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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O Lord, our God, remove from our Senators all that is contrary to You. Take away all their doubts; cast off all resistance to Your leading. Instead, mold our lawmakers into Your image, giving them a willingness to sacrifice for others. Deliver them from anxiety. Infuse them with gratitude. Let Your peace guard their hearts and minds. May they always incline to Your will and walk in Your ways, as they dedicate themselves to the advancement of Your glory. Give them wisdom to do what is best for the safety, honor, and welfare of the Nation, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, purpose and piety may be established among us for all generations.

We pray in Your wonderful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland, 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 27, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. CARDIN 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, this morning we will resume consideration of S. 1639, the immigration legislation. As I said yesterday, cloture was filed on the bill. Any germane first-degree amendments need to be filed today by 1 p.m.

Also, another reminder to Members about the briefing by Admiral McConnell which will take place in S-407 and will run until 11:30 this morning. I will say to everyone, we could have votes during that period of time. I announced that last night. That is very possible, that we will have votes on this immigration bill. We are under postcloture rules. We are going to finish this legislation this week. And we very much appreciate the admiral coming down here, but, of course, he did not know what our schedule would be. But others may be inconvenienced because there very well could be votes.

Let me say a couple of things before we get to immigration. I would notify the two managers that I may have to have a short quorum call because there are some changes they are making on procedural matters. I think we need a couple of minutes to get that straightened out.

I sought yesterday to move to S. 1, the ethics and lobbying reform bill. There was a reason the bill came first. From the first day, we knew that all progress would depend on renewing the peoples' faith in the integrity of this institution, the Congress. This legislation which passed here in the Senate does just that: It prohibits lobbyists and those who hire lobbyists from giving gifts to lawmakers and staff; it prevents corporations and lobbyists from paying for questionable travel for Members and staff; it requires Senators to pay fair market value for chartered flights, putting an end to abuses of corporate travel; slows the revolving door by extending the ban on lobbying by former Members of Congress and senior staffers; prevents Senators from even negotiating for a job as a lobbyist until their successor has been elected; puts an end to the pay-to-play schemes that became notorious around here; it shines the light of day on lobbying activities by vastly increasing disclosure requirements; requires the Senate disclose all earmarks—this is the first time ever. We passed the ethics and lobbying reform bill here with overwhelming support from Senators on both sides of the aisle. The House did the same thing.

Yesterday, I asked consent to send our legislation to conference. The Republicans objected. I think it is interesting that on the same day this objection took place preventing us from moving forward to complete this legislation, there was yet another sign of how desperately needed this reform is. Yesterday, Stephen Griles, President Bush's former Interior Deputy Secretary, the No. 2 in charge, was sent to prison and fined for his corruption. This sentence came after Griles admitted to obstructing the investigation of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. Now Mr. Griles will face justice for his contribution to disintegrating the peoples' trust in their Government. But now we have a chance to look forward, to stop the Jack Abramoffs, the

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



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Safavians, the Neys and others and the Stephen Griles of the future before they have a chance to corrupt our system even more, to deliver to the American people a government as good and as honest as the people it represents.

I will come, before the day is out, and ask once again unanimous consent to appoint conferees in this legislation. The eyes of the country are upon us as to what we are going to do with ethics reform and lobbying reform in this Congress. Are we going to be prevented from completing this legislation? The answer is up to the minority, the Republicans.

Yesterday, I came to the floor to express appreciation to RICHARD LUGAR, the senior Senator from the State of Indiana, former chairman and current ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, for his comments on the tragic war in Iraq.

I have said on previous occasions that Democrats are virtually unanimous in our opposition to the war and united in our efforts to change course. But we face an obstinate President who refuses to hear the call of the American people. We face a Republican minority that has largely stood by his side as conditions in Iraq have deteriorated, and we have more than 3,500 dead Americans. I understand those who are wounded are approaching 30,000, a third of them grievously wounded.

Opposing the President of one's own party, especially on a war, is no small thing. And now Senator GEORGE VOINOVICH, another key Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee, has stepped forward along with Senator LUGAR to question what is going on in Iraq. In a letter to President Bush, Senator VOINOVICH urges the President to finally wake up to the truth so many of us already know: This war cannot be won militarily, can only be won politically, diplomatically, and economically. Senator JOHN WARNER said yesterday that he expects more Republicans to join our call for a responsible change of course.

