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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ, a Senator from the State of Hawaii.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Rev. Kenneth Kolibas, pastor at St. Joseph Church in Raritan, NJ.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Dear Lord in Heaven, You blessed the creation of this great Nation of men and women and today I ask for the continuance of Your support and guidance of the women and men of the Senate. Bless them with the wisdom necessary to make tough decisions concerning our Nation and its well-being. Guide them toward keeping our Nation strong, free, and generous. Help them to use their talents and gifts to benefit our Nation and come to the aid of those in need. May they be the best of teachers as role models for the future generations of our country. Please bless them with good health and the ability to do the work that is brought before them. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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 assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 19, 2013.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ, a Senator from the State of Hawaii, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. SCHATZ thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I yield to the junior Senator from New Jersey to speak about the Chaplain today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Jersey.

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. CHIESA. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize my pastor, Father Ken Kolibas, who is joining us here in Washington today.

I am honored and delighted that Father Ken Kolibas, pastor of the Church of St. Joseph in Raritan, NJ, is serving as our guest chaplain today. Father Ken is the pastor and spiritual leader for the people of St. Joseph's and for the larger community.

Father Ken began his working career as a small businessman in New Jersey. When he was 23 years old, he opened Ken's Flowers and Gifts in Carteret, NJ. He quickly became a respected leader of the business community. But Father Ken later received and answered the call to ministry, and he now dedicates his life to our spiritual growth. His commitment and generosity to the members of our parish is unwavering, and his door is open to anyone who seeks his guidance.

The Church of St. Joseph's is nearing the conclusion of its year-long celebration of its 100th year. We are fortunate at St. Joseph's to have Father Ken as our pastor and our leader, and I am

proud to have him as our guest chaplain today.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks the Senate will be in a period of morning business. The majority will control the first 30 minutes and the Republicans will control the second 30 minutes. Following morning business we will resume consideration of S. 1392.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it was about five decades ago that Vice President Humphrey predicted it was possible to eradicate poverty in America. In fact, this is what he said: "We can banish hunger from the face of the Earth." That was in 1965.

Today, in 2013, there are more than 50 million people living in the United States—including 150,000 families in Nevada—who don't know where their next meal will come from. In the richest country in the world, one in six is in danger of going to bed hungry tonight, and half of those people are children.

But despite these sobering numbers—and despite these difficult economic times—House Republicans have turned their backs on American families struggling to put food on the table. It is true the bill being considered in the House of Representatives today would save \$40 billion. How would it save that \$40 billion? By snatching food out of the hands of millions of the neediest children and their families.

Why are there people on food stamps? We have tried to create a safety net so

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



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these people have at least the basics of being able to have a meal during the day.

House Republicans are determined to gut the nutrition assistance program in the name of austerity, even though 9 out of 10 recipients are families with children, senior citizens, or people with disabilities. These needy Americans aren't exactly living a life of excess on the government's dime. They get about \$4 in food assistance each day.

One of my favorite things I like to do in Nevada and here in Washington is to go grocery shopping. It is such a diversion for me. I love going grocery shopping to look around, buy things. Landra and I are without our children and our grandchildren—we live alone—but we still buy food and I enjoy that so very much. So I have a good idea how much \$4 will buy, or \$4.50 to be specific. That is enough money to buy, if one is lucky, a pound of hamburger. They have different grades of hamburger. They have the expensive kind, the not so expensive, and then the cheaper kind. Even for the cheaper kind, \$4 couldn't buy a pound of that most of the time. A gallon of milk costs about four bucks. So a person couldn't buy them both on the same day; a person certainly couldn't buy hamburger and milk on the same day.

It is possible to make important reforms to both farm and food stamp programs without balancing the budget on the backs of people who are hungry. But instead of cutting waste and eliminating fraud, the House Republicans would cut lunches for 210,000 children and eliminate food assistance for 170,000 veterans.

