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## Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable LAMAR ALEXANDER, a Senator from the State of Tennessee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's prayer will be offered by the guest Chaplain, Rev. Kim Swithinbank of Falls Church, VA.

### PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Please pray with me.

Almighty God and Heavenly Father, we thank You for those who had the vision for this country as One Nation Under God. We thank You that it has become a home for people from many different nationalities and ethnic backgrounds and for the rich diversity of life and culture that flows therefrom.

However, we acknowledge, too, the challenge that this diversity presents to those who have the responsibility of governing and guiding this Nation. So we pray for this Senate and all its Members that they would be given wisdom in their decisions, the ability to hear and respond constructively to colleagues whose views may differ, and a true desire to serve all the people of this Nation.

Send Your Holy Spirit, we pray, to guide this Senate in Your ways of justice, compassion, and truth that they may exercise their duty of care for this Nation with integrity, imagination, and skill. We ask these prayers in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who was unafraid to speak the truth, who had compassion for all people and who now reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable LAMAR ALEXANDER 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. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, May 20, 2003.

To the Senate:

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

TED STEVENS,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. ALEXANDER assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

### SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this morning there will be a period of morning business with the time equally divided between Senator CORNYN and the minority leader or his designee. Following morning business, the Senate will resume debate on the Department of Defense authorization bill. Two amendments are pending which relate to TRICARE. This morning, the chairman and the ranking member will be working on a time agreement as to when we may dispose of those pending amendments. Rollcall votes are, therefore, expected prior to the recess for the respective party luncheons.

Other Members who intend to offer amendments to the Defense authorization bill are encouraged to notify the chairman and ranking member in order to schedule consideration of their

amendments. Senators should expect rollcall votes on amendments throughout the day in order to make progress on this important bill. It is hoped that we can finish the bill either today or tomorrow. As a reminder, this week the Senate will consider the debt limit extension under a previous consent agreement.

Finally, I would add it is hoped that final action on the jobs and economic growth package from conference will be voted on this week. In fact, I want to notify my colleagues that it is my intention, as soon as we receive that conference report, to bring it to the floor. An agreement is being reached between the two Houses on this conference report. I am very optimistic that we will be able to address that this week.

We will have a very busy week with the Department of Defense authorization, the jobs and economic growth conference report that I just mentioned, the debt limit, and we are working to make progress on unemployment insurance which has to be addressed also this week. That expires on May 30. Thus, we are responsible for acting on that as well this week.

### MEDICARE AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I have a few opening comments I wanted to briefly mention on an issue we are going to be talking about and debating on the floor during the last 2 weeks of next month; that is, Medicare and prescription drugs. At this point, let me make those comments, and then we will proceed with the schedule as planned.

It was in 1963 that President John F. Kennedy said, when leading the fight to enact Medicare at that time:

A proud and resourceful nation can no longer ask its people to live in constant fear of a serious illness for which adequate funds are not available.

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



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These are the words I want to stress. He said:

We owe the right of dignity in sickness, as well as in health.

Protecting the health of our Nation's seniors was the right thing to do in the early 1960s, and it is the right thing for us to do now. Back in 1965, Medicare was designed for the way medicine was practiced at that point in time, and that was to treat acute or episodic illnesses that would bring people to the hospitals. It was not designed at that time, nor could it be designed at that time, to keep up with the dazzling innovations, the creativity, and the dynamic discoveries that were being made almost on a daily basis. These great advances have and will continue to transform medicine. We have a structure with Medicare that simply is not flexible enough or adaptable enough to assimilate or capture those great discoveries that are being made. That leads us to unacceptable gaps in coverage. One of those gaps has become apparent to us all, whether we are seniors or individuals with disabilities, or those of us in the political arena listening very carefully to our constituents. That is the gap for prescription drugs.

What seniors deserve is health care security. Unlike in the 1960s when it was designed—there haven't been that many changes, really, since the 1960s—today that health care security does involve good preventive care, access to affordable prescription drug protection from those unexpected catastrophic costs which can reach astronomical levels, and access to the modern technology that I mentioned before.

Since it doesn't include all of those things, it has not given the security I and I believe all of us believe seniors deserve.

