



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 111th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 155

WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 2009

No. 10

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Almighty God, help of the ages past, hope for the years to come. Today, give our Senators special gifts of wisdom and understanding that they may uphold what is right and follow what is true. As they pursue Your purposes, make them instruments of justice and peace who foster mutual understanding and cooperative endeavors. Lord, help them to remember that our times are in Your Hands, for You are the light that never fails and the life that never ends. In all their relationships, private and public, lead them in the paths of righteousness, for Your Name's sake. Daily renew in them a sense of joy.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable SHELDON WHITEHOUSE 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. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U. S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 16, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable SHELDON WHITEHOUSE,

a Senator from the State of Rhode Island, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE 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, today the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each. Senator SALAZAR will be recognized to speak up to whatever time he wishes to take.

At 11 o'clock today, Senator-appointee TED KAUFMAN, will become a Senator, replacing Vice President-elect BIDEN, from the State of Delaware.

There will be no rollcall votes today. When the Senate convenes on Tuesday afternoon after the inauguration, we hope to clear a number of President Obama's nominations, but we do not expect any rollcall votes. If any nominations require votes, we will schedule them for the next day.

Yesterday, we were able to adopt the motion to proceed to the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. We have one amendment pending to the bill. Additional amendments are expected to be offered and debated. We hope to finish the bill on Wednesday.

I have spoken to a number of Senators, both on the Democratic side and Republican side. We are not encouraging amendments, but certainly we are not discouraging amendments. As to anyone who cares to offer an amendment, they should be prepared to do that. We asked for people to be ready to offer some today, and we did not

have any takers. But we would hope Wednesday people would be here bright and early to start offering amendments. There will be rollcall votes on Wednesday.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR KEN SALAZAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in a few minutes, Senator SALAZAR will rise to give his final speech on the floor of the Senate. Parting is with such sweet sorrow. I have such great respect for this man we call KEN SALAZAR.

I spoke yesterday regarding Senator BIDEN, who will become Vice President of the United States next Tuesday. I also spoke about Senator CLINTON who, after her confirmation, will become Secretary of State. The accomplishments of Senators BIDEN and CLINTON are well known—two great Americans. The accomplishments and life of KEN SALAZAR are less known but no less remarkable; in fact, in most instances more remarkable.

KENNETH LEE SALAZAR is a fifth-generation Coloradan and a twelfth-generation American. His family is a remarkable story about what America is all about. His family settled in New Mexico 400 years ago and moved to Colorado's San Luis Valley in the middle of the 19th century, claiming some of the region's first water rights.

KEN SALAZAR grew up farming and ranching the same Colorado land his ancestors had for hundreds of years. This is real rural America, 300 miles from Denver. The ranch did not have electricity until 1982—no telephone, no television. Senator SALAZAR and his seven brothers and sisters were born to two American patriots. His mom Emma traveled to Washington by herself as a 19-year-old girl to do her thing in World War II. She went to work in the War Department here in Washington, DC, while KEN's father Henry joined the military and became a staff sergeant. He was so proud of that service in the military that he asked, when

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



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he passed away, to be buried in his staff sergeant uniform; his family complied with that.

Although Emma and Henry were not educated in the true sense of the word by having gone to colleges and universities, their love of education was so strong that all eight of the SALAZAR children have college educations, and some such as KEN, of course, have gone on to graduate from law school and other such things.

KEN SALAZAR farmed for more than 30 years; and he and his lovely wife Hope—who is such a nice, strong person—owned a number of businesses in Colorado. As I recall, I think one of them was a Dairy Queen and I think maybe a couple radio stations.

I had the good fortune of traveling to South America with Hope and KEN, and it was a remarkable trip—Bolivia, Peru, Machu Picchu. It was a wonderful trip, something I will always remember.

But later, after having practiced water and environmental law to protect the health of Coloradans and the beauty of that State—and anyone who has ever been to Colorado knows it is one of the great national treasures we have in our country. It is a beautiful State. But I think what I have learned about the Salazars, and KEN especially, is that if you look at their family, you learn a lot about them. They are a great American family.

When KEN decided to run for the Colorado State attorney general's office, his father Henry was with him all the time. In fact, he had a pickup truck, and he traveled the State with his son. All 64 counties in Colorado they visited. Senator SALAZAR did not do that just once, he has done it many times.

Henry Salazar was not alive long enough to see KEN elected to the Senate, but I can say with certainty that as proud as he was of his son already, his pride would overflow for the Senator who is going to become now a member of President Obama's Cabinet.

