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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Righteous God, lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Set our lawmakers on safe paths, protecting them from dangers seen and unseen. Preserve them and their loved ones, doing for them more than they can ask or imagine. Provide our Senators with counsel even in the night seasons, that they may prevail against the evil forces that seek to destroy our Nation and world. As they trust Your loving kindness, may their hearts rejoice in Your salvation. Lord, deal bountifully with them and the members of their staffs.

We pray in Your marvelous 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. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

EVERY CHILD ACHIEVES ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the pundits told us it would never happen. Republicans and Democrats will never agree on a way to replace No Child Left Behind, they said. But a new Senate that is back to work is proving them wrong. We are poised to pass bipartisan

legislation that will replace an education law that no longer works with significant education reforms that will work.

It is a bipartisan bill that would take decisionmaking power away from distant Federal bureaucrats and empower parents, teachers, States, and school boards instead. It is a bipartisan bill that would end the practice of States being coerced into adopting measures such as Common Core. It is a bipartisan bill that would substitute one-size-fits-all Washington mandates for greater State and local flexibility.

Because the needs of a student in Kentucky aren't likely to be the same as the needs of a student in Montana or California, this is a bill that would clear the way for educational standards and programs to be designed with the needs of local students in mind. In short, the Every Child Achieves Act is aimed at helping students succeed instead of helping Washington grow.

I urge colleagues to join me in passing it soon. That would be a big achievement for our kids, and it would be another reminder of what is possible in a Senate that is back to work for the American people.

After all, what did our constituents see in this debate? They saw Senators they sent to Washington, regardless of party, having their voices heard. They saw Senators working across the aisle. They saw Senators of both parties offering amendment after amendment and then voting to adopt many of them.

On this bill alone, the new Senate has already taken rollcall votes on 17 amendments. We expect to take up to 6 more today. Just to put that in perspective, the new Senate will have taken more amendment rollcall votes on this single bill alone than the old Senate took all of last year on all bills combined. That is something we should all want to celebrate because it means the voices of the American people are being heard again here in the Senate.

So I want to thank the senior Senators from Tennessee and Washington for all of their hard work on this bill. Their continued dedication helped to lead us to the point where we are today.

I also want to acknowledge the efforts of the House of Representatives on this issue. The Republican-led House passed legislation to address this issue the past few years, but the old Senate did not act. This year the Senate, under new management, is poised to finally do its job. We look forward to going to conference with the House on this issue.

But first, we must pass the bill before us. So let's keep the productive momentum going. Let's pass this bill, and let's replace No Child Left Behind once and for all.

After all, we have already seen how States such as Kentucky have been able to achieve more success by obtaining just a limited amount of flexibility from the current law via conditional waivers. Just imagine what Kentucky and other States can achieve when fully empowered to do what is right for their students.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Now, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to H.R. 22 occur at 2:15 p.m. on Tuesday, July 21.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE HIGHWAY BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, let me just say to all Senators that we are making progress on the highway bill, and we are setting the vote for next Tuesday to allow the bipartisan supporters of a longer term bill a couple of days to complete the draft substitute.

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



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Chairman INHOFE, Senator BOXER, and a bipartisan group of Senators are working out the final language. I want to thank them for their efforts, and I hope we will find a way to go forward on a multiyear, paid-for highway bill.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

A COOPERATIVE MINORITY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I commend Senators MURRAY and ALEXANDER for their good work on this education bill. But I want the record to be spread with this. The bill is passing this Congress because we have had a constructive minority during this Congress.

Senator Harkin, who was chair of that committee, had indicated—and I said this on the Record last week—that on two separate occasions they reported the bill out of the education committee, but it was filibustered and never got to the floor.

So I understand why my friend the Republican leader is beating his chest about how great the Senate works, because it does work if you have a cooperative minority, and that is what we have done. We have worked very hard to try to get this done, and as a result of our work together, we have been able to get it done. But please save everyone the lack of history. My friend keeps bringing up: Boy, the Senate is working so well. It is very cynical what my friends did in stopping everything for the last 4 years. They stopped everything. Hundreds of times they stopped bills from moving to the floor. So my friend comes to the floor and says: Oh man, things are working so great now. Isn't it great the Senate is working?

