



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 111th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 156

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2010

No. 45

Senate

(Legislative day of Friday, March 19, 2010)

The Senate met at 2:16 p.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable MARK BEGICH, a Senator from the State of Alaska.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, the giver of every good and perfect gift, as we continue to labor for liberty, guide our Senators with Your wisdom and might. We don't ask for easy tasks but for a spirit that makes difficult tasks easy.

Provide inspiration and wisdom to the many workers who assist our lawmakers in accomplishing their important work. May these laborers, whose work is often unrecognized, know that You see their diligence and will reward their faithfulness.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK BEGICH 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. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U. S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 23, 2010.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK BEGICH, a Sen-

ator from the State of Alaska, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BEGICH thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 4872, S. 3152, AND S. 3153

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is a bill at the desk. I ask for its first reading.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows: A bill (H.R. 4872) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to Title II of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010 (S. Con. Res. 13).

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding the Republican leader wishes to be recognized at this time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bills by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3152) to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

A bill (S. 3153) to provide a fully offset temporary extension of certain programs so as not to increase the deficit, and for other purposes.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I now ask for their second reading, and in order to place the bills on the calendar under provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The three bills that have been read for the first time will receive their second reading on the next legislative day.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, a little earlier today, the President signed the Democratic health spending bill into law, and he used the occasion to point out a number of things he wants people to know about it. Now he will travel around the country, talking up the bill to a skeptical public. Clearly, Democrats in Washington still do not get it. Americans already know what is in this bill. That is precisely why they do not like it.

Most Americans out there are not celebrating today. They are dumbfounded by the fact that Congress just passed this 2,685-page monstrosity against their wishes, on the backs of their children and grandchildren who they know will have to pick up the tab.

With all due respect, you do not pass a bill the American people did not want and then try to sell them on it. You win their support first, then pass it on a bipartisan basis, just as we have done on every other piece of major social legislation we have passed over the past 45 years.

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



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S1819

People oppose this bill not because they do not know what is in it but because they know exactly what is in it. But for some reason, Democrats in Washington still think they can continue to spin the public on this bill. They are still trying to sell it as the one and only solution to problems that we all recognize exist in our health care system.

They will say this is the only solution to controlling costs. They will say this is the only solution to covering preexisting conditions. They will say this is the only way to keep people from getting kicked off their insurance plans.

The American people are not stupid. They know these are false choices.

They know you do not have to slash Medicare a \$½ trillion to lower premiums.

You do not have to impose job-killing taxes to keep people from being kicked off their plan.

People know you will not save money on health care by spending another \$2.6 trillion on health care.

They know you can do these things without forcing taxpayers to cover the cost of abortions.

They know you do not reduce the deficit by creating a massive new government program that even Democrats have described as a Ponzi scheme.

They know you can go a long way toward doing all of these things without creating a brandnew entitlement at a time when we cannot even cover the cost of the entitlements we already have.

They know Democrats can claim to know the verdict of history all they want, but that history will remember this past week not for giving Americans a boost but from diverting us from the real task of enacting commonsense health care reforms that actually lower the cost of care without undermining the health care system we already have.

Americans wanted us to get at the root of this problem, which is cost. Instead, Democrats are spending trillions more on a system that already costs too much and forcing seniors, small business owners, and middle-class families to pay for it.

You can call that a lot of things. You might even call it historic. But you cannot call it reform.

The fact is, this bill spends \$2.6 trillion at a time of near double-digit inflation, while putting the real problem off for another day. It kicks the can down the road.

Democrats in Washington can celebrate all they want, but the celebration is going to be short lived. The American people are not fooled.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I agree with my distinguished counterpart, the Senator from Kentucky. The American people are not stupid. What we are now going to be on shortly is something we do nearly every year. Since 1980, we have done it 20-some odd times; 80 percent of the time it has been done by Republicans. We are going to move forward and make a good law we just passed and signed by the President today even better.

This legislation will reduce the deficit during the first 10 years by about \$140 billion, over the next 10 years by about \$1.3 trillion. In Nevada, 600,000 people will be able to have insurance who do not have it today; 24,000 small businesses in Nevada will be able to have insurance for their employees. Why didn't they have it before? Was it because they were cheap or mean? No, they could not afford it. The insurance companies had a lock on the system. They could not afford it.

There are so many good things, and I am not going to talk about all of them, in this law the President signed today, but let me talk about one thing because it is very personal. This legislation now will allow someone who turns 24 to still be on their parents' insurance when they are in college. They don't even have to be in college—whatever they do. The reason this is important is, Searchlight, NV, is a place where a hard-working couple had a child somewhat late in life. They love that boy. He is going to school almost full time, working part time. He turned 23 and went off his parents' insurance.

Within weeks of his being 23 years old, he got sick and was diagnosed as having testicular cancer. He was real sick. He has had two surgeries. He has had chemotherapy twice. This has been paid for by his parents, who did not have the money to do this. They exhausted their savings. In America, that is not the way it should be. This law we now have takes care of a lot of people just like Jeff Hill from Searchlight, NV.

For all senior citizens in Nevada who are on Medicare, we can close the doughnut hole; that is, people will not have to be concerned about arriving at a point with their health care delivery system where they no longer have coverage for prescription drugs. We take care of that in this new law. There are bipartisan ideas to attack waste, fraud, and abuse. We expand Medicaid Programs. Doing nothing means double-digit premium increases as high as 60 to 70 percent.

This is a good law, and we are going to make it better.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move that the Senate adjourn until 3:05 p.m. today, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) are necessarily absent.

Mr. KYL. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 57, nays 39, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 62 Leg.]

YEAS—57

Akaka	Franken	Mikulski
Baucus	Gillibrand	Murray
Bayh	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Begich	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bennet	Inouye	Pryor
Bingaman	Johnson	Reed
Boxer	Kaufman	Reid
Brown (OH)	Kerry	Rockefeller
Burris	Klobuchar	Sanders
Cantwell	Kohl	Schumer
Cardin	Landrieu	Shaheen
Carper	Lautenberg	Specter
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Conrad	Levin	Tester
Dodd	Lieberman	Udall (CO)
Dorgan	Lincoln	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Webb
Feingold	Menendez	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Merkley	Wyden

NAYS—39

Alexander	Crapo	Lugar
Barrasso	DeMint	McCain
Bond	Ensign	McConnell
Brown (MA)	Enzi	Murkowski
Brownback	Graham	Risch
Bunning	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Gregg	Sessions
Chambliss	Hatch	Shelby
Coburn	Hutchison	Snowe
Cochran	Inhofe	Thune
Collins	Johanns	Vitter
Corker	Kyl	Voivovich
Cornyn	LeMieux	Wicker

NOT VOTING—4

Bennett	Isakson
Byrd	Udall (NM)

The motion was agreed to, and the Senate, at 3:12 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 23, 2010, at 3:13 p.m.