



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 108th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 150

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 2004

No. 74

Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Lord of time and eternity, You have presented us with the gift of another day. With wonderful fairness, You have given each of us the same number of hours and minutes. Forgive us when we abuse this gift by preoccupation with yesterday and anxiety about tomorrow. Remind us to tackle today's challenges and leave the past and the future to You.

Bless our Senators in their work. Give them understanding and courage to act on their convictions. When they are tempted to doubt, strengthen their faith. Order their lives by Your unfolding providence, and enable them to use the gift of time to work so that peace will reign in our world.

Bless our military and all who daily risk their lives for liberty. Sustain the families of these heroes and heroines and hasten the time of reunion. We pray this in Your mighty 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.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, the Senate returns to business today following the Memorial Day recess. I hope everyone had a safe and productive break.

Today, we will be in a period for morning business until 12:30 p.m., with the time equally divided between both sides of the aisle. At 12:30, we will recess until 2:15 p.m. for the weekly Republican policy luncheon. I understand the Democratic policy luncheon will occur tomorrow.

As a reminder, prior to the Memorial Day break, we tried to reach consent to begin consideration of the class action fairness bill. I reiterate that it has always been my hope we could finish the Defense authorization and the class action bill in a reasonable and timely way. Unfortunately, after spending a week on the Defense authorization bill we were still unable to reach an agreement for an amendment limitation.

In addition, there was an objection to proceeding to the class action fairness measure. A cloture vote is currently scheduled for 5:30 p.m. today on the motion to proceed to the class action bill. I hope it will not be necessary.

I will be talking with the Democratic leadership to see if we can find a way to finish the Defense authorization bill and begin the class action fairness bill without unnecessary delay.

We need to reach an agreement on how and when we will complete this important Defense authorization bill, and then we will begin the class action bill without the need for cloture.

I hope to announce shortly that we have reached an agreement for vitiation of the 5:30 p.m. vote and that we will continue on the Defense bill with the expectation that Members will cooperate with the two managers to allow us to finish this Defense authorization bill.

I also should remind my colleagues that we will continue to work on judicial nominations as we proceed forward. I will be setting votes on those nominations each day. If we are able to vitiate the cloture vote today, we will schedule a vote on a judicial nomination today in its place as we will have a vote at 5:30 p.m. today.

Again, I will announce the voting schedule shortly.

Finally, we have 4 weeks during this legislative period. We have a lot to accomplish over that period of time. I hope we can use our time efficiently and get our work done.

DRUG DISCOUNT CARDS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I also very briefly want to comment on the drug discount cards that are being made available and which take effect this month. This is June 1 and they take effect beginning today.

The discount cards, as my colleagues know, are a product of legislation signed by the President last December. The reality is that we have seniors today who are literally choosing between paying for their rent and paying for their food and obtaining prescription drugs.

One of the objectives set out in this piece of legislation and set out by the President of the United States was that we need to get help to those people who need help the most in terms of their prescription drugs. Thus, although this is a more comprehensive approach, affordable access to prescription drugs for seniors does not begin to take place for about a year and a half from now. I am delighted that just several months after passage of this bill and the signing into law by the President these prescription drug cards are available. They are available today, and they will have an impact today.

There are a couple of quick points that I would like to make: First of all, they are available to all Medicare enrollees who lack prescription drug coverage.

Second, the card itself will give a discount on average of about 17 percent. Seniors who do not have access through affordable access to prescription drugs can get these cards and on average get a discount of about 17 percent, which is a huge discount that can start literally today.

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



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Third, and what I am most excited about, those seniors who really need it the most and who simply can't afford prescription drugs will get a value on this card in addition to the 17-percent discount of \$600 for the remainder of this year, and another \$600 for next year. Thus, over the next 18 months they will get \$1,200 in value, like a voucher, to purchase prescription drugs.

Again, that is a huge benefit for the millions of seniors who qualify for this low-income benefit as well. There are about 4 million low-income seniors whose incomes do not exceed the \$12,500 level for individuals and about the \$16,800 level for couples and who can have this direct and immediate benefit with this card.

I am very excited about the fact that these cards are available. They are available today. You can call the 800 Medicare number or go on the Medicare Web site to get more information.

With that, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business until the hour of 12:30 p.m., with the time equally divided between the majority leader, or his designee, and the Democratic leader, or his designee.

Who seeks recognition?

The Senator from Colorado.

MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, my wife and I, during the Memorial Day break, had a wonderful, patriotic week. It is always good to get back to the regular schedule. We started out visiting Fort Carson just south of Colorado Springs, CO, and had an opportunity to welcome home the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment of Fort Carson, the Mountain Post.

Having done that, we met with a number of constituents after flying back to Washington, DC, to meet with hundreds of Coloradans who decided to come to Washington, DC, to celebrate the Memorial Day weekend here and to celebrate the opening of the World War II Memorial, which was a long time in coming.

