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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by the Reverend Dr. Silvester S. Beaman, senior pastor of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Wilmington, DE.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God of grace and God of glory, as this great Hall prepares to open for another session of deliberations, we humbly submit our minds, energies, gifts, and graces to You, that we may be men and women sensitive to the concerns of a nation in great expectation.

Use the collective resolve of our Senate as Your instrument, building wholeness and peace in an age where injury, indifference, uncertainties, and deficiency swirl as an immobilizing specter.

Show us a glimpse of Your radiance, remove all doubts and fears; liberating and inspiring, until hope and possibility become a living reality.

We are forever Yours and we will be forever faithful. 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. INOUE).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 22, 2011.

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.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
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.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I yield to my friend, the junior Senator from Delaware.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Delaware is recognized.

THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise simply to give honor and gratitude that this morning our opening prayer was offered by the Reverend Dr. Silvester Beaman of AME Zion on the East Side of Wilmington, a great voice for justice in my home State.

I think it is a critical and important part of our Nation's tradition that we begin every session of the Senate with prayerful reflection. I am thrilled that today he is able to be joined by his wife Renee, a registered nurse, and to be able to comment for a moment that Rev. Dr. Beaman, born in Niagara Falls, NY, who started his mission work and his service in Hamilton, Bermuda, with his wife, early on saw the challenges of HIV/AIDS and the risks and opportunities for worship and for mission that this pandemic provides to our community. He has been with us now 19 years in Delaware. The two of

them have been recognized far and wide in our State and region for the beautiful Gate Outreach Ministry they have launched. I think it was Dietrich Bonhoeffer who first said most tellingly that it is the charge of ministry to afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted. Pastor Beaman, through his leadership, his vision, his compelling sermons, and his compelling example, in partnership with his wife Renee, has provided exactly that sort of challenging and effective leadership, that great and prophetic voice for our community in Wilmington, DE.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have his prayerful reflections begin our deliberations today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for an hour, Republicans will control the first half and the majority will control the final half. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3832. Later today, the Senate will complete action on the GSP and TAA bill. There will be up to five rollcall votes in relation to amendments and passage of this bill. I will work with the Republican leader to set a time it is convenient to do that.

FEMA

More important, now that we have arrived at an agreement on how to move the trade adjustment assistance out of here, is what is going to happen in the House.

Last week, something all too rare these days happened in this Chamber; we had some bipartisanship. Ten Republicans joined Democrats in voting to give FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the money they need to fund their important operations for the foreseeable future. The House bill would have jeopardized the

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Agency's ability to help Americans affected by tragedy to put their lives back together, but that is what the House did.

What the House did last night was so wrong. We passed a bill a few months ago that would take care of funding for the rest of this year, from October 1 to October 1. Rather than doing what we had agreed upon, and the American people saw us work for months to agree upon, they reneged on that deal. They tried last night to send a continuing resolution for a few weeks and they attached to it—and they should not have attached anything to it because we had already agreed on all that—attached to it a very unfair FEMA funding measure.

To show how spiteful they were—we have done great things in this country, doing things with modern vehicles. I had an energy summit the end of August in Las Vegas. They had all these electric cars lined up that they could show us. This is a result of money we have given here, taxpayers' money, to stimulate that part of our manufacturing sector. It has worked out great. It has been wonderful.

As STENY HOYER, one of the Democratic leaders in the House, said, what the House did is try to legislate away 53,000 jobs. They took money that was in the pipeline to do more of those electric cars and other kinds of new vehicles and stripped it away. They applied that toward something we have not done around here; that is, fund emergency situations around the country.

To rub salt in the wound, they not only took that, 1 billion dollars' worth, but they took 500 million dollars' worth and they rescinded it, wiping out jobs, not applying it to the deficit, just doing it, I guess, to show they are in control of the House. But that fell apart last night. It fell apart because Republicans and Democrats would not support that issue.

We don't know what they are going to do over there today. All kinds of rumors are floating around. We don't know. I have not spoken to the Speaker or the majority leader over there. I haven't talked to them. There are all kinds of rumors as to what they might do. They might try to send it back to us again. But the one thing I heard loudly and clearly, and my colleagues have to understand, the Republicans have announced in the House they may be in session this weekend. I hope that is not the case. I have spoken to the Republican leader here. If they send us something, we will do our very utmost to move as quickly as we can on that to take action on whatever they send us.

