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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable WILLIAM M. COWAN, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God, the light for those who know You and the security for those who love You, You formed us in Your image and likeness. Help us, therefore, to live as children of Your kingdom. May we not squander our inheritance of faith, integrity, love, humility, and perseverance in a far country of waste. Empower us instead, O God, to live worthy of Your Name.

Use our lawmakers to do Your will. May they remember not only to serve the haves but also the have-nots: the hungry, the homeless, the persecuted, the voiceless, and the powerless. Fill our Senators with compassion so that they will glorify and honor You.

We pray in Your marvelous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable WILLIAM M. COWAN 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. LEAHY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 23, 2013.

To the Senate:

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

appoint the Honorable WILLIAM M. COWAN, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COWAN 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 be in a period of morning business for 1 hour. The majority will control the first half, the Republicans the final half. Following morning business the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to the Marketplace Fairness Act. From 12:30 today until 2:15 the Senate will be in a recess to allow for our weekly caucus meetings.

Yesterday evening a number of Senators missed votes. We have talked about this a number of times and become somewhat complacent. We have votes for 15 minutes. We extend it for 5 minutes. We have extended that time for a long period of time.

Because of procedural things around here in the Senate, I had to terminate that vote before 6 o'clock in an effort to save a full day of legislative business. Obviously, there is 30 hours following that cloture vote—wasted time. I have talked about it before, but there was no reason whatsoever that we went into Wednesday rather than Tuesday. So I do not apologize. Everyone here has to understand there are certain things we have to do around here.

We have been somewhat lax in enforcing the length of votes. It is very unfair to people who vote and have other things to do to wait for others before the vote is terminated. I under-

stand how important it is for people to do their votes, but it is also important to get our business done here. I repeat, had we not terminated that vote before 6 o'clock, then it would have kicked us over until Wednesday before cloture could be filed on the bill. I do not know if I am going to file cloture on the bill today, but at least I have the opportunity to do that.

REGULAR ORDER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my Republican colleagues often demand a return to regular order. We have heard speeches, and the House is also talking about regular order. They have done this many different places but especially where the budget process is concerned. They complained for 2 years that we did not pass a budget, even though there was a law we passed that gave us those budget numbers.

But they still came and talked about our needing to do a budget resolution. I repeat, we did not need a budget resolution because we had enacted a budget with the force of law, a bill the President signed. A resolution, the President does not have to sign that. This year, I repeat, the Republicans again requested we take up a budget resolution.

Until 5 in the morning we took vote after vote on amendment after amendment, more than 100 votes. In the end, we passed a budget resolution without a single Republican vote in the affirmative. After giving the Republicans what they wanted or what they said they wanted, regular order, countless amendment votes, the passage of a budget resolution, a strange thing happened. House Republicans did a complete 180. They flipped. They are no longer insisting on regular order, even though they preached that for years. They do not want to go to conference and work things out. They did not even want to name conferees.

It seems House Republicans do not want to be seen discussing even the

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



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possibility of compromise with Democrats for fear there will be a tea party revolt, but that is not a good reason to run away from budget negotiations. In fact, it is ridiculous. So today I am going to ask unanimous consent to name conferees so we can have a budget conference to try to work things out.

I hope, even though I doubt, my Republican colleagues in the Senate will not object for the sole purpose of giving cover to the House Republican colleagues who are certainly directed and guided by the tea party folks over there. If the Republicans are serious about reducing the deficit, we need to get to work, get to work sooner rather than later.

What is regular order? It means we do things the way they are supposed to be done—by the book, so to speak. So I am going to ask that consent soon.

SEQUESTRATION

Mr. REID. Let's talk about sequestration just for a brief time. I talked about it yesterday in the afternoon when the Senate convened. On Sunday, the Federal Aviation Administration implemented sequester furloughs. It will affect tens of thousands of employees. By Monday, yesterday, travelers were already experiencing delays at airports from coast to coast.

According to the Wall Street Journal, flights to New York airports were delayed more than an hour already because of those furloughs. Delays are also reported in Los Angeles and even Baltimore. The FAA assured us things will get much worse before the end of the busy summer travel season, as these arbitrary sequester cuts continue to affect airport staffing levels.

