

(5) encourages the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009

Mr. KAUFMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow, Tuesday, February 24; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 160, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2009, with the time until 11 a.m. equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus luncheons.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. KAUFMAN. Madam President, at 11 a.m. tomorrow, the Senate will proceed to a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to S. 160, to be followed by a cloture vote on the executive nomination of Hilda Solis to be Secretary of Labor.

As a reminder to Senators, tomorrow, at 9 p.m., there will be a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President. Senators should gather in the Senate Chamber at 8:30 p.m. to proceed as a body at 8:40 p.m. to the Hall of the House of Representatives.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KAUFMAN. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order following the remarks of Senator BILL NELSON.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE STIMULUS

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, this is the first time I am at my new desk. As we change each new Congress, according to seniority you get to select a different location. I look

into this desk drawer and see the names of so many of the giants who have been here before. Perhaps those who are watching or listening to these remarks would know it is customary that Senators actually inscribe their names in the drawers of these desks, some of which in this Chamber go all the way back to the beginning of the Senate. That is true certainly in this Chamber, and I would not be surprised if some of these desks are the same ones that were in the Old Senate Chamber, which is right down the hallway. That is a place, by the way, which used to be used by the U.S. Supreme Court. I believe the famous *Marbury v. Madison* case was argued there.

I address the Senate for a different reason, and that is that this day is the beginning of the session after we have had a week's recess to be back in our States on the occasion of Presidents Day, which was a week ago. That gives us the opportunity to get around and see the people of our State. Over the course of Monday through Friday, I ended up having some 15 townhall meetings. I have been doing this ever since I was a young Congressman, having come to the U.S. Congress—goodness, it is hard to believe, but it is over 30 years ago. Even before that, I did it as a State legislator. That goes back 37 years.

I hold these townhall meetings where anyone can come. Especially this past week, I invited local elected officials—county commissioners, mayors, city commissioners, the superintendents of education in each of the counties, the elected school board members, the administrative officers of counties, the local legislators, and the members of the State legislature. I wanted them to come. I wanted to hear from them how they perceive what is going on economically in their communities. As well, I wanted to try to answer their questions, of which they had many, about the stimulus bill we had passed Friday a week ago, close to 11 o'clock at night because of having to keep the vote open until Senator BROWN, bless his heart, could get back here after his mother's funeral. His vote was necessary because it was the 60th and we had to have 60 votes of 100 Senators to pass that legislation.

I wanted to hear from these local officials. Naturally, they were glad to hear that of this \$780-some billion package, over a third of that was tax cuts, tax cuts to stimulate a certain kind of activity or tax cuts to put dollars in the hands of individuals so they would spend it. That is not like this so-called stimulus bill we did a year ago that was sending \$500 to every taxpayer. This time, it was targeted to moderate and lower income folks who need the money. Indeed, it was targeted to taxpayers who do not have a requirement of a Federal income tax to pay but who still pay a lot of taxes because they pay a payroll tax.

This time, it is different. It is \$400 to an individual and \$800 to joint filers—

husband and wife. That is one of the tax cuts we are giving to stimulate the economy.

Other tax cuts we put in—we wanted to stimulate certain activities, such as a \$2,500 tax credit for moderate- and low-income families to use, to send their kid to college. You say: What does that have to do with stimulus? That has a lot to do with keeping our colleges and universities going. That is providing we are not eating our seed corn. We want the seed corn so we can plant next year's crop. That is exactly what we are trying to do in education. The future of this country's ability to compete on the world stage is our intellectual capital, and we cannot have that unless we have an educated public.

There were other kinds of tax cuts. There were tax cuts to stimulate certain activity in getting green energy, removing ourselves—as we country boys would say, weaning ourselves from our dependence on oil, particularly foreign oil. We do that by giving an inducement through tax incentives to businesses and individuals to produce new kinds of renewable energy instead of being so dependent, as we have been, just on oil, and in particular foreign oil.

One part of the spending of this stimulus bill was to begin the planning of a smart grid system. Let me tell you, in my townhall meeting in Gainesville, FL—this, by the way, is the home of the national champion Florida Gators—the city of Gainesville is starting on their own a smart grid system. They are going to give a local business or an individual homeowner the incentive to produce their own electricity from renewables—in our case, solar—and they will guarantee in the first 2 years that any excess of that electricity which is produced by that individual in their home or that business that is collecting the Sun's rays and turning them into energy—they, the city of Gainesville, will guarantee them 32 cents per kilowatt. Then, as you get on into the third year, it gradually goes down as economies of scale get in and also as the equipment to do this becomes cheaper. Those were some of the things that I found out, that people really believed this was the kind of stimulus they wanted.

I can tell you I heard from the educators—the school board members, the superintendents of education in each of the 67 counties, and the teachers who came after their school boards—because Florida has been cutting its support for education, and the teachers would come and they would point out that the school board had announced it was going to lay off teachers because Florida has been cutting its support for education. In one county, Marion County in the town of Ocala, they announced they are laying off 522 teachers come July. In another county, Polk County, the county seat of Bartow, the superintendent, who came to the meeting, said they are going to have to lay off 1,200 teachers come summer.

In Florida's portion of this fiscal stimulus bill, the fiscal stimulation fund is going to school boards, not the State department of education so it can siphon it off, but to the school boards—Florida's share is \$2.2 billion. If those school systems want to preserve those teachers' jobs with this money, they can do that. They have to be careful. This is not recurring money, so they have to plan for how they are going to keep those teachers after this 2 years of stimulus money. But that gives them the chance to do that.

