



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 154

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2008

No. 100

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JON TESTER, a Senator from the State of Montana.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

God of hope, who fills us with joy and peace, sustain our Senators and those who support them with the power of Your Holy Spirit. Work in them, enabling them to do infinitely more than they can imagine.

Lord, give them a peace which the world cannot give and a passion to accomplish Your purposes. When they are weary, give them rest, and when they are discouraged, empower them to persevere. Prepare their hearts and minds to serve You and country with humility and integrity, as they work together with mutual forbearance and respect.

Lord, teach them to seek first Your honor and glory. But above all, fill them with Your matchless love.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JON TESTER 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 17, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable JON TESTER, a Senator from the State of Montana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. TESTER 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, today following leader remarks, there will be an hour for morning business. Senators will be able to speak for up to 10 minutes each. The Republicans will control the first half, and the majority will control the second half. The Senate will proceed thereafter to the motion to proceed to H.R. 6049, the Renewable Energy and Job Creation Act. The time until 12:30 is equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees. The Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus luncheons. Following the recess, the Senate will proceed to a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to H.R. 6049, the Renewable Energy Act.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 5749

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my distinguished friend, the Senator from the State of Arizona, is here. As a result, I am going to propound a unanimous-consent request so as not to cause him to have to spend any time here he would not ordinarily have to do.

The House has passed an unemployment compensation bill. I am going to show the Senate in a little while that we are at 76 filibusters. I am not going to go through another one on unem-

ployment compensation. If we do not agree to pass this bill at this time, there will not be a long floor debate on unemployment compensation. What we will do, it is my understanding this legislation will be in the supplemental we will get from the House. That being the case, we will have ample time to talk about the issue if anybody wants to.

The distinguished majority whip is going to speak on unemployment compensation, as are some others today. But right now I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 780, H.R. 5749, a bill we recently received from the House, the Emergency Extended Unemployment Compensation Act. I ask that the bill be read a third time, passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I do object. I wonder if I may make one brief comment.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I wish to make the point that when we do extend unemployment benefits, if we do, the Senate needs to weigh in on its ideas about how it ought to be done, for one thing. The House-passed bill, which I don't think we want to consider, eliminates the 20-week work requirement which has been the law now since 1981. So theoretically someone could work a very short period of time and be entitled to this 13-week extension, something I don't think we want to change. As a result, we would like the Senate to weigh in and get it done the right way. For that reason, I have to object to bringing the House bill up at this time.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we will be willing now to accept that change in the legislation and pass it.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, if I might further address the majority leader

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



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then, I have several concerns. I highlighted one.

Mr. REID. I say to my friend, this, I believe, will be in the package we get from the House, and we will be happy to work with the minority if they feel some changes should be made. There are a number of people on my side who would agree to this, and maybe there are other points on which we can agree.

Mr. KYL. I appreciate that. I think there are some issues the Senate wishes to modify in the proposal. The offer to work together is a fair one, and that is how we ought to proceed.

TAX EXTENDER LEGISLATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, yesterday was a remarkably good day. When I got out of law school, I went back to Nevada and thought I would be this great golfer. I golfed for 6 months or so, and then realized I was becoming obsessed with the game. Therefore, I decided I shouldn't do this. I had a family, and it took so much time.

For a number of years, I have listened to my friends talk about how much they enjoy golf, and I am sure they do. But it has only been in recent years that the American public has focused on golf, and that is because of Tiger Woods.

I can remember the first time I watched this little boy play. They showed him on the late night shows. Of course, as we all know, it was taped a lot earlier before his bedtime. This little kid, when he was 3 years old, could do remarkable things with his golf club. That is the way it was through his entire career, including at Stanford University.

Over the weekend, we all watched with attention while Rocco Mediate was going stroke for stroke with the great Tiger Woods. They tied in regulation play. They played an extra 18 holes. It was a tie. Finally, yesterday, it was concluded. All of us had mixed emotions as for whom we were pulling. Everyone likes Tiger Woods because he is so good and so nice, but we all also rooted for this underdog.

The one thing we noted yesterday is this golf tournament took place in San Diego. The sun was shining, and it was a beautiful day for golf. That is what the commentators kept saying. We were literally stuck in the rain yesterday. Those of us who were here last night about 4 o'clock saw a violent storm. There was lightning, thunder, driving rain, and lots of wind. As a result, I spoke with Senator McCONNELL, and we thought it was best to delay the vote. We had people calling saying: I am stuck in Richmond. One Senator was supposed to go to Dulles. She had to land in Richmond. Another Senator was stuck in Buffalo. We had people stuck all over the country. So we did this, and it was the right thing to do.

