



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 107th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 147

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, JUNE 11, 2001

No. 80

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 12, 2001, at 12:30 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, JUNE 11, 2001

The Senate met at 1:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BILL NELSON, a Senator from the State of Florida.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Lord of all life, who has made work in Government one of the highest callings and the formation of public policy a crucial ministry, we ask You to help us to bless the weekday and keep it holy. Give us a renewed sense of mission today as we go about the tasks of this week. You are present in this Chamber. May we keep our attention on You as the only one we must please. With that ever before us, we will work with excellence because we are accountable to You. So may every word we speak, every relationship we enjoy, and every task we tackle be done with a sense of Your presence. May we never forget why we are here: to serve You by being servant leaders to the people in our land. Living and working is a privilege. Thank You for another day to do both with enthusiasm. In the name of our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BILL NELSON 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, June 11, 2001.

To the Senate:

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

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. NELSON of Florida thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we are going to be in a period of morning business until 2:30 today. At 2:30 we are going to resume consideration of the education reform bill. We are going to spend 30 minutes on the Bond amendment regarding parental involvement and then 2 hours on the Landrieu amendment dealing with title I. We will have two rollcall votes at 5:30 p.m. in relation to the Landrieu and Bond amendments. We are going to complete

consideration of this education bill by the end of this week.

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

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

The assistant 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now be in a period of morning business until the hour of 2:30 with Senators permitted to speak therein for not to exceed 10 minutes with the following exceptions: Mr. THOMAS or his designee, 1:30 to 2; Mr. DURBIN or his designee, 2 to 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. REID). The Senator from Florida.

GLOBAL WARMING

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I am grateful for the opportunity to address a couple of topics that have been in my heart.

I had the privilege of being here Friday afternoon to hear Senator BYRD

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



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explain the legislation he was offering to try to get our arms around the problem of global warming. It was in Senator BYRD's presentation to the Senate that he shared with us that a vast majority of the scientific community in fact has recognized that the Earth's temperature is warming and that, indeed, man is contributing to that warming through the emission of CO₂ into the atmosphere, thus causing a greenhouse effect.

I was so moved by Senator BYRD's presentation, after which he then introduced the legislation, in light of the fact that this present administration had set aside the Kyoto accords and is going about in its own way to try to address the problem.

Senator BYRD offered this legislation, sponsored by himself and cosponsored by Senator STEVENS, as a means to try to accelerate and focus world attention on this phenomenon; to use Senator BYRD's words, that something out there in fact is happening.

I was moved to speak after Senator BYRD's presentation. What I shared was an experience of looking at global warming from the perspective of my past life as the elected insurance commissioner of Florida, recognizing that it would have devastating effects upon a State such as Florida with such an extensive coastline. The rise of the seas would have an immediate effect upon most of our population which is along the coast. The warming of the atmosphere would cause increased frequency and ferociousness of storms, particularly the storms that are a part of our life still in Florida known as hurricanes, and the rising temperature for the tropical and subtropical climes would likewise have the result of increasing pestilence and disease.

I was then moved to remember in my mind's eye the view I had out the window of the spacecraft *Columbia* on the 24th flight of the space shuttle, looking back at planet Earth, how beautiful it is and yet how fragile it looks. It is gorgeous. It is a blue and white ball suspended in the middle of nothing. Space is nothing. It is an airless vacuum that goes on and on for billions and billions of light years. In the midst of that void is this wonderful creation we call home, planet Earth.

I described to Senator BYRD Friday that on the first day, you are looking at nation states. On the second day, you are looking at continents. On the third day, you are looking at the whole planet. That is the perspective you have. The first time you look out, you are looking for home. You are looking for Florida, and then you are looking for America. Then in a few days you are looking for home, and there it is, planet Earth, blue because of the oceans, white because of the clouds.

If you look at the land mass, it is usually a dull brown except in parts where there are the contrasts of colors, such as the Horn of Africa, the bright, almost orange-reddish sands of eastern Africa set off against the bright blue waters of the Indian Ocean.

