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## Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

### PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Loving God, You are just and compassionate. As we labor today, we need Your strength. Forgive us for becoming impatient, for being too busy, too distracted, and too quick to speak or act. Forgive us for not taking time to think or to pray. Bless our Senators in their work. May they labor with integrity and faithfulness, cheerfulness and kindness, optimism and civility. Lord,

keep them ever mindful of life's brevity and of the importance of being faithful in life's little things. Help them to seek to serve rather than to be served, following Your example of humility and sacrifice.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK R. WARNER 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 bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, December 14, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,  
President pro tempore.

### NOTICE

If the 111th Congress, 1st Session, adjourns sine die on or before December 23, 2009, a final issue of the *Congressional Record* for the 111th Congress, 1st Session, will be published on Thursday, December 31, 2009, to permit Members to insert statements.

All material for insertion must be signed by the Member and delivered to the respective offices of the Official Reporters of Debates (Room HT-59 or S-123 of the Capitol), Monday through Friday, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. through Wednesday, December 30. The final issue will be dated Thursday, December 31, 2009, and will be delivered on Monday, January 4, 2010.

None of the material printed in the final issue of the *Congressional Record* may contain subject matter, or relate to any event, that occurred after the sine die date.

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Members of the House of Representatives' statements may also be submitted electronically by e-mail, to accompany the signed statement, and formatted according to the instructions for the Extensions of Remarks template at <http://clerk.house.gov/forms>. The Official Reporters will transmit to GPO the template formatted electronic file only after receipt of, and authentication with, the hard copy, and signed manuscript. Deliver statements to the Official Reporters in Room HT-59.

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By order of the Joint Committee on Printing.

CHARLES E. SCHUMER, *Chairman*.

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



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Mr. WARNER 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, following leader remarks, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each. The Republicans will control the first 30 minutes, the majority will control the next 30 minutes. We are still working on an agreement to line up votes that have been the subject of competing agreements with respect to the health care reform legislation. Pending is a Crapo motion, with a Baucus side-by-side on taxes; and a Dorgan amendment, with a Lautenberg alternative. So we have four amendments on which we need to try to work something out. That is not done yet, but as soon as it is worked out we will notify Senators of any scheduled votes.

#### HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, every day we do not act, it gets more expensive to stay healthy in America.

If you are fortunate enough to have health insurance, this is not news to you. You have no doubt noticed your premiums have more than doubled in the last decade, even though the quality of your health care has not doubled—and that is an understatement.

If you are fortunate enough to have coverage, you might have noticed that you are paying at least an extra \$1,000 a year to cover all of the other families who do not have health insurance.

Those with insurance know when premiums eat up a larger slice of their paychecks, they have less money to take home to their families. Those without insurance know the pain of skipping medicine or treatments or doctors visits because it simply costs too much to go to the doctor. Economists tell us if we do nothing, those costs will continue to climb and to climb. The economists tell us that without question, if we do not do something, the costs will continue to increase.

Very recently, the President's Council of Economic Advisers has crunched the numbers, and this respected group tells us the bill before the Senate will indeed keep health care costs down.

Lower costs are good for every American. It means more people who do not have insurance today will be able to afford it, and those who do have insurance will have more stability and security against losing it.

The White House's economists highlighted a number of other impressive

effects of our bill. The amount our government spends on Medicare for our seniors and Medicaid for the underprivileged will be much less than if we do not act. Our Nation's deficit will be much lower than if we did not act. Health care costs in the private sector will be much lower than they would be if we did not act. And with this bill, American families' incomes will increase more than they would if we did not act. The same is true for job creation, small business growth, and our overall economy.

After all, health reform is economic reform. When you are not spending so much of your paycheck on premiums, you have more left to feed your family and to fuel our economy.

We also know a healthier workforce is a more productive workforce, and a more productive workforce means a healthier economy. Those are pretty good reasons to act and a pretty strong rebuttal against the strategy of doing nothing. This data proves once again what we have said from the start: this bill will save lives, save money, and save Medicare.

That is the reality, and that is why we are working to make it possible for every American to afford a shot at a healthy life. It is a goal that will make our economy stronger and make our citizens healthier. It is a goal with an eye to the future, to our children, one that appreciates the long-term effects of what we do.

The other side has a goal of its own—one that not only ignores the reality of the present but dismisses both the long-term benefits of acting and the long-term costs of doing nothing. Whereas we are working to slow the growth of health care costs, they are working to slow down the Senate. In fact, they would like to bring this body to a screeching halt.

But we will not let talking points meant to scare seniors and frighten families obscure the hard data that show just how unhealthy our health care system is. We will not be derailed by those who spend more time hoping for America's leaders to fail than they do helping the American people succeed. We will not be sidetracked by those who try to stop history in its tracks.

Mr. President, would the Chair now announce morning business.

#### 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 of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the Republicans controlling the first 30 minutes and the majority controlling the next 30 minutes.

The Senator from Tennessee.

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Republicans be allowed to speak as a group over the next 30 minutes.

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

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I thank you.

#### HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the health care bill that is before us. One of the major points of contention over the last 2 weeks has been the fact that Medicare savings are being utilized to leverage an entirely different entitlement and not even taking care of the SGR issue that is so important to physicians around our country.

The other important stat is the fact that half of the expansion in health care benefits that is occurring under this bill is under Medicaid, probably the worst health care program in America. After a year of discussions among many folks on a bipartisan basis, and ending up with a very partisan bill, the fact that half of the expansion is occurring in one of the worst programs that exist in our country, locking people at 133 percent of poverty into Medicaid, with no other choice, does not seem to me to be true health care reform.

I know the Senator from New Hampshire, who has spoken eloquently on this issue, has something to say about that.

Mr. GREGG. I thank the Senator from Tennessee for opening this discussion on the issue of Medicaid. But I did want to ask a couple questions relative to what the Senate leader just said about the bill that is before us.

We have to remember the bill that is before us—all 2,074 pages, as I understand it—is not the bill we are going to actually consider. There is somewhere in this building a hidden bill, known as a managers' amendment, which is being drafted by one or two or three people on the other side of the aisle, and which is going to appear *deus ex machina* on our desks fairly soon. We do not know what is in it. A lot of the people on the other side do not know what is in it. The press does not know what is in it. The American people do not know what is in it.

Mr. CORKER. The President does not know what is in it.

Mr. GREGG. The President does not know what is in it. Nobody knows what is in it. But they are designing this bill, which is going to be represented to expand Medicaid even further and to also offer the ability to people age 55 and over to buy into Medicare, which is going to have a huge impact.

But what the Senator from Nevada said, which I want to ask the Senator