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Senate

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

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, the Reverend Adam Bridell, associate pastor of the Asbury United Methodist Church, right here in Washington, DC.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Holy God, You are a stronghold for the oppressed, a fortress in times of trouble. The heavens are the work of Your fingers. You established the Moon and the stars. Who are we, that You care for us? Who are we, that You promise us grace and mercy?

May Your greatness humble us. May Your light transform us. May Your love inspire us.

Inspire us to great acts of mercy, kindness, and justice. Inspire us to love You and love our neighbor. Inspire us to labor for the sake of Your Kingdom, to sacrifice for the least and the lost.

Today may the men and women of this great Chamber be found faithful to You.

This we pray in Your merciful 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 PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, deep in shadow, there is a specter that haunts our country. In dark corners it claims thousands of victims every year—quietly, stealthily, maliciously. It is hard for many Americans to believe that human trafficking could happen where they live, but it does, right here in the United States—in all 50 of our States. And many of these victims are children.

In Kentucky alone the Commonwealth has been able to identify more than 100 victims since it began keeping relevant records in 2013. While this kind of abuse often begins around the age of 13 or 14, there have been reports of victims in Kentucky as young as 2 months old. It is just about the most morally offensive thing you can imagine.

These victims need a voice, they need justice, and the new Congress is determined to give them both. That is just what the bill we are considering this week, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, aims to do.

I particularly want to thank Senator CORNYN for his hard work on this legislation. He has been a tireless advocate for it. I also want to note that this legislation has always been a bipartisan exercise. I want to thank the 13 Democratic cosponsors of the bill.

It is a bill that received a hearing in the Judiciary Committee earlier this year and was reported without a single negative vote. It has been thoroughly vetted and carefully crafted, which explains its bipartisan support in the Senate. That also explains the long list of endorsements outside the Senate, with organizations such as Shared Hope International, Rights4Girls, the Fraternal Order of Police, and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children among its many supporters.

Here is what one of the broad coalitions backing this bill had to say about it. "The Justice for Victims of Traf-

ficking Act provides unprecedented support to domestic victims of trafficking, who are too often invisible and underserved," they wrote. "This legislation is vital."

I hope now that it has been brought to the floor, this bill continues to enjoy its strong record of constructive bipartisan support. It is similar to a measure that was passed by the House of Representatives.

The version before us also contains some additional provisions as well. For instance, Senator PORTMAN has offered ideas to improve the way we find missing kids and to strengthen law enforcement efforts to investigate and prosecute those who commit sex trafficking crimes.

It is good to see such a strong and bipartisan piece of legislation because victims of human trafficking should be treated as victims—not as criminals—because they should have the services and resources they need to rebuild their lives and because law enforcement should have the tools it needs to protect them and to combat these crimes. This bill aims to ensure these things actually happen, and I look forward to the Senate's good work to pass it.

REMEMBERING EDWARD W. BROOKE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, later today a former Senate colleague will be honored at the National Cathedral and laid to rest in Arlington. Senator Brooke was a trailblazer. He was a model of honesty and courage in office. Through his example, Edward W. Brooke reminded Americans that anything was possible in their country. In the years since Senator Brooke left office, we have seen the truth of that statement.

So while I am sure the Brooke family will mourn a man they loved today, just as any family would, I hope those who loved Senator Brooke can remember they have a lot to be proud of, too,

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



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as does the Senate, as does our country.

We thank this path-breaking pioneer for his many years of service to our country, and we honor him today.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

HEALTH CARE COSTS

MR. REID. Mr. President, all over the country today in newspapers and electronic media there is a story. I will just pick one of them out from the front page of the Washington Post today. The headline reads: “CBO: Health law will cost less than expected.” It says: “President Obama’s health-care law will cost taxpayers substantially less than previously estimated, congressional budget officials said Monday, in an upbeat note for a program that has faced withering criticism since its passage five years ago.”

I would just note here that the opposition has come from my Republican colleagues in the Senate and the House. They voted 67 times to repeal it in the House. Of course, each time it has failed.

Continuing on in this article, it says:

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office attributed the savings to spending on medical care in coming years that will not be as great as previously forecast. As a result, the agency said, insurers are not expected to charge Americans as much for coverage, and the government will save on subsidies for low- and moderate-income people.

