independent review for everything it has to work on free from political interference.

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



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