Cynical as it was, the Republicans had a plan, and that was to oppose everything. We had a Democratic President, we had a Democratic Senate, and if they opposed everything, it would work out great for them, and it did. It wasn't good for the country, but they are now in the majority. Now, how long they stay there remains to be seen.

If you look at the poll numbers about how well my friend is doing, the Republican leader is not doing very well, with the lowest numbers since they started doing polling on leaders—Democratic or Republican leaders.

So we will continue to cooperate when we can. The highway bill is coming up, and I hope we can work together to get something done on that. It is something that is long overdue. We have tried to get that done in the past, but we had Republican objections on everything we tried.

We have had 33 short-term extensions on the highway bill—33. We used to do them as a matter of routine every 5 years. But that isn't the way it is any longer. But we are going to cooperate as much as we can on the highway bill and everything else.

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

Mr. REID. Mr. President, prior to leaving the floor, I want to talk about another subject that is extremely important.

One of the sad things that has happened the last few months is that Republicans have brought to a standstill—and that is even an understatement to say that—the Export-Import Bank. It is now gone. Legislation was not passed. So something we have always done in the past routinely—reauthorized this bill—we have not done so this time. The Republicans have stopped it. It is gone. The Export-Import Bank is gone.

Our ability to sell to other countries our products has been seriously overwhelmed. It is so sad. And it really is sad. Other countries have these export-import banks. There is some mindset from my Republican friends that we can't do anything that government is involved in. But if we are going to be competitive in the world, we have to have a program such as the Export-Import Bank. It has been around for a long time and has been very successful. If we don't do this, for example, the airplanes we build in the State of Washington will actually come to a screeching halt. They can sell to America but not to other countries.

Now, am I making all this up? No. In fact, other countries have these banks. Is it one or two countries? No, it is scores of countries—scores of countries. I will take a minute or two to read the names of the countries that have working export-import banks to help their businesses and workers compete globally: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan.

Every one of these countries has a working export-import bank. Why do they have them? Because they want to be competitive. Whatever they are able to sell to a foreign country—whether a bag of wheat or some kind of product they manufacture—they want to be able to help their local businesses sell to foreign countries—but not the United States. And we are really hurting.

I can't imagine—I can't imagine—how the Republicans, whose support for business-oriented operations we thought over the years their interest was in helping business—has just turned a blind eye. They are not interested in helping business any more. Why? Because these working Export-Import Banks are government operations. Does it cost the Federal Government of the United States money?

Of course not. We have received \$7 billion back in rewards that goes to our Treasury. We make money on the deal.

So I would say to my friend who believes the Senate is working well, I wish somebody would say to my Republican friends, you know, every small business organization supports the Export-Import Bank. The chamber of commerce is not an organization that is out beating the drums for Democrats, but they are running ads all over America saying: Republicans, do something about this. Huge companies like Boeing—there are hundreds of thousands of jobs at Boeing—are dependent on being able to export those big airplanes.

As a result of Republicans' nonaction and not reauthorizing this important piece of legislation—before this collapse of the Bank took place, there were 165,000 Americans working in jobs related to the Export-Import Bank. I don't know how many there are today, but I guarantee there are not 165,000. Each day that goes by, others lose their jobs. Little companies from the State of Nevada are calling me and saying: We have to have this. We are going to go out of business.

The bad feeling my Republican friends have for anything dealing with the government so that they do stuff like this—it is hard to explain to anybody why they would do something like this.

Every one of these countries has programs. I have read their names into the RECORD. I think it is just a shame what has happened with this wonderful institution that is so good for creating jobs for America.

If the Presiding Officer would announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

EVERY CHILD ACHIEVES ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1177, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1177) to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that every child achieves.

Pending:

Alexander/Murray amendment No. 2089, in the nature of a substitute.

Murray (for Peters) amendment No. 2095 (to amendment No. 2089), to allow local educational agencies to use parent and family engagement funds for financial literacy activities.

Murray (for Coons/Rubio) amendment No. 2243 (to amendment No. 2089), to authorize the establishment of American Dream Accounts.

Alexander (for Cruz/Lee) amendment No. 2180 (to amendment No. 2089), to provide for State-determined assessment and accountability systems.