That election in 2004 was dramatic. All over the country, we Democrats were hoping to pick up seats. We lost just about everything, except Illinois and Colorado. Two great Senators, two great Americans were elected that year as Democrats: Barack Obama and KEN SALAZAR.

KEN's mother Emma, who is now almost 88 years old, is surely just as proud as her husband Henry was of her son, who will now serve this country as a Cabinet Secretary.

Senator SALAZAR's election, as I have indicated, was one of the few bright spots of 2004, a year that saw us defeated in the Presidential election and all the close congressional races.

Expectations were high for the new Senator from Colorado, and KEN SALAZAR met and exceeded every one of the expectations. While in the Senate, Senator SALAZAR has been a champion for a new defense and foreign policy that keeps us safe, restores our authority in the world, and honors the coura-

geous service of our men and women in uniform. He has helped lead the fight for affordable health care, and to help broaden the State Children's Health Insurance Program. He serves on the Senate Energy Committee, Finance Committee, and Agriculture Committee, and these are tremendous assignments that he received as a young Senator.

He has done so well as a Senator in so many different capacities: as an advocate for clean, affordable, and renewable energy and for protecting our environment and natural resources.

Coloradans have rightly come to love KEN SALAZAR. He is now going to bring this remarkable experience and wisdom, as he leaves the Senate, upon confirmation, to begin a new adventure as President Obama's Secretary of the Interior.

All of us feel his time in the Senate is far too short, but I know his upcoming service to our Nation will in no way take away from the legacy he has left in the Senate. After having served as a Cabinet officer, it will be enhanced. His new role will enhance that.

Senator SALAZAR has a keen understanding of life and of the environmental concerns and needs of Western States such as Colorado and Nevada. He will be a great advocate for the people of both our States and the whole West and our country.

Barack Obama's Cabinet selections have been one of his most approved adventures in Government in a long time: Republicans, Democrats, Independents. I think his appointments to the Cabinet have been so significant. None has been more significant than KEN SALAZAR. To take this great Senator and convince him to be a Cabinet officer says it all. It shows how remarkable both Obama and SALAZAR are; classmates who came here together in 2004.

The most important attribute I have found about KEN SALAZAR, this relatively new Senator, was his ability to be a peacemaker, to reach out and bring us together. He was new here when we were going through the battle dealing with the nuclear option. But he stepped right in, understood what our Constitution was all about, why it was so important that matter be settled, and he was one of the leading advocates of working that out, which he did.

Immigration, a difficult issue. Who, of course, was the leader on that? KEN SALAZAR. Because he wanted a program that was comprehensive and fair to all sides.

As everyone knows, we had a situation with Senator LIEBERMAN that was a unique situation, and it needed to be resolved. Who did that? KEN SALAZAR. KEN SALAZAR wrote in hand the resolution. He is the one who talked to Democrats and Republicans, recognizing we were headed in the right direction.

So he is a peacemaker, not bound by labels but only by his own integrity.

Much of that integrity and moral grounding comes from his faith, which I have heard him discuss in personal conversations with me, downstairs every Wednesday with our Prayer Breakfast, and other places.

I have seen tears well up in his eyes as he talks about the beautiful mountains that surround his home in southern Colorado.

KEN tells the story of those mountains being named by a young priest who was dying. He wakes up delirious, with death close at hand, and looks out at those beautiful mountains, 14,000 foot mountain peaks, to see the Sun coming through those mountains. To the priest, they looked like the blood of Christ, and they were named "Sangre de Cristo," the Blood of Christ, Mountains.

Senator SALAZAR, your abiding faith, your moral grounding, your lifelong love of our country, and your family are treasures that I will never forget, and that will serve you well in years to come. Your colleagues are proud of you, proud of your accomplishments, grateful for your service, and excited for the problems you will solve and the progress you will make for all Americans.

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

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR KEN SALAZAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wanted to come out and join my good friend, the majority leader, in congratulating the Senator from Colorado upon his selection as Secretary of the Interior, but I must say I am kind of sorry to see it.

The first thing I said to Senator SALAZAR is, say it isn't so. I hated to see him leave the Senate. Even though he has been here a relatively short time, he has made an enormous number of friends, I think an incredible contribution to the institution and, of course, to his State as well. I think his passion for the issues the Interior Department deals with overcame what I would have hoped he would have concluded in the end was the right decision, which was to say no to the new President and stay in the Senate.

We hate to see him leave. We think he has been an extraordinarily outstanding and fine Member of this body. I wanted to join with the majority leader and say how much we appreciate his service and how much all of us look forward to continuing to work with him in the coming years in his new and important responsibility as Secretary of the Interior.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.