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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable ROLAND W. BURRIS, a Senator from the State of Illinois.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Loving God, You know our weaknesses and the extent of our failure to love You and one another. Look upon us with mercy and use us to heal the hurt in our world. Establish the labor of our lawmakers, strengthening them to honor You by serving others. Let Your life-giving Spirit move them to feel greater compassion for those in need. Use them to remove barriers that divide us, as they help all to live in

greater justice and peace. Lord, give our Senators a daily respect and submission to Your will and commands.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable ROLAND W. BURRIS 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, December 15, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable ROLAND W. BURRIS, a Senator from the State of Illinois, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BURRIS thereupon assumed the chair as Acting 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.

Senators' statements should also be formatted according to the instructions at http://webster/secretary/cong_record.pdf, and submitted electronically, either on a disk to accompany the signed statement, or by e-mail to the Official Reporters of Debates at "Record@Sec.Senate.gov".

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.

Members of Congress desiring to purchase reprints of material submitted for inclusion in the *Congressional Record* may do so by contacting the Office of Congressional Publishing Services, at the Government Printing Office, on 512-0224, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. daily.

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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S13203

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 resume consideration of H.R. 3590, the health reform bill. There will be 5 hours for debate prior to votes in relation to the following amendments and motion: Baucus, Crapo, Dorgan, Lautenberg. We can never determine for sure, Mr. President, but it appears the votes should start between 5 and 6 o'clock. The Senate will be in recess from 12:45 until 3:15 p.m. today for the weekly caucus luncheons.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, with Americans now really focusing in on the health care debate, it is important to take a step back and recall where we started because somewhere along the way, Democratic leaders took their eyes off the ball.

It is a good time to remember what this reform debate was all about. The goal of this legislation, by all accounts—everyone agreed—the goal was to lower the cost of health care. This is what the President had to say. It is a direct quote:

The bill I sign—

According to the President—must . . . slow the growth of health care costs in the long run.

That was on July 22 of this year. Yet here we are, nearly 5 months later, and the administration's own scorekeeper, the CMS Actuary—the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Actuary—says the Democratic bill will actually drive costs up, exactly the opposite of what the debate was all about in the beginning, and exactly opposed to what the President indicated on July 22, that he would not sign such a bill.

Now, remember, the purpose of reform was to lower people's insurance premiums as well. Here is what the President had to say about that, a direct quote:

I have made a solemn pledge—

Said the President—

that I will sign a universal health care bill into law by the end of my first term as President that will . . . cut the cost of a typical family's premiums by up to \$2500 a year.

That was the President campaigning for President on June 24, 2007, "a solemn pledge that I will sign a universal health care bill into law . . . that will . . . cut the cost of a typical family's premiums by up to \$2500 a year."

Yet now we are being told by the administration's own nonpartisan scorekeeper—again the CMS Actuary—that new fees for drugs, devices, and insurance plans will drive up insurance premiums.

The purpose of reform was also to ease the burden on taxpayers. Here is what the President had to say about that:

No family making less than \$250,000 a year will see any form of tax increase.

That was the President on September 12, 2008: "No family"—not a one—"no family making less than \$250,000 a year will see any form of tax increase."

Yet now we are told by the independent analysts, such as the Joint Committee on Taxation, that taxes will actually go up on those same taxpayers, those making under \$250,000 a year.

People who like the plans they have were told they would be able to keep them. Here is what the President had to say about that:

If you like your current plan—

"If you like your current plan"—

you will be able to keep it.

Then he said:

Let me repeat that: If you like your plan, you'll be able to keep it.

That was July 21, 2009, just this summer. Yet now we are told by the independent analysts, such as the Congressional Budget Office, that millions of Americans will lose their employer-based coverage and that millions of seniors will see their extra benefits cut by about half.

Americans are looking at this, and they are truly outraged. The American people are outraged at what is happening. They cannot understand what we are doing. The latest CNN poll says 61 percent of Americans oppose this bill; 61 percent of the American people are saying don't pass this bill.

This bill is completely out of touch with the American public. Think about it: 1 out of 10 working Americans is looking for a job, and Democratic leaders in Washington want to spend \$2.5 trillion on a bill that makes existing problems worse. Mr. President, 1 out of 10 Americans is out of work, and yet the majority seeks to pass a bill that makes the existing problems worse. Yet Democratic leaders in Washington are still insisting that we pass this bill.

Even as opposition grows, supporters of the bill are drafting plans and cutting deals to make this bill the law of the land by Christmas—ignoring the wishes of the American people, off in a room somewhere, cutting plans and making deals, trying to figure out some way to jam the American people when they are asking us, overwhelmingly: Please don't pass this bill.

You get the impression that the supporters of this bill think it is about them, about them and their legacies. Well, this is not about them. This is about the American people. This is not about making history. This is about doing the right thing for every single American's health care.

Americans have a message: Higher premiums, higher taxes, higher health care costs are not what they signed up for. This is not what they were promised. This is not reform. Yes, doing nothing is not an option, but making current problems worse is worse.

TRIBUTE TO JACKIE HAYS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to wish a fond farewell to one of the Nation's finest television news anchors, Louisville's own Jackie Hays. After more than three decades in broadcasting, most of it spent in Louisville, Jackie will be retiring, and people throughout Louisville and across Kentucky are sorry to see her go.

The level of respect Jackie has earned in the community is reflected in the many awards she has won over the years. She has received 16—16—Best of Louisville awards, including numerous honors as Best Female News Anchor.

In 2005, she was named "Best of the Best" by Louisville Magazine. She has also received the Star Awards from the Women in Radio and Television, and Emmy nominations for her work both in Louisville and Philadelphia.

Jackie has had a lot of wonderful experiences in her career, all in pursuit of getting the best story for her viewers. She reported live from the scene of the bombing at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta. She interviewed two Presidents; one of them was Ronald Reagan over lunch. And, of course, she has been a fixture in many Louisville homes on the first Saturday of every May, as she has anchored coverage of the Kentucky Derby 25 times.

Once she went up in an F/A-18 Hornet with the Blue Angels, a U.S. Navy flying acrobatic team that has performed in the Kentucky Derby Festival. She flew at 600 knots—that is nearly 700 miles an hour—and was subjected to seven times the normal force of gravity. She may have blacked out briefly with all that force—as the instructor told her most people do—but for the thrill of the ride, and to better tell the story to her viewers, she says it was worth it.

Jackie was born in Paris, TN, right over the border from Murray, KY, and she attended Murray State University on a special Presidential academic scholarship. She was named the outstanding senior in radio and television and began her broadcasting career at a Paducah station while still a senior in college.

After graduating with highest honors, she went on to a full-time position, until moving to Louisville in 1980 to work for WHAS Television. After 5 years, she briefly went to work in Philadelphia, but in 1988 she returned to Kentucky and River City where she has stayed ever since.

For the last 21 years, since returning to Louisville, Jackie has been with WAVE-3 News. She is currently the anchor of that channel's 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. newscasts.