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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 23, 2009, at 11:30 a.m.

Senate

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2009

The Senate met at 7 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable EDWARD E. KAUFMAN, a Senator from the State of Delaware.

PRAYER

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

Eternal Spirit, whom we seek in vain without unless first we find You within, may the hush of Your presence fall upon our spirits, quiet our minds, and allay the irritations that threaten our peace. Breathe through the heat of our desires Your coolness and balm.

Strengthen the Members of this body. Take their spirits from strain

and stress, and let their ordered lives confess the beauty of Your peace. Fill them so full of Your goodness that they will know how to discern Your best for their decisions. Make them faithful leaders by Your standard of righteousness.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

NOTICE

If the 111th Congress, 1st Session, adjourns sine die on or before December 26, 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.

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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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PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable EDWARD E. KAUFMAN 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 legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, December 22, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable EDWARD E. KAUFMAN, a Senator from the State of Delaware, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. KAUFMAN 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 resume consideration of the health care legislation. The time until 7:18 this morning is equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees. The Senate will then proceed to a series of three rollcall votes—they will be stacked—in relation to the Reid motion to table the Reid amendment No. 3278, the Reid-Baucus-Dodd-Harkin amendment No. 3276, and a motion to invoke cloture on the Reid substitute No. 2786. If cloture is invoked, the majority leader will then be recognized, and then the time until 9:30 will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees. Beginning at 9:30 a.m. and until 5:30 p.m. today, the time will be controlled in alternating 1-hour blocks of time, with the Republicans controlling the first hour. The Senate will recess from 12:30 until 2:30 p.m. today for the weekly conferences.

CHRISTMAS PEACE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, tensions have been high because of this legislation which has been on the floor for a considerable period of time. I hope everyone understands that this part of the session is winding down, and I hope everyone will go out of their way to be thoughtful and considerate to those on both sides of the aisle. This is not the

time for any personal attacks or anything that is acrimonious. It is time to figure out a way to leave here in a peaceful nature. We have the Christmas holiday coming, and we know how important that is to families. I hope everyone will work toward getting us out of here and back to our families as quickly as we can.

I designate the time the Democrats have remaining to Senator DURBIN, the majority whip.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

SERVICE MEMBERS HOME OWNERSHIP TAX ACT OF 2009

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3590, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3590) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the first-time homebuyers credit in the case of members of the Armed Forces and certain other Federal employees, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reid amendment No. 2786, in the nature of a substitute.

Reid amendment No. 3276 (to amendment No. 2786), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 3277 (to amendment No. 3276), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3278 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 2786), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3279 (to amendment No. 3278), to change the enactment date.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until expiration of cloture on amendment No. 3276 shall be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I will be taking the leader time on our side. How much time is there?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Six minutes.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, today we are taking another step toward passing a bill that has not seen the light of day for very long. It is a bill that is going to change health care policy in this country forever if it is finally coming to enactment. It will take effect in 2014. The reason we are talking about this bill and trying to let people know what is in it is because we hope there is still a chance this bill will not become law.

This bill was drafted behind closed doors without Republican input. The votes are 60 to 40. Sixty Democrats and 40 Republicans make up the Senate, and that is what is providing cloture on this bill.

This bill increases taxes by over \$½ trillion over a 10-year period—that is over \$500 billion—and \$½ trillion in

cuts to Medicare. This is a time when we should not be increasing taxes. Small businesses are burdened already. This adds to their burden. Families are trying to make ends meet. They are trying to pay their mortgage so they will not be thrown out of their homes. They are trying to pay their bills. They are trying to find jobs in the highest level of unemployment in our country since World War II, and we are going to heap taxes and burdens on them starting as early as next year—in 2 weeks. This is not a time to raise taxes. We don't need a tax burden increase, we don't need Medicare cuts, and we do need health care reform that would lower the cost of health care. This is going to do the opposite. We are going to increase taxes and lower the service for Medicare in our country.

I remember reading some of the history and the anecdotes about the vote on the constitutional amendment to allow women the right to vote. There was a Congressman from Tennessee who was wavering. He said what finally made up his mind—and he was the Congressman who made the difference—was that his mother wrote him a letter and said: Vote for ratification.

What is going to be said about this bill that changes health care policy for every American? What is going to be written about how the votes were brought together to have a bill that would tax our American people \$½ trillion and take Medicare as the pay-for for this program is that there will be essential protection for seniors in Florida and New York to prevent them from suffering the cuts to Medicare Advantage but no other State. Insurance companies in only two States, Nebraska and Michigan, are exempt from the taxes that will take effect on insurance companies, raising the premiums for every insured person in this country. Changes to the language restricting physician ownership of medical facilities appear only to benefit a single medical center in Nebraska, and additional Federal payments to Louisiana, Massachusetts, Nebraska, and Vermont to expand Medicaid will cost taxpayers in every other State in America over \$1 billion. This is part of the deal that was brokered to make sure 60 votes would pass this bill. The people of Nebraska will never pay a dime for Medicaid increases, whereas my State of Texas will carry a new burden of over \$9 billion, and every other State in America will eventually take the burden of the Medicaid increases but not Nebraska, not ever. Even the Governor of Nebraska has said he does not think that is fair.

So I think we can do better. We can do better in this country than having the history of the overhaul of our health care system that is going to affect the quality of life and the tax burden on every American. I think we should have a better history.

So I am asking my colleagues to think about this vote. We could change one vote, one person who says: I don't