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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, June 24, 2013, at 11 a.m.

Senate

FRIDAY, JUNE 21, 2013

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, who inhabits eternity, help us to honor Your Name. Today, inspire our Senators to do Your will. May they remember that life is a rehearsal, a pilgrimage, and a time of testing. Remind them, therefore, of their accountability to You and that You will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil. Lord, enable them to be in the world but not of it, as they understand the vanity of the temporal and the glory of the eternal. May gratitude to You be the motive for their work, as they make a renewed commitment to excellence in everything they do and say.

We pray in Your righteous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, if any, the Senate will resume consideration of the immigration bill.

Mr. President, we finished here late last night. We had a lot of issues that were unresolved then. We have just a couple this morning, and we hope we can resolve those very quickly. I certainly hope that is the case. I am going to ask a consent agreement that will put us into some activity here for the next several hours, but I hope we do not have to use all this time.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time until 2:30 p.m. this afternoon be for debate only, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the exception of Senator SESSIONS, who will control up to 2 hours, and that at 2:30 p.m. I be recognized. I would ask that consent be approved by the body.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Senator SESSIONS has always been very courteous to me, and if I have some agreement that we have as to that amendment, I am certain he would let me be recognized. But if he does not, I will wait until he uses the 2 hours. So we are going to try to wrap this up very quickly, but very quickly in Senate time sometimes is not like everybody

else's time. So we will do the best we can to move as quickly as possible.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my consent agreement be modified to the extent that if someone suggests the absence of a quorum, it be charged equally against both sides.

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

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

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



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S4849

BORDER SECURITY, ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, AND IMMIGRATION MODERNIZATION ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 744, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 744) to provide comprehensive immigration reform, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Leahy/Hatch amendment No. 1183, to encourage and facilitate international participation in the performing arts.

Boxer/Landrieu amendment No. 1240, to require training for National Guard and Coast Guard officers and agents in training programs on border protection, immigration law enforcement, and how to address vulnerable populations, such as children and victims of crime.

Cruz amendment No. 1320, to replace title I of the bill with specific border security requirements, which shall be met before the Secretary of Homeland Security may process applications for registered immigrant status or blue card status and to avoid Department of Homeland Security budget reductions.

Leahy (for Reed) amendment No. 1224, to clarify the physical present requirements for merit-based immigrant visa applicants.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 2:30 p.m. will be for debate only, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each except that the Senator from Alabama Mr. SESSIONS will control up to 2 hours.

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, to me it is rather astonishing the extent to which we are discussing this historic immigration bill and how little our focus has been on the real impact of it, what immigration means, how to make it better, how to serve the national interests to do the kinds of things the American people want us to do. We really talked about a lot of hot-button issues, but we have not focused on the substance of what we are doing, how many people the country can absorb legally every year. We do 1 million legally every year. How many more can we assimilate effectively and have reasonable expectations that they would find good work in America, to be able to have them find work but not put Americans out of work, and what kinds of skill sets do we need most? Will our system of enforcement work? And there are many other questions like that.

So I would say that to some degree we have missed that discussion. We are told that today—now we are going on 11 o'clock—we will see a magic amendment, the amendment that fixes everything, that we can just relax and go home and take a good nap because we have an amendment that is going to fix all of the problems in the legislation. Well, that is odd because we were told when the bill was announced that it was the toughest legislation ever, that it fixed everything, it did not need any improvement, we are all OK with it,

you all just pass it, and if you raise questions about it—as I did—then you are not a good fellow, you are not being nice if you point out problems.

Apparently, now the sponsors of the bill have realized that they have a lot of problems, that as the bill has been examined and actually read—the thousand pages of it here, it has been read and studied—more and more and more problems have been found with it.

We have had a great deal of discussion about the border. The border security issue is a very important issue, but it is one of the issues in establishing a good lawful immigration system that serve the national interests. It's just one of the issues. It was nothing like the bill's sponsors promised. It would not have accomplished the job.