When this war finally ends—and we are in the fifth year of this war, and it will end—this last period of time where we have had LUGAR, VOINOVICH, and WARNER speak out about the present situation in Iraq could be the turning point. This could be the moment when we break down the aisle that separates the two parties on Iraq.

So I say to my Republican colleagues who continue to follow President Bush's lead: Join with us. When I say "us," we now have at least five Republicans that I know of, and I would be happy to run through the names: HAGEL, SMITH, VOINOVICH, LUGAR, and WARNER have already spoken out. Join with us. We can extricate our troops from the firing line of another country's civil war. We can begin to rebuild our battered military so they can focus on the real threats we face around the world.

Remember what the National Council of Mayors did yesterday. They also

said, and voted by a majority, the war should end as soon as possible.

The first step has been taken by my Republican colleagues. We need more help. Now we need to put their brave words in action by working together to bring home our brave troops and deliver the responsible end to the war that the American people demand and deserve.

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.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

MR. REID. Mr. President, I understand the manager of the bill on the Republican side wishes to make a statement. I ask that it be made as in morning business. I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Pennsylvania be recognized for 20 minutes and that at the conclusion of that 20 minutes, I be recognized.

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

The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

IMMIGRATION

MR. SPECTER. I thank the distinguished majority leader. I have sought recognition to comment on two subjects on the pending immigration bill.

First, it is my hope that my colleagues in the Senate will focus very closely on the extraordinary problems the United States faces today by the current status of our immigration laws and weigh very carefully, notwithstanding any objections people may have to the pending bill, the comparison of the bill with the status quo, what is in existence at the present time. The ultimate decision on whether to vote for or against the bill depends upon not what we would like to have, not what would be perfect, maybe not even what would meet the desires of the individual Members, but a comparison between what bill finally emerges and the status quo, what is happening at the present time, because what we really have in our immigration law is chaos and anarchy.

We struggled through legislation in the 109th Congress. It came through the Judiciary Committee, which I chaired in the 109th Congress, passed the Senate, and a different kind of a bill passed the House of Representatives. We could not go to conference, we did not resolve the issue, and it is back again this year. As I have said on a number of occasions on the floor, I think it probably would have been preferable to work through committee. I

think at this juncture, you can strike the "probably." It would have been preferable to work through committee in regular order. Whenever we leave regular order, we get into trouble.

So we structured it differently. We structured it with a hard-working group of Senators, up to 12, sometimes a rotating group, and we came up with a bill. We have been struggling with it on the Senate floor. We have found objections on all sides. We have found objections on the right that it is amnesty, and we have found objections on the left that it does not satisfy humanitarian needs and provide for family reunification, but we continue to push ahead. But I think it is plain that if the Senate does not come up with a bill, doing the best we can now, the subject will be cut off for the indefinite future. Certainly it will not come back up this year when we have a very crowded agenda on appropriations bills and patent reform and many other subjects. It is unlikely to come up next year in a Presidential and congressional election year. Then we are looking at 2009, and we have no reason to expect that the issue will be any easier in 2009 than it is today except that we would have lost more time.

We also ought to bear in mind that the Senate bill is not the final product. We will yet have a House bill, we will yet have conference, and we will yet have an opportunity to meet objections which are presently lodged against the bill.

Just a word of explanation. When I tear up, it is a result of chemotherapy; it is not a result of sadness on the current status of the immigration bill.

There is unity of judgment in both the House and the Senate, and I think broadly across America, that we need to reinstate the rule of law. We need to fix our broken borders. We need to have law enforcement against individuals who knowingly hire illegal immigrants. That is a very major part of the pending bill. The current bill provides for an increased Border Patrol from 12,000 to 18,000—6,000 new people.

It provides for additional fencing, although fencing was legislated in the 109th Congress. It provides for drones to fly overhead. It provides for fencing to protect urban areas. While you can't build an impenetrable fence of more than 2,000 miles above the border, we do cover a great deal of border protection. But no matter how secure the border is, as long as there is a magnet so people can get jobs in the United States which are better than other places, immigrants will be attracted, illegal immigrants will be attracted. That is why we have structured provisions in this bill to have foolproof identification so employers will be able to know with certainty whether an individual is a legal or an illegal immigrant. That being the case, if employers hire illegal immigrants knowing they are illegal immigrants because they are in a position to make that determination, it is fair to have sanctions, and for repeat offenders tougher