It was a great time. My wife and I were both caught up in the enthusiasm of both generations—the current generation fighting for freedom and security in Iraq, and the past generation, the World War II generation who fought and literally changed the world because of their efforts, dedication, and heroism during World War II. We were caught up in the enthusiasm of the

World War II generation and found ourselves dancing to music of that era, having a wonderful time, meeting many wonderful Coloradans who were obviously excited about the fact they could come to Washington, DC, and celebrate the opening of the World War II Memorial.

THE 3RD ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT

I rise today to commend the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment for its long history of service to our Nation and for its more recent heroic accomplishments in Iraq.

Last week, I had the opportunity to attend a welcome home ceremony for the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Carson, CO. Unlike most welcome home ceremonies, this one was steeped in tradition.

Few units in the U.S. Army can claim as distinguished history as the 3rd Armored Cavalry. And, even fewer have had so many of its soldiers awarded medals for valor on the battlefield.

The 3rd Armored Cavalry's service to our country did not begin in Iraq, or during World II. Indeed, not even in the past century. Rather, it began on May 19, 1846, by an Act of the 29th Congress of the United States. On that date, Congress authorized the creation of a regiment of mounted riflemen for the purpose of establishing military stations on the route to Oregon. Unbeknownst to Congress, this regiment would go far beyond this limited mission in its service to our country.

A year after its creation, in 1847, the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, then called the Mounted Riflemen, was sent into battle in the Mexican-American War. Leading the assault on the fortress of Chapultepec, a key citadel outside Mexico City, Mounted Riflemen charged through heavy cannon fire to seize the castle and capture an enemy artillery battery.

Later in the war, the Mounted Riflemen were sent to capture another enemy artillery battery halfway to the Belen Gate outside Mexico City, and then on to capture a third battery in the assault on the gate itself. It was extraordinarily successful in all three assaults.

General Winfield Scott, the Commander of U.S. forces during the Mexican War, was so impressed with the bravery and toughness of the Mounted Riflemen that he gave this commendation:

Brave Rifles, veterans—you have been baptized in fire and blood and come out with steel. Where bloody work was to be done, "the Rifles" was the cry, and there they were. All speak of them in terms of praise and admiration. What can I say? What shall I say? Language cannot express my feelings of gratitude for your gallant conduct in this terrible conflict . . .

Due to the bravery of their service, 11 troopers were commissioned from the enlisted ranks and 19 officers received brevet promotions for gallantry in action.

At the time of the start of the Civil War, the First Regiment of Mounted

Riflemen was redesignated as the 3rd U.S. Cavalry Regiment. During the war, the 3rd Cavalry Regiment fought at the battle of Chattanooga, and in minor battles in New Mexico, Alabama, Tennessee, and Arkansas. During the campaign in New Mexico, the 3rd Cavalry Regiment fought alongside the 1st Colorado Infantry Regiment, and Colonel "Kit" Carson, who commanded the 1st New Mexico Infantry Regiment.

Following the Civil War, the 3rd Cavalry Regiment was sent to the American West to the fight in the Indian Wars. The experiences of the Indian Wars were traumatic and brutal for the troopers of the 3rd Cavalry Regiment, but they continued on. During the largest battle of the Indian Wars, the Regiment again distinguished itself. Four 3rd Cavalry troopers received the Medal of Honor for their heroism during the battle.

In 1898, the regiment's mettle was again tested in the Spanish-American War. The 3rd Cavalry regiment, along with five other regular U.S. Cavalry regiments, was given the nearly impossible mission of assaulting the hills surrounding San Juan in Cuba. In the dismounted attack, the 3rd Cavalry Regiment's U.S. Flag was the first to be raised on the point of victory.

With the turn of the century, armies began to turn to mechanized warfare. It was not until World War II, however, that the 3rd Cavalry Regiment was reorganized and redesignated as the 3rd Armored Group and sent to the European theater.

The troopers of the 3rd Cavalry group became the spearhead of General Patton's drive across German-held France. In fact, because this unit was everywhere and nowhere at the same time, it was nicknamed the "Ghosts" by the Germans. And, on November 17, 1944, the 3rd Cavalry Group became the first element of Patton's army to enter Germany.

At the war's end, the unit received high praise from its commanding general. General Patton commented with these words:

The 3rd Cavalry has lived up to the accolade bestowed upon it at Chapultepec by General Scott. As horse cavalry you were outstanding; I have never seen a better regiment. To your performance as mechanized cavalry, the same applies. It is a distinct honor to have commanded an army in which the 3rd Cavalry served.

During the Persian Gulf war in 1991, the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment again distinguished itself on the field of battle. On February 22, 1991, the Regiment led the U.S. forces across the Iraqi border. One hundred hours later, the regiment had moved over 300 kilometers north and left the remnants of three Iraqi Republican Guard divisions in its wake.

The purpose of reviewing the storied past of one of Army's most famed units is for each of us to understand just how important it was to these troopers that they live up to the unit's reputation in battle during Operation Iraqi Freedom.