I am saying all of this because I wanted to add to the comments I made on Friday about global warming. I was struck with the beauty of this creation, but I was also struck with how fragile it looked. I could see how we are not being good stewards. I could see the destruction of the rain forests, and then I could look to the east and see the mouth of the Amazon. The waters of the Atlantic were discolored for hundreds of miles with the silt that resulted from the destruction of the trees hundreds of miles upriver. I would look at the rim of the Earth, a bright blue band. But on closer inspection, you could see the thin film enveloping the Earth that sustains all of our life known as the atmosphere.

I came away from that experience of 6 days in outer space with a profound sense that I needed to be a better steward of what God has given us in this beautiful, colorful planet called Earth.

That is what I was moved to think of when Senator BYRD introduced his legislation concerning global warming; that we better be serious and listen to the scientific community, saying that things are changing, that people in States such as mine along the coast of this country had better be wary of the immediate effects upon the consequences of global warming, and that we should be better stewards of what we have been given by our creator, if, in fact, we are doing what we ought to do.

I have often let my imagination wander with regard to space travel. I firmly believe that in my lifetime, certainly in the lifetime of a lot of our young friends, we will see an international mission from planet Earth to another planet, probably Mars. When we get there, are those dry river beds that we see in our telescopes? And if they are, what happened to that water? And if we find, in fact, that there was water, then there likely was life. And if there was life, to what degree did it develop; was it civilized? And if it was civilized, what happened? What can we learn so that we can be better stewards of our civilization on planet Earth?

Senator BYRD, as he so eloquently expressed his concerns and interest and, therefore, the offering of the legislation to study the problem, was most timely. The President is on his way to Europe tonight to discuss this issue with the many leaders of Europe, their concern that he unilaterally disregarded the Kyoto accords. If we are not going to have the Kyoto accords for the nations of the world to come together to do something about the rise of the greenhouse effect on planet Earth, then we better get together with some other kind of protocol quickly. Senator BYRD and Senator STEVENS are offering that kind of leadership as a way. It is just one suggestion, but it is an important suggestion. It is timely.

I took this moment to offer those thoughts and, again, to say my profound appreciation to the great Senator from the State of West Virginia for what he has offered.

I yield the floor.

(Mr. NELSON of Florida assumed the chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

EDUCATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, what has taken place in the Senate over the past few weeks, the change from a Republican majority to a Democrat majority, is really not about which party is in charge or which party is the majority. I believe the history books will be written that it is about the truly important issues to the citizens of Nevada, Florida, and citizens all over the country.

The education of our children, for example, is at the top of any list. Three of my grandchildren are of school age. As I stand here today, Mattie, Savannah, and Ryan are in school—one of them here in a suburb of Washington; two of them in Las Vegas. They are each sitting in their classrooms. They are so fortunate that they have great teachers. They have teachers who are dedicated to putting information in their heads and making them feel good about themselves.

As a grandfather, I want to do all I can to ensure that they receive the best education possible and that my other seven grandchildren—and I have two additional ones on the way, so that is 12 grandchildren—will also have the same opportunities and maybe even better opportunities than my three grandchildren who are in school today.

As a Senator representing the State of Nevada, I want to do everything I can as a Member of this national legislative body to make sure that not only my grandchildren but every child in America has an opportunity to be educated in the best way they can. We all have that obligation.

Millions of children across the country are, at this very moment, acquiring a foundation that will provide them with enormous opportunities. They are acquiring an education. There are also lots of children in America who are not being educated in the way they should be educated.

Nevada is an interesting example. We have one school district, Clark County School District, where Las Vegas is.

It is the sixth largest school district in America and fast approaching the fifth largest. There are 240,000 children in that school district. We have to build, to keep up with the growth, one new school every month. This year, we will dedicate about 15 schools. We hold the record in America. One year, we dedicated 18 new schools. The superintendent of schools has said he is not a superintendent of "instruction," but a superintendent of "construction."

We need help in this very large school district. We need help. There are a number of ways we have tried to get aid to school districts for construction, not only to build new schools but to rehabilitate old schools.

The average school in the U.S. today is about 45 years old. We need to do