Hopefully, the whole idea is we are going to jump-start the economy back to life. In doing so, with more dollars out there, jobs will be created, the economy will start to recover, homes will not be vacated and foreclosed on and property values will rise, and then the ad valorem tax, which is the basic tax which supports education in Florida, will continue to rise as well to support those teachers who otherwise, 3 and 4 years from now, might be laid off.

What I brought to them was welcome news. I am surprised, I must say, in over some 15 townhall meetings, that I did not have a lot of negative catcalls that we have been hearing emanating out of Washington and out of the talking heads on the television. As a matter of fact, it is almost like two different worlds. You turn on the TV, turn on any of the cable shows, and you have these talking heads—sometimes talking over each other, which makes it very annoying, and it is as if this is the worst thing you have ever heard of, this stimulus bill. Of the votes up here, here we only got three Republican Senators, the two Senators from Maine—Senators SNOWE and COLLINS—and Senator SPECTER from Pennsylvania. They are the only three. Down at the other end of the hall in the House of Representatives, they didn't get any Republican Members of Congress to vote for this. You hear this chatter going on, and it is like it is so partisan and it is so awful.

That is not what I heard out there. What I heard back home this past week is: Our people are hurting. They are losing their jobs. They are losing their homes.

Unfortunately, it has hit my State of Florida big time. Our unemployment rate is now at 8.1 percent. The national average is 7.6. There are some news articles that are speculating that in Florida it is going to 10 percent unemployment. Our foreclosure rate on homes is next to California. We are No. 2. And California is 2½ times as large as Florida. As a matter of fact, there are parts of Florida where the foreclosure rate is the highest in the Nation.

An example is Fort Myers, Lee County, on the southwest coast of Florida. Our people are hurting, and they are scared.

Naturally, when the Government tries to do something, however imperfect it is, they are appreciative that something is trying to be done. Is this

the answer? Is the program the Secretary of Treasury announced the answer? We do not know. But the alternative, when the clerk called that roll Friday a week ago, was a vote that said yea or nay. It seems to me it was worth the risk to say yea in order to give our new President a chance of him trying to turn this economy around with our help.

Now, I could go through the rest of the specifics that are going in. There is money for title I over and above the normal title I which is for disadvantaged children, which has made a huge difference in our school systems over the years. There is new money here for IDEA, which is for children with disabilities. In the old days, a half a century ago, we did not load all these problems on the school districts. But now the schools take care of a lot of these problems. Children with disabilities have to have special instruction and special ed. It is very expensive. So, indeed, in this stimulus bill, the Federal Government has given additional money to the local school districts in order to try to help them.

Yes, there is money for roads and bridges. If this Senator had had his druthers, there would have been more money because infrastructure, this Senator feels, is a place to turn over dollars and create jobs. In Florida, we think that from this stimulus bill, which is a combination of about two-thirds of spending and one-third of tax cuts, all to stimulate the economy, over 200,000 jobs will be created in the next year and a half.

Well, since the recession started, we have lost more than that. In Florida, we have lost 255,000 jobs. Let's hope and pray it works. If we have to tinker with it, so be it. Ultimately, we need to get it right. I think we have taken the first right step. I think the new President is trying hard. This Senator is going to try to help him. The American people expect no less.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow, February 24.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 5:48 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, February 24, 2009, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

LANNY A. BREUER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, VICE ALICE S. FISHER, RESIGNED.

CHRISTINE ANNE VARNEY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, VICE THOMAS O. BARNETT, RESIGNED.

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS VICE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 47:

To be vice admiral

VICE ADM. DAVID P. PEKOSKE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 50A:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. JOHN P. CURRIER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS COMMANDER, PACIFIC AREA OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 50:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. JODY A. BRECKENRIDGE
IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. VINCENT K. BROOKS

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

KATHY L. FULLERTON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

EMIL B. KABBAN
PAUL E. WADE
STEPHEN H. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

BRIAN D. ANDERSON
TAMARA A. AVERETT-TRAUER
JENNIFER D. BAUER
MICHELLE L. BISHOP
LOLA R. CASBY
BARBARA A. CATON
MARLA J. DEJONG
JANE G. DENTON
EDWARD F. FARLEY
ELEANOR T. FOREMAN
ROBIE V. HUGHES
ROBIN E. HUNT
SUSAN JANO
BEVERLY J. JOHNSON
JACK L. KENNEDY
BARBARA L. KUHN
SUSAN M. MCINTT
ALTHEA B. MILLER
KELLEY C. MOORE
NANCY A. OPHEIM
PENNIE G. PAVLISIN
ALLISON W. PLUNK
MARINA C. RAY
RICHARD J. REUSCH, JR.
HILDEGARDE P. STEWART
JULIE M. STOLA
ANNATA R. SULLIVAN
SHARON L. TAYLOR
MARGARET M. WALSH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

MARK T. ALLISON
ARLEN E. BEE
JOSEPH P. BIALKE
JAMES G. BITZES
JAMES R. BYRNE
JAMES H. DAPPER
KIRK L. DAVIES
MELINDA L. DAVIS-PERRITANO
ERIC L. DILLOW
THOMAS F. DOYON
JAMES M. DURANT III
MARK C. GARNEY
LESLIE D. LONG
MICHAEL J. OCONNOR
MICHAEL J. OSULLIVAN
FERAH OZBEK
ROBERT A. RAMEY
ERIC J. ROTH
STEPHEN M. SHREWSBURY
DOUGLAS M. STEVENSON
PHILIP T. WOLD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

TINA M. BARBERMATTHEW
JOSEPH P. MOEHLMANN
REGAN J. PATRICK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624: