



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 157

WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 2011

No. 51

Senate

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Immortal, invisible, God only wise, You know our needs before we ask You but wait to bless us until we ask You for Your help. So, Lord, we are asking You to fill our lawmakers with energy for the tasks You have assigned their hands to do. Let no pride of power betray them into rejecting Your precepts and purposes, but help them face the challenges of these difficult times with a total dependence on You.

Lord, save us from ourselves, as You help us to remember that in our Nation's history, well-meaning people have sown to the wind but reaped the whirlwind.

While our military men and women risk and give their lives for liberty overseas, may we be willing to sacrifice for freedom at home.

Lord, without Your help, we cannot succeed; with Your power, we cannot fail.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK R. WARNER 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, April 8, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNER 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 any leader remarks, there will be a period of morning business until 4 o'clock this afternoon for debate only, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each during this time, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

We are very hopeful we can reach agreement on the budget today. I will have more to say about that in a few minutes. Senators will be notified when votes are scheduled.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess from 1 p.m. this afternoon until 2 p.m. this afternoon in order to allow for a special Democratic caucus meeting.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 1255 AND S. 768

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bills by title for the second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1255) to prevent a shutdown of the government of the United States, and for other purposes.

A bill (S. 768) to provide for continuing operations of government in a fiscally responsible manner.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to further proceedings in regard to these bills en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bills will be placed on the calendar.

BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have been married for a long time—more than 50 years. My wife and I have one daughter and nine grandchildren. I love these women very, very much. One day, though, I may not be able to help them, and one of them may need a cancer screening. It is not a pleasant thought, but that is the reality of life—that I may not be around to help them when they need something.

Over their lives, they will be in need of other things, such as a cholesterol check, maybe a blood pressure screening—tests that are less serious but just as important to a woman's health. They should be able to get the test that can save their life. So should every single woman in America. I believe that and, frankly, that is not so controversial. It is not so controversial a belief.

Some women, of course, have doctors. Others, including many of the poorest among us, don't. So where do they go to get a blood pressure, cholesterol, or cancer screening? Where do they go? Thankfully, there is a little-known part of a little-known law that saves many lives. It is called title X, and it is part of a public health law. It means women and girls can go to their

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



Printed on recycled paper.

S2287

local health department or community clinic and get these tests. More than 5 million women use these centers for title X coverage every year—5 million—and one of them could be my granddaughter or my daughter.

Mr. President, some watching us today—and we know the whole world is watching us today—may be asking why I am talking about women's health when the question before us is the budget of the biggest economy on the planet Earth. Some may ask why we are talking about the smallest corner of planet Earth. With a government shutdown looming not weeks away or days away but hours away, why are we talking about whether women can get something as simple and noncontroversial as a cancer screening? The answer is that Republicans want to shut down our Nation's government because they want to make it harder for women to get the health services they need.

By the way, title X does not include abortion. It is illegal to use Federal funds for abortion services. So anyone who says this debate is over abortion isn't being truthful. It is about simple and important health services. Republicans want to shut down the government because they think there is nothing more important than keeping women from getting cancer screenings. This is indefensible, and everyone should be outraged—men and women should be outraged. The Republican House leadership has only a few hours left to look in the mirror, snap out of it, and realize how positively shameful that would be.

For months, this conversation has been about billions and trillions of dollars. It has been about weighty issues and difficult decisions. This debate is about saving money—or that is what we thought it was about. But no longer. We have an agreement on the cuts and savings. I was there at the White House last night. That agreement includes a historic level of cuts. We have always recognized we had to make cuts. That is why we agreed at the White House last night to make significant cuts—hard but important.

But now the tea party—among others, although they are the biggest push—is trying to move its extreme social agenda on issues that have nothing to do with funding the government. They are willing, it appears, clearly, to throw women under the bus even if it means they will shut down the government because that is where we are. That is the one issue that was remaining last night. That agenda is an extreme agenda. I don't agree with their ideas on social policy, but in our democracy, those ideas, however radical or however you may disagree with them, deserve a debate if they want one. That is fair. But that debate doesn't belong in an urgent bill to keep the government running, and it especially doesn't belong here at this late hour.

The consequences of letting our country's funding expire will be dev-

astating. There are almost 1 million Federal employees. These are people who work for the Bureau of Land Management, which doesn't have a big presence in the Presiding Officer's State but has a huge presence in Nevada. The State of Nevada is 87 percent owned by the Federal Government. There are Forest Service employees, FBI employees, Internal Revenue Service employees, and the people who work in this great government complex—almost 1 million of them—who are waiting on pins and needles.

Federal employees are like everybody else. They are working from paycheck to paycheck. They are wondering if they are going to be able to get that new car they have needed for 3 or 4 years. They are wondering, with summer coming, if they are going to be able to take that vacation they have wanted to take for a long time. Federal employees are like everybody else.

The consequences of letting our country's funding expire would be devastating to people, individuals, and it would be devastating to our troops, to our small businesses, and to Americans' everyday lives—people who just want to get a home loan or get their tax refund or, I repeat, get their paycheck. A government shutdown would damage our image and credibility around the world. But Republicans are asking me to sacrifice my wife's health, my daughter's health, and my nine granddaughters' health. They are asking me to sacrifice the health of women in Nevada and all across this country. But I am not going to be part of that. I won't do it. As a legislator, I am very frustrated. As an American, I am appalled. As a husband, a father, and a grandfather, I am personally offended.

Would the Chair announce morning business now, please.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will be in a period of morning business until 4 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, and any time spent in a quorum call will be equally divided.

The Senator from Arizona.

BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, at this very critical time in our country's history—a time when we have over a \$14 trillion debt and we are desperately trying to find ways to reduce government spending and there looms the possibility of a government shutdown—I think we

would be best served trying to provide some information to our constituents and, as politicians, resisting the temptation to throw rotten apples at each other. I also think it would be wise for the media to not hype or overhype a situation regarding a government shutdown but to try to put things into perspective. So let me try to do that for a moment this morning.

In the first place, obviously we are trying to reach agreement. I compliment the majority leader, Senator REID, who just spoke, and the Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER, for their efforts to get together and bridge the differences between the two parties—the two bodies—and to reach an agreement. In the last 2 or 3 days, the President has also weighed in on the issue, and I think he too is trying very hard to help the parties reach an agreement. Notwithstanding that fact, under the law, tonight at midnight, the funding for much of the government stops, and the question is, What can be done about that?

The House of Representatives has passed a bill. They passed it yesterday. The Senate could take up that bill and pass it. It would keep the government running for another week. It would provide full funding for the military, not just for another week but for the entire rest of the year. That is a reasonable measure to keep the government running. It also, by the way, reduces \$12 billion in spending, and most of that spending, I am informed, has already been agreed to by the administration and would be included in any longer range continuing resolution.

Well, what happened? The President said he would veto that bill. That is very puzzling because if we are all seeking to fund the government, at least until there can be an agreement on a long-term resolution, one would think we would try to keep it going for another week and adopt what the House did, especially since it provides funding for the military.

The President, in his veto message, said that the bill was a distraction. I do have to take issue with that. It is not a distraction, it is what is necessary to keep the government running. Let me get back to that in a moment.

What would happen if we were able to reach agreement by tonight? If we are able to reach agreement before midnight then at least theoretically both bodies, both House and Senate, could pass a very short term, 2 or 3 days, stop-gap measure in order to have the time to complete the work on the full measure and then adopt that sometime next week and that would avert a shutdown. It is possible also, because in the Senate it would require unanimous consent; somebody might disagree with that process and would object. In that case, it would take a few days for us to do, in effect, the paperwork to get this done. That would then result in a government shutdown during that time, at least over the course of the weekend.