What’s more, the CBO has concluded that companies are not canceling health insurance policies as often as had been anticipated earlier this year. Fewer Americans consequently are planning to sign up for insurance under the Affordable Care Act, generating more taxpayer savings.

In total, the health-care law will cost taxpayers . . . 11 percent less over the next decade than estimated in January. The cost of providing subsidies for people to buy insurance on the state and federal marketplaces—the centerpiece of the law—will be 20 percent lower than projected.

The article goes on and on about the good things that are happening with health care in America.

LYNCH NOMINATION

MR. REID. Mr. President, the official mission statement for the U.S. Attorney General reads:

To enforce the law and defend the interests of the United States according to the law; to ensure public safety against threats foreign and domestic; to provide federal leadership in preventing and controlling crime; to seek just punishment for those guilty of unlawful behavior; and to ensure fair and impartial administration of justice for all Americans.

That is a tremendous responsibility.

The U.S. Attorney General is more than just a lawyer or an administrator. An Attorney General is a defender, a crime fighter, and an advocate for Americans’ rights. It is not an easy

job, but President Obama’s nominee Loretta Lynch is up to the task.

Throughout my time in the Senate, I have seen many qualified nominees, Republicans and Democrats—people such as Janet Reno, Madeline Albright, Colin Powell, and Hillary Rodham Clinton. Loretta Lynch, a graduate of Harvard Law School, is as qualified as any candidate I have ever seen in my 33 years in Congress.

Ms. Lynch currently serves as the U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of New York. She has been confirmed unanimously for that office by the Senate twice, most recently in 2010. During her time in the U.S. attorney’s office, Loretta Lynch has proven herself to be a tough crimefighter. She has vigorously prosecuted drug dealers and criminals, corrupt politicians, and greedy Wall Street bankers.

Loretta Lynch is also a guardian of the Constitution. She takes the protections afforded to Americans in the Bill of Rights seriously. Almost two decades ago she helped bring to justice a Haitian immigrant who had been physically and sexually assaulted by police officers acting outside the law.

She has also defended human rights abroad. She was part of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, where she prosecuted suspects accused of one of the most heinous crimes in world history, the genocide carried out in Rwanda.

Whatever the case, whatever the crime, Loretta Lynch has protected the innocent and fought the guilty. She has been exemplary in defending the interests of the United States and its people. She is an ideal candidate to be America’s top law enforcement officer. That is why she was nominated 121 days ago by President Obama.

I look forward to the Senate finishing this confirmation as soon as possible. The American people need Loretta Lynch in their corner.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided, and the majority controlling the first half and the Democrats controlling the final half.

MR. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

MR. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes and that the Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. Toomey, be allowed to follow me for as much time as he may consume.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

MR. THUNE. Mr. President, every year millions of human beings around the world are forced into slave labor and sold for sex. This includes a large number of children. While these crimes are especially prevalent in countries where prosecution of trafficking is lax or essentially nonexistent, the truth is that human trafficking occurs in every country, including right here in the United States. Every year thousands of Americans—most frequently women and children—are trafficked within the borders of the United States.

A large number of the victims are children who are bought and sold to feed the twisted desires of sexual predators. That is a key phrase, “bought and sold,” because to the criminals who prey on these children, that is what it is about—buying and selling. It is a business. That is right—the sexual exploitation and brutalization of children, some of them not yet teenagers, is a business to the traffickers who enslave them, and many of them get rich off of the horror these children endure.

Traffickers identify vulnerable targets—often children who are already living in difficult circumstances or come from broken homes. They then engage in calculated campaigns to win the trust of these vulnerable children and lure them into their orbit. After the child has been trapped, he or she is brought into a lifestyle whose horrors are difficult to adequately describe. These children are forced into a life of prostitution, their innocence repeatedly and brutally violated hundreds or thousands of times in a year. They are controlled by a combination of sexual, physical, and psychological abuse at the hands of their traffickers. Many of them become hooked on drugs as well thanks to their captors, who see drug dependence as a useful means of control.

Some children never escape from this life. They end up dead before they have even left their childhood behind, the victim of a dangerous encounter with a sexual predator or too violent a beating at the hands of a pimp. Those children who do escape can take years or decades to recover from the trauma. Post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and lasting physical injuries are just some of the challenges victims can face as they attempt to rebuild their lives. Some never recover.

All of this is nothing more than a business to the traffickers, who enrich