We intended to vote on the motion to proceed to the Renewable Energy and Job Creation Act, known as the tax extender bill. Some on the other side, I

am sure, may have welcomed yesterday's delay, but we are where we would have been last night. We need to return to a vote on the motion to proceed to the tax extender bill today, and we will do that, as has been indicated.

The cornerstone of this legislation is an extension of incentives for businesses to invest in clean, renewable energy. Right now, we reward these innovators who are blazing the trail to a greater, cleaner, more affordable energy future, but we don't reward them very much. These people are creating hundreds of thousands of jobs. The potential is out there. If we can pass this legislation, it would mean so much to the American economy and the world ecology, the world environment.

This is not just the Democrats talking. Somebody I have gotten to know over the years is a man by the name of T. Boone Pickens. As I understand, he is from the State of Texas. He has proven one thing: He knows how to make money. He has proven he is willing to take chances, and most always his chances turn out good at the bank for him.

What T. Boone Pickens has now decided to do is make money on renewable energy. He has done so much in the State of Texas alone. He, among others, thinks we should pass the legislation that is so important to give these tax credits to the American entrepreneurs so they will create jobs.

Here is a chart: Republican filibusters and counting, 76. For a long time, we had to keep creating new charts because they kept filibustering so much and it got to be a burden. So what we have done is we put Velcro on this chart. We can peel these babies off. Because the Republicans are so often filibustering, we now have a Velcro chart. We hope we don't have to change this too much more, the "7," or change the "6." Of course, we changed that a couple times last week. The Republicans are filibustering what T. Boone Pickens and others want.

There are hundreds of thousands of jobs, millions of jobs out there we could create if we have this tax incentive. They are doing it other places. In Australia, they are in the process of constructing a solar energy plant. That one plant will be 10,000 megawatts. They can do that all over Australia. It is an Australian company that is heavily involved now in California and other parts of the West.

These tax credit extensions will continue to encourage the renewable energy industry in States all over the West, States that have wind and Sun, and some States, such as California or Nevada, have a lot of geothermal. If the Senate does not act to extend these tax incentives, this research and entrepreneurship will literally be in jeopardy. Thousands of Americans will lose jobs. They are already in the process of losing jobs because the tax credits are about to expire.

We need an opportunity to move away from \$140 barrel oil imported

from unstable regions and unfriendly governments. There is no problem facing America that American ingenuity cannot handle. Failing to pass this tax incentive legislation will mean stacking the deck against innovation.

The minority is saying we shouldn't pay for these extensions, we should run up the red ink. During the last 7½ years, we have had the master at running up the red ink in the White House. We have now almost a \$10 trillion deficit. We are saying we should pay for this legislation. The House has already done that.

The setoffs are very simple. One tax that does not kick in we have extended on a number of occasions in the past. The Republicans did this. We want to do it again. We also believe these offshore shenanigans that are taking place in America where they put these phony companies offshore to get tax breaks should come to an end. And that is what we have done. Most of it would be directed toward billionaires. These hedge funders have recognized they had a good deal going, and they have indicated, with rare exception, that they think it is a good idea. So it is not as if we are trying to ramrod some vicious tax increase to the American middle class. In fact, that is not the case.

We cannot let this legislation fail, and the Republicans are going to let it fail unless we get cloture on this legislation. Not only does this legislation do good things for renewable energy and job creation, but it also expands the child tax credit for families of 13 million children; it provides as many as 30 million homeowners with property tax relief; it helps 4.5 million families afford the cost of college with the tuition deduction; it allows millions of teachers to deduct out-of-pocket classroom expenses; and it levels the playing field by providing tax relief to people living in States with no income tax through the State and local sales tax deduction. Our economy is losing jobs, for 6 months now losing jobs, hundreds of thousands of jobs. In the 8 years President Clinton was President, almost 23 million jobs were created. In this administration, it is quite to the contrary. The disastrous Bush economic policy is the reason we have these job losses, a policy that Republican nominee JOHN MCCAIN wants to preserve. We think this is wrong.

With millions of Americans suffering from job loss, home foreclosures, record gas, energy, and grocery prices, there is no reason on Earth to oppose the bill before us now. I spoke with someone in New Mexico yesterday. He said his home has dropped in value by 50 percent. In many places in America, the value of homes has dropped 25 percent. This bill would create hundreds of thousands of good jobs here at home, lower taxes for American businesses and families and lower energy prices.

Yesterday, my friend, the Republican leader, indicated his caucus plans to oppose this legislation. Why? It seems,