Those of us who were asking the tough questions—people tried to dismiss the concerns. They finally had to deal with the issue that it did not do what they promised. It was a big problem. So now they have accepted an amendment, it appears, that would change the legislation quite a bit—at least with regard to the border. That was talked about a lot because it always symbolizes whether we are serious about enforcement.

It was so weak in the legislation. When the bill first started, they proposed spending \$6.5 billion on border security. Then, as it went through committee and complaints arose, they went up to \$8.3 billion—about a 30-percent increase. Then the bill hit the floor and the American people began to find out how weak it was, and our phones started ringing—almost in a panic, it seems.

A group has met in secret. They have announced the Corker-Hoeven agreement to spend \$38 billion, to add 20,000 agents. It is all fixed. Vote for the bill. Now you have no excuse. You have to vote for the bill. But if you are holding a bucket of water and it has a bunch of holes in it and you close one of the holes, all of the water is still going to run out of the bucket.

There are other problems with the legislation. There was just one problem that was so dramatic and so plainly contrary to the promises the sponsors had made for their bill that it was really devastating. Now, in total retreat and capitulation, they have talked about adding 20,000 agents and spending \$38 billion on the border.

We do not want to hear you guys complain anymore. Now you just hush and pass our bill. Do not talk about what else is in it. Do not talk about the policy issues that are raised by the legal flow of immigration we have. You just pass the bill now because we answered the border security problem.

Well, this is not the way it is going to be. We should be able to do dramatic things and effective things at the border with \$38 billion, but, as I will point out in a little bit, we are not sure at all that is going to happen in an effective, smart way, especially when it has come up in this fashion and especially since

we have passed laws repeatedly that mainly require certain things to happen and then they never happen, such as fencing.

We said the last time we passed a bill that we had to build 700 miles of double-layer fencing. Well, that was in 2008, I believe. Today we have 36 miles of double-layer fencing and about 300 miles of pedestrian fencing. So now they say they have their 700 miles. Well, it remains to be seen if that will ever happen, No. 1, but, No. 2, it is not double-layer, as we passed in law previously. That never happened. It is just a single-layered fence, which is much easier to penetrate. A double-layered fencing system with a vehicular ability to move between the fences is very, very effective. It has proven effective before. That is why it was put in the bill—not because someone wanted to sound tough but because it will work.

Things that really work tend to be blocked in the Senate. Things that would actually make the system transform from illegality to legality have always been blocked, in my experience, since I have been in the Senate. It is amazing to me in that regard.

We have not seen the amendment. We were told we would have it last night at 6 o'clock. We were on track to have a series of amendment votes, some important amendments to be voted on. We were getting ready to do that. All of a sudden, it was announced that an agreement had been reached and a new amendment had been offered. This amendment was going to fix the border. It was going to spend more money than ever. Nobody now had a right to complain about the immigration bill before us, S. 744. We had it fixed. The series of amendments we thought we had—no votes were cast on them.

Actually, the night before, a tentative agreement had been reached to vote on as many as 16 amendments. That would have been a nice start to begin the discussion, allow people to point out that there is a weakness in the bill and propose a solution to fix it. That is the way legislation is supposed to go. You bring forth an amendment and you say: This bill lacks this. This provision in the bill is wrong. I have a fix for it. This is my offer. This is my amendment.

That is the way good legislation should be processed in the Senate. That was all stopped.

So we waited—6 o'clock, 7 o'clock, 8 o'clock, 9 o'clock, 10 o'clock. I think it was 10:30 when we departed and still there appeared no magic amendment that is going to fix every problem with the legislation. No magic amendment. Here we are at 11 o'clock and we still have not seen it. Frankly, I would like to read it. I am going to read it. We read this one. It did not do what the sponsors said. They had good talking points. I could have voted for the talking points. I liked what they said, basically, in the talking points, but it was not in the bill. That is the problem.