



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 111th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 155

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2009

No. 55

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our guard and guide, we thank You for this new day with its opportunities for noble service. As our lawmakers open their hearts to You, may they sense that Your presence is as pervasive in statecraft as in religion. Illuminate their finite minds with Your eternal light, giving them wisdom beyond their own. In their daily lives, may they validate the faith of the faithful who have gone before them, as You sustain them by the radiant vision of the ultimate triumph of Your Kingdom. Lord, remind them that some problems You will not solve until they are ready to be used by You in working out the solution.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM UDALL 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, April 1, 2009.

To the Senate:

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

appoint the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico 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 budget resolution. Under an agreement reached last evening, 20 hours of statutory time remains, with the time equally divided between the minority and the majority. Rollcall votes are expected to occur throughout the day. Senators will be notified as soon as votes are scheduled.

As a reminder, when all statutory time expires on the budget resolution, additional amendments can be offered and immediately voted upon. Therefore, Thursday's session could extend into the night.

The two managers of the bill, Senator CONRAD and Senator GREGG, have gone through this process many times. It is my understanding that they have suggested to me and Senator McCONNELL that we start voting sometime this afternoon. There could be as many as 10 votes at that time. We will continue working with the managers. I will notify and communicate with the Republican leader throughout the day.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

THE BUDGET

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, throughout this debate, Republicans have shown that this budget spends too much, taxes too much, and borrows too much. At a time when many are struggling just to get by, Democrats in Congress want to enact the largest tax increase in history, including a national energy tax that could cost every American household up to \$3,100 a year. They want to double the national debt in 5 years and triple it in 10. And they want to increase nondefense spending so much that the Government would have to hire up to 250,000 bureaucrats just to get the money out the door. Let me say that again. The Government would have to hire up to a quarter of a million bureaucrats just to get the money out the door. This is not the type of job creation Americans have been hoping for, and this was not the budget Americans wanted. Rather, they are demanding that Republicans and Democrats work together to craft a budget that lets them keep their hard-earned wages, spend their tax dollars wisely, and does not saddle their children and grandchildren with mountains of debt.

Republicans have tried to work with Democrats to pass such a budget by offering amendments that reflect the views of most Americans and soon will sponsor a series of amendments to prevent tax increases on individuals, families, and businesses. The junior Senator from Texas, for example, has an amendment that would make it significantly harder to raise taxes on small businesses. The President has noted repeatedly that small businesses are at the heart of the American economy, are responsible for half of all private sector jobs, and have created roughly 70 percent of all new jobs in the past decade. Republicans will propose an amendment by the junior Senator from Nevada which would make it significantly harder to raise taxes on couples making less than \$250,000 a year.

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



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Americans are worried about tax hikes. They are also worried about the colossal amount of debt this budget would leave to our children. This budget proposes to borrow an equivalent amount of money in the next 5 years to all of the money the Government has borrowed from 1789 to January 20, 2009. So the senior Senator from New Hampshire sponsored an amendment to require a supermajority to adopt any budget resolution that would more than double the entire public debt cumulated from 1789 to January 20, 2009. The Democrats rejected that amendment.

In other efforts to control debt and curb Federal spending, Republicans will offer a number of additional amendments, including another amendment from the senior Senator from New Hampshire that would take the first step toward the creation of a bipartisan task force to confront the Nation's long-term deficits; an amendment from the senior Senator from South Carolina that would help to ensure that Social Security remains a self-sustaining, solvent program; an amendment from the senior Senator from Idaho that would take the Democratic spending levels and try to ensure spending does not exceed those levels. Republicans will sponsor further amendments that would correct many of the other problems with this budget.

Additionally, Republicans have resisted efforts to fast track major policy changes through reconciliation. The junior Senator from Nebraska has offered an amendment that would prohibit the use of this rule in connection with a national energy tax. Some Democrats said they do not support using reconciliation for this legislation. We will insist on having a vote on the Johanns amendment.

These Republican proposals should have the support of Senators on both sides of the aisle. We should all want to cut the massive taxing, borrowing, and spending in this budget.

The budget debate is always one of the most clarifying weeks of the year. Rarely do the American people get to see the differences between the two parties as clearly as they do during this debate. Rarely has the difference been so stark.

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE LADY CARDS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on another subject and admittedly a lighter note, I rise today to pay tribute to a group of young women from the University of Louisville who reached an amazing milestone this week. The U of L Lady Cards made basketball history with their first NCAA Final Four trip.

The Lady Cards, coached by Jeff Walz and led by All-American Angel McCoughtry and senior forward Candyce Bingham, are heading to St. Louis this weekend to play in the women's NCAA Final Four.

Today, I wanted to recognize this history-making team. The Lady Cards had

an amazing season, and it is not over yet. On Sunday, they will face Oklahoma, with the winner advancing to the final game on Tuesday.

This has been a fun team to watch this season. Their style of play will inspire future generations of Lady Cardinals. I am sure there are a lot of young athletes in Kentucky who look up to the home team and will be cheering them on to victory this weekend.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the names of the players and coaches.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL ROSTER

Gwen Rucker, Becky Burke, Candyce Bingham, Janae Howard, Tiera Stephen, Mary Jackson, Laura Terry, Monique Reid, Angel McCoughtry, Chantise Wright, Keshia Hines, and Deseree Boyd.

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL COACHES

Head Coach Jeff Walz, Assistant Coaches Stephanie Norman, Michelle Clark-Heard and Bethann Shapiro Ord and Director of Basketball Operations, Becky Bonner.

Mr. McCONNELL. I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 13, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 13) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2010, revising the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2011 through 2014.

Pending:

Johanns amendment No. 735, to prohibit the use of reconciliation in the Senate for climate change legislation involving a cap-and-trade system.

Lieberman amendment No. 763, to protect the American people from potential spillover violence from Mexico by providing \$550 million in additional funding for the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice and supporting the administration's efforts to combat drug, gun, and cash smuggling by the cartels, by providing \$260 million for Customs and Border Protection to hire, train, equip, and deploy additional officers and canines and conduct exit inspections for weapons and cash; \$130 million for Immigration and Customs Enforcement to hire, train, equip, and deploy additional investigators; \$50 million to Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to hire, train, equip, and deploy additional agents and inspectors; \$20 million for the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center; \$10 million for the Office of International Affairs

and the Management Directorate at DHS for oversight of the Merida Initiative; \$30 million for Operation Stonegarden; \$10 million to the Office of National Drug Control Policy for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas Program, to support state and local law enforcement participation in the HIDTA Program along the southern border; \$20 million to DHS for tactical radio communications; and \$20 million for upgrading the Traveler Enforcement Communications System.

Alexander amendment No. 747, to create runaway debt point of order against consideration of a budget resolution that projects the ratio of public debt to GDP for any fiscal year in excess of 90 percent to ensure the continued viability of the U.S. dollar and prevent doubling or tripling the debt burden on future generations.

Sessions amendment No. 772, to restore the budget discipline of the Federal Government by freezing nondefense discretionary spending for fiscal years 2010 and 2011, and limiting the growth of nondefense discretionary spending to 1 percent annually for fiscal years 2012, 2013, and 2014.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, in the ongoing debate about the fiscal condition of the country, we have heard once again the finger pointed at President Obama. President Obama did not create this economic collapse. He has only been President about 3 months—less than 3 months. This is not his concoction, nor are the deficits and debt piled up by the previous administration his responsibility.

President Obama inherited a colossal mess—a debt that was doubled during the previous administration, foreign holdings of U.S. debt that were tripled during the previous administration, and an economic collapse unparalleled since the Great Depression. In addition to that, he inherited two wars.

President Obama is striving mightily to get us moving back in the right direction. His budget, especially the first 5 years of his budget, which emphasizes reducing our dependence on foreign energy, a focus on excellence in education, fundamental health care reform, all the while cutting the deficit by more than half and extending the middle-class tax cuts from 2001 and 2003, has exactly the right priorities for the country.

When I hear criticism of President Obama, I must say it is badly misplaced. Our friends on the other side who complain about the fiscal condition of the United States should look in the mirror because they were there as silent sentinels when the previous administration stacked up this record debt, these record deficits, and plunged this country into a deep economic decline. That is their responsibility. President Obama is in on the cleanup crew, and a remarkable job he is doing.

We now are prepared to enter into an order for the next several amendments: Senator CASEY to be recognized for 10 minutes; then Senator GREGG or his designee for 1 minute; Senator ENSIGN for an amendment, 15 minutes on his side, 15 minutes for the chairman of the Budget Committee or his designee;