



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, JUNE 4, 2007

No. 88

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 5, 2007, at 2 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, JUNE 4, 2007

The Senate met at 2:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JIM WEBB, a Senator from the State of Virginia.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, our shelter in the time of storm, as we return to the business of freedom, use the Members of this body to accomplish Your will. Strengthen them to never abandon the struggle, and inspire them to endure to the end. Help them to press forward to the goal of Your ideal for humanity. May they never take the easy path and so leave the right road. Remind them that perspiration is usually the price of worthy things and that without the cross, there is rarely a crown. Keep and sustain our lawmakers by Your grace.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JIM WEBB 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 assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 4, 2007.

To the Senate:

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

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WEBB thereupon 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. REID. Mr. President, the Senate will be in a period for the transaction of morning business until 3:30 p.m. today. The time is divided between the two parties. Following the period for morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1348, the immigration legislation. There will be no rollcall votes today.

I will meet with the distinguished Republican leader this afternoon and talk about when, if at all, we should file cloture on this immigration bill. We have 14 amendments pending. We need to dispose of those amendments, or most of them, before we move on to other amendments. The managers will be working this afternoon to come up with a package we can start voting on tomorrow. There are important amend-

ments on which people who favor the immigration bill and oppose the immigration bill will want to move forward. They are key amendments, and we need to get them scheduled and disposed of, and the managers need to get that done as quickly as possible.

We had a good debate on this matter the last week we were in session. Everyone has been home, and they have been barraged on all sides of this issue. There are people who think it is the best thing in the world, and there are people who think it is the worst thing in the world. We are going to continue to work on this legislation and see if we can satisfy people so they think it is good legislation and we are working out of a necessity to solve some major problems in America today as relates to legislation dealing with immigration.

I will be happy to yield to my distinguished Republican friend.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

IMMIGRATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I welcome all of our colleagues back and the staff who are in the room and others.

As the majority leader indicated, we are in the middle of a big, challenging, contentious issue. There are many amendments pending. In fact, over 80

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S6971

are filed at the desk. A lot of work has been done over the recess in terms of some of those amendments, and it is my hope that some of them can be disposed of without rollcall votes. It is also my hope that during today's session, the managers will be prepared to set up votes on the pending amendments so we can continue to make progress on the bill tomorrow.

This is a very significant piece of legislation, as we all know. We need to have the maximum opportunity for the largest number of amendments to be considered before we entertain the notion of shutting down debate on this important measure. It is quite possibly the most significant measure we will be dealing with this Congress, and we need to make sure all Senators feel that they have had an opportunity to offer their amendments and that those amendments have had a shot at being considered.

I encourage people on both sides of the aisle to come on over. Let's make sure we have plenty of amendments in the queue and have a full day working on this bill beginning tomorrow.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 2316 and H.R. 2317

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding that there are two bills at the desk and they are both due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bills by title for the second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2316) to provide for more rigorous requirements with respect to disclosure and enforcement of lobbying laws and regulations, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 2317) to amend the Lobbying and Disclosure Act of 1995 to require registered lobbyists to file quarterly reports on contributions bundled for certain recipients, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in order to place these bills on the calendar under the provisions of standing rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bills will be placed on the calendar under rule XIV.

Mr. REID. I note that these are the two bills the House has considered dealing with ethics reform. I have had a number of meetings with my distinguished Republican colleague, and we are in the process of figuring out a way we can get to conference with the House on these important issues.

MEMORIAL DAY RECESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I attended, as Senator ENSIGN and I do every Memorial Day, a service at the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery, which is located in Boulder City, NV. I am struck by two conversations I had.

One was with a World War II veteran by the name of Ken Brown. Basically, he has lost his hearing. He was a machine gunner on a destroyer. As you know, Mr. President, the noise on one of those ships was deafening, and he certainly was deafened in the process. But he told me—and this is the first time he has ever expressed anything other than total support for what President Bush has been doing as relates to the military—he told me in no uncertain terms that we Democrats were headed in the right direction; we had to stop what was going on in Iraq.

Then, a wonderful woman came up to visit with me. She visited me a year and a month ago here in my office. Her boy had been killed in Iraq. A year ago, I traveled with her and her husband after the ceremony in Memorial Cemetery in Boulder City out of the auditorium and out to one of the graves. There are 22,000 graves in that new cemetery in Boulder City. It is very new. There are 22,000 graves. One of those graves is her son, John Lukac, who was killed in Iraq. She is as sad today as she was a year ago. She asked me with tears in her eyes if there is some way I can get her to Iraq. She wants to go where her son was killed. We said: No, we don't want you to go to Iraq; you shouldn't go there. She is a wonderful woman, a wonderful mother. This is a wonderful family. Her husband is so gracious and nice.

I am grateful beyond words for the sacrifices of the men and women in uniform from Nevada and around the Nation who have done so much for our country and are serving in the military. We focus on those who have been injured and killed, and those are the people who have given a tremendous sacrifice. But there are other people who serve, and sometimes in not so glamorous positions, but it is as a result of their service that we are able to conduct military warfare as we need to. In this work period, we will continue to do everything we can to honor the sacrifices of these men and women with a responsible end to the Iraq war.

During the work period, I had a chance to visit with many Nevadans. No. 1 on their minds is the war, and No. 2 is the high gas prices. We are better now in Nevada. Gas prices keep going up. We are no longer No. 3 in the Nation. I guess that is some distinction. We have dropped down to 11 or somewhere in that area. And, of course, immigration reform is on everyone's mind. I assured them that these issues—the Iraq war, the situation with the gas prices and, of course, immigration—are on our radar screen. We are going to be working on those issues this work period.

On the first day of the 110th Congress, Democrats, because we won the majority, were able to introduce the first 10 bills, the first 10 priorities as we saw them. Last Friday, we concluded a 7-week work period, and we have taken action on 7 of these 10 priorities.

We passed the toughest ethics and lobbying reform in our Nation's history. We will soon go to conference with the House on that bill.

We passed a 10-year overdue minimum wage that the President has signed.

We attempted to give Medicare the power to negotiate lower drug prices. We were prevented from doing so because of a Republican filibuster.

We passed the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission after almost 3 years of them being set aside. We expect to complete the conference on that legislation within the next couple of weeks and send it to the President.

Stem cell research, giving hope to millions of Americans, was again passed in this body, and we expect to send it to the President after conferring with the House, which we expect to do in the next couple of weeks, and we think in the Senate we are going to send a veto-proof bill to him.

In addition, we were able to pass what was not one of the top 10 priorities but something we have been trying to do for 3 years; that is, disaster relief for the struggling farmers and ranchers in this country.

We were able to send to the President something he signed dealing with giving the victims of Katrina the relief they deserve since the actual hurricane struck. The President has gone there lots of times but refused to cooperate with us in sending the money.

We were able to send a downpayment on SCHIP, which is helping to fund health care for children.

And, of course, we were able to send \$1 billion in homeland security. We fought with the President for years. I have to say, his people fought us to the very end. We were forced to take some of that money off homeland security. But with \$1 billion, we can at least go forward and do a better job of checking cargo containers coming into this country. We can do a better job of checking for nuclear weapons coming into this country, dirty bombs. We will do a better job of taking a look at what is happening with our rail safety.

So we are comfortable that we have done some good things. We passed a balanced budget that restores fiscal discipline and puts the middle class first—cutting their taxes while increasing investment in education, veterans care, and children's health care.

We began debate on the complex, crucial issue of immigration reform, which I spoke about a short time ago. This week, we are going to complete that legislation and hopefully bring to final passage a comprehensive bill that will strengthen our border security and bring 12 million undocumented Americans out of the shadows and help our economy move strongly.

In the days ahead, we will work to improve the bill to protect and strengthen family ties while improving the structure of the temporary worker program.