If you look at certain technologies such as preventive tests for breast cancer and prostate cancer, it literally required an act of Congress before they could be covered by Medicare. We in Congress simply cannot respond, with all of the other responsibilities, to each and every innovation that comes through. We simply can't do it.

More basic care, such as cholesterol screening in my own field of heart-lung cardiology—you all know the importance of cholesterol—is not covered today. In the end, it creates lapses in a very good system. Medicare is a very good system, but it is simply not a system that is up to date with the quality of care that we could give our seniors today.

I would say that we do have an obligation—I would call it a moral obligation—to ensure that Medicare does provide the highest quality of care to our seniors that we are able to provide and which I believe we can provide.

The Senate Finance Committee has been working for the past several months to develop such a plan. We are building on the work of a lot of past bipartisan efforts in this body: the Breaux-Frist plan, the House-passed legislation, the Senate tripartisan plan

of the last Congress, and the President's framework for reform.

In early June, the Finance Committee will be addressing this matter under the leadership of Senator GRASSLEY, working with Senator BAUCUS, and we will take this proposal to the floor, as amended through committee, sometime in those last 2 weeks of June.

It is my hope and it is my intention to vote on final passage of such legislation before we adjourn for the July 4 Independence Day recess.

Once passed, we will begin to provide that prescription drug coverage for seniors and improve that system for health care security for our seniors.

I do think we need to address this issue in a bipartisan way. This is a big bill. It is a big expansion of Medicare. It is going to take people on both sides of the aisle to address this important goal of protecting the health of our seniors.

I mention all this only because it is so big and so large that I encourage my colleagues to start studying and re-studying the issue, even though we have a very busy week now, and then we have our recess during which we will be with our constituents back at home, and then we will come back to an energy bill, and then Medicare. I want people to start preparing for that right now because it is such a large challenge before us.

Our Nation's seniors are depending on us to do the right thing for them. With the appropriate planning, with the appropriate discussions, again, in a bipartisan way, we will be able to deliver on that promise.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Would the Chair announce morning business. Has that been done?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. It has not.

#### 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, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business until the hour of 10 a.m., with the time equally divided between the Senator from Texas, Mr. CORNYN, and the Democratic leader, or their designees.

The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I know the junior Senator from Texas is in the Chamber and wishes to speak.

I am wondering how long he wishes to speak. I direct the question through the Chair to the Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. About 10 minutes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have some remarks I wish to give while the majority leader is on the floor. I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until 10:10, and that the extra time be equally divided.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MEDICARE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the subject of Medicare is extremely important. Medicare is not a perfect program, but it is a good program. It has done so much to help the American people.

I am glad to see we are going to address the issue. I hope we address it with the intent of doing more than just calling it Medicare reform. It has to be real Medicare reform. I hope that can be accomplished.

(The remarks of Mr. REID pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 146 are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

#### REBUILDING IRAQ

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I rise today to say a few words about the rebuilding of Iraq and, more importantly, the creation of a democratic Iraq.

Iraq is situated in the very cradle of civilization. It has an ancient and colorful history. And although it is easy to overlook now, Baghdad itself was once viewed as a center of learning and cultural activity until it was hijacked by the fascist regime of Saddam Hussein.

Today, Iraq is a hive of clan warfare, looting, and violent chaos. There are competing political groups, armed criminal gangs, and street thugs. The Iraqi people are free of Saddam, but they are not yet free of fear.

The situation is complex, delicate, and decidedly unpleasant. But unless America and our coalition partners act quickly and decisively, self-government will be recalled years from now as only a fleeting dream for the people of Iraq.

I believe there is still hope and opportunity—hope that the free people of Iraq can conquer the anarchy that controls their streets, and opportunity to fulfill the promise of a thriving democratic Iraq.

That dream may seem far off in Baghdad today, but as John Adams once said: "People and nations are forged in the fires of adversity."

In order for Iraq to grow and blossom from the rubble, it requires security. It requires order. It requires the rule of law.

First, we must begin by ensuring the basic security of the Iraqi people. People must be able to buy food at the market without fearing armed robbery or kidnapping. They must be able to worship without fearing snipers or skirmishes. Their children must be able to go to school without hearing the sound of gunfire nearby.

The Middle East looks like the Old West right now, and we need lawmen to help restore the peace. We must eliminate the threats posed by what remains