But I wish to send this message to them. They should not renege on the agreement that was legislated just a few short weeks ago; that is, funding government for the next year. We have agreed upon that, and whatever they send us, they should just send us a continuing resolution until we work on

getting the appropriations bills done. Send us a continuing resolution with nothing attached to it. If they disagree over there with what we did—they have over on the House side our bill which passed in the Senate on a bipartisan basis. If they don't like that, send us back something else.

We think the overwhelming support of the Nation is for something we did but don't tie it to the CR. That is simply not the right thing to do.

We are going to be alert and wait for the House to act. We are at an impasse, not because of what we are doing but because of what they are doing, and we will wait and see what action they take. It is extremely important that they act as quickly as they can.

We know we had scheduled next week to be off. We hope we can do that. We have an important holiday next Wednesday. That is the reason we are taking next week off. But I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate, both Democrats and Republicans, to move forward as quickly as we can.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

THE JOBS BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, over the past week, President Obama has been traveling around the country, trying to set a record for the number of times he can say the words "pass this bill right away"—the number of times he can say it, actually in a 5-minute speech. Today he will bring his act to a 50-year-old bridge that connects my own State of Kentucky with Ohio. The purpose of this visit is perfectly clear. The President's plan is to go out to this bridge and say that if only lawmakers in Washington would pass his second stimulus bill right away, then bridges such as this one would get fixed and that the only thing standing in the way of repairing them is people like me.

I would like to make a couple points about all this. First, I find it hard to take the President's message all that seriously when his own communications director is over at the White House telling people he is no longer interested in legislative compromise when the leaders of the President's own party in Congress are treating this bill like an afterthought.

We would be more inclined to look at this so-called jobs bill if the President's own staff and members of his own party in Congress started taking it a little more seriously themselves.

Second, I remind the President that the people of Kentucky and Ohio have heard this kind of thing before. Don't forget, the President made the same promises when he was selling his first stimulus. It is a message he brought to

Ohio repeatedly. Here is what he said 2 years ago this week at a stop in Warren, OH.

All across Ohio and all across the country, rebuilding our roads and our bridges . . . that's what the Recovery Act has been all about.

The Recovery Act is the stimulus bill, the first one. Yet 2½ years later, what do we have to show for it? Politically connected companies such as Solyndra ended up with hundreds of millions of dollars, provided by the taxpayers, and bridges such as the one the President is attending today still need to be fixed.

It is worth noting, in fact, this one company blew through more taxpayer money than the first stimulus allocated for every road and bridge in the entire State of Kentucky combined.

The President told Ohioans and Kentuckians, the first stimulus would keep unemployment below 8 percent as well. Yet 2½ years later unemployment in both States is still above 9 percent.

We have heard these promises before, and I don't think the President should expect anybody to fall for them again. I mean, how many stimulus bills do we have to pass before these bridges get fixed? How many? How many Solyndras do we have to finance? How much money do we have to waste before the President makes good on the promises he has already made? If a bridge needs fixing, by all means let's fix it. But don't tell us we need to pass a \$½ trillion stimulus bill and accept job-killing tax hikes to do it. Don't tell the people of Kentucky they need to finance every turtle tunnel and solar panel company on some bureaucrat's wish list in order to get their bridges fixed. Don't patronize us by implying that if we pass the second stimulus, bridges will get fixed right away. The American people heard the same thing when the administration was selling the first stimulus, only to turn on their television sets 2½ years later to see the President having a big laugh over the fact that all these shovel-ready projects weren't quite as shovel-ready as they thought they were.

So I suggest, Mr. President, that you think about ways to actually help the people of Kentucky and Ohio, instead of how you can use their roads and bridges as a backdrop for making a political point. If you are truly interested in helping our State, if you truly want to help our State, then come back to Washington and work with Republicans on legislation that will actually do something to revive our economy and create jobs and forget the political theater.

I yield the floor.

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, the