What this means is that every 2 weeks all FAA employees will have to take a day off. At peak travel times, almost 7,000 flights will be delayed every day, some of them by up to 3 hours. On the worst day we had last year because of weather-related issues, less than 3,000 flights were delayed. Now, every day, more than twice that number will be delayed.

These delays will be bad for business, they will be frustrating for families, and they will be devastating for the economy. But flight delays are not the only unintended consequence of these across-the-board cuts. It is not just FAA employees. It will affect 750,000 jobs across the country. It will shred the safety net that keeps millions of seniors, children, veterans, and needy families from falling through the cracks.

It will gut investment in education, medical research that helps America compete in the 21st century. More than 2,700 schools with large numbers of disadvantaged children will see their Federal funding slashed. Seventy thousand little boys and girls will not be able to do the Head Start programs. These cuts will put 10,000 classroom jobs at risk. They will eliminate extra help at

closing the achievement gap for 1.2 million underprivileged students.

More than 7,200 teachers and classroom aids who work with children with disabilities will lose their jobs because of the sequester. Some 33,000 college students will lose their work study jobs. I was a janitor for part of the time I went to school. It helped me pay my tuition. Things have changed over the years, but these jobs are still important, very important. They call them work study jobs.

We are putting the dream of higher education further out of reach for our poorest students if we keep this sequestration going. Families and businesses in every State will feel the pain of the sequester whether they fly or do not fly. But Congress could act now to reverse these cuts without adding a single dollar to the deficit. We can use the savings from wrapping up military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan to avoid the full brunt of these arbitrary cuts.

Right now, there is about \$650 billion in that fund. We could erase the sequester for the rest of the year, which is a fraction of the savings from winding down these two wars. Using those savings, Congress could avert the most painful and senseless sequester cuts, cuts to the FAA and programs that get homeless veterans off the streets, fund research to cure lethal diseases, and provide meals to needy seniors.

I only hope public outcry over long delays at airports will serve as a wake-up call to my Republican colleagues. We cannot put off action any longer.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— H. CON. RES. 25

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 33, H. Con. Res. 25; that is, the budget resolution; that all after the enacting clause be stricken and that the amendment which is at the desk, the text of S. Con. Res. 8, the budget resolution passed by the Senate, be inserted in lieu thereof; that H. Con. Res. 25, as amended, be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be consider made and laid on the table; that the Senate insist on its amendment, request a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses, and the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate, with the appointment of the budget conferees being on the ratio of 7 Democrats to 5 Republicans, and there be no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, the ranking member of the Budget Committee, Senator SESSIONS, is not available because he has a conflict at the moment. On his behalf, I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

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 Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans the second half.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator TOOMEY be recognized for up to 4 minutes, that following his remarks the Senator from North Dakota, Ms. HEITKAMP, be recognized.

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

SEQUESTRATION

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader.

I feel the need to respond to the comments from the leader about the sequester that has gone into effect. I wish to be very clear. The flight delays that are occurring, the furloughs among air traffic controllers, and the shutting down of air traffic towers are entirely, utterly unnecessary. This is a willful choice being made by this administration in order to inflict as disruptive a process as possible on the American public and on our economy, all to further a political agenda. The political agenda is to attempt to convince the American people there are no circumstances under which we can ever cut spending at all.

If you question why I say this is a willful decision on the part of this administration, I would refer you to legislation Senator INHOFE and I offered prior to the beginning of the sequestration. This legislation, as you may recall, would have granted to the administration complete flexibility in how they achieved the savings of the sequester.

What we hear from the administration, administration officials, and White House spokespeople is that this is terribly unfortunate, but they have no choice and no alternative; the law requires that they make these cuts. However, when Senator INHOFE and I introduced legislation to explicitly grant them all the flexibility they could ask for, complete flexibility to find the most wasteful, most redundant, most unnecessary programs, and to cut there instead of cutting essential services, what did the administration say? They said: If you send us the legislation, we will veto it. They put