There is another way. It was done here in the Senate under the direction of Chairwoman STABENOW: the bipartisan Senate agricultural bill, passed under her direction and that of the ranking member. It saves \$23 billion without forcing needy children to skip meals. It does it fairly. If the Senate farm bill came to the House of Representatives floor, it would pass overwhelmingly, but the Republican leadership won't let Democrats vote. That is why they will probably pass this very mean-spirited piece of legislation today, because only Republicans will be allowed to vote on it.

The House Republican leadership refuses to consider any bill that would garner votes from both parties. Leave it to the House of Representatives to take the hard way whenever possible.

These same reckless Republicans are also determined to take the uphill route to passing a CR—a continuing resolution. What does that do? It funds the government. Instead of doing what is necessary to keep the economy on a firm footing, Republicans are obsessed with denying and undermining the law of the land—ObamaCare. Remember, the law passed about 4 years ago and the Supreme Court declared it constitutional. Many good things are already working to keep people who are sick from declaring bankruptcy. It is a

good piece of legislation that will make America like all modern nations and have health care for everybody, with rare exception.

Watching the Republican Party self-destruct—and that is not coming from me; that is what pundits are saying all over the country—would be good political theater, to watch them self-destruct—and that is what they are doing—if there were not so much at stake.

The economic consequences of a government shutdown are deadly serious. Even today, when I had my news briefing—the Republicans are openly fighting against each other now. Senate Republicans are saying, Well, we know we don't have enough votes to get rid of ObamaCare, but let's send it back to the House and let them hang tough. The House Republicans are saying, Why aren't the Senate Republicans doing it themselves?

The consequences of a government shutdown are deadly serious. The economic consequences of a first-ever default on the full faith and credit of the United States are deadly serious. Look what happened last time they threatened this: The stock market dropped 2,000 points. We lost our credit rating. It dropped.

Anyone listening to this doesn't have to take my word for it. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, not noted for being this base of liberality in the country, wrote to Members of the House yesterday, saying: Prevent a shutdown. Ease the fears of default. Specifically, here is what they said:

It is not in the best interests of the United States or its business community or the American people to risk even a brief government shutdown that might trigger disruptive consequences or raise new policy uncertainties washing over the U.S. economy.

The quote continues:

Likewise, the U.S. Chamber respectfully urges the House of Representatives to raise the debt ceiling in a timely manner and thus eliminate any question of threat to the full faith and credit of the United States.

But in spite of these warnings from the largest business organization in the country, Republicans either don't realize the stakes or simply don't care. They are willing to put the Nation's economic recovery at risk to make an ideological point.

What remains to be seen is how many innocent Americans will be hurt by their reckless political games. How many children will go to school without breakfast? How many workers will lose their jobs? How many seniors will lose their retirement? How many businesses will lose their hard-earned investments if Republicans tank the economy?

I only hope the anarchists in the House of Representatives come to their senses before it is too late.

I note the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1514

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 191, S. 1514, the Saving Coal Jobs Act. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed without intervening action or debate, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I know how important coal is to the States of Kentucky, West Virginia, Indiana, and a lot of States feel very strongly about coal. We will be happy to work with the Republican leader and others who are concerned about the coal issue in the United States to come up with a procedure where we can try to figure out a way to get a vote on this and have a reasonable debate on it. So I will be happy to work with the Republican leader, but based on my brief review, I think it best now for me to object, and I do object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

WAR ON COAL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I might say we have a genuine emergency in Kentucky—a depression in eastern Kentucky—as a result of what this administration has done and is about to further do this very week, directed at the jobs and livelihood of my constituents. So it is for us a genuine emergency.

The EPA is due this week to announce regulations capping carbon emissions on new coal-fired powerplants. It is just the latest administration salvo in its never-ending war on coal, a war against the very people who provide power and energy for our country. The EPA has already stifled the permitting process for new coal mines. The Agency has done this so dramatically that they have effectively shut down many coal mines through illegitimate, dilatory tactics.

The EPA's actions ignore the thousands of people in my home State of Kentucky who depend on the coal industry for their livelihoods. Kentucky's own Jimmy Rose, a veteran and former coal miner, said it best in