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

PRAYER
The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:
Let us pray.
Merciful God, the fountain of wisdom, as we witnessed what is euphemistically called collateral damage, we wrestled with what our eyes have seen, ears have heard, and hearts have felt.
Lord, some of us asked the question, When does the end justify the means? We reflected on Gandhi's words that “the end is inherent in the means.”
Lord, across time, You have shown us how peace following a war can be jeopardized because of the long-term consequences of how the war was fought.
Give our lawmakers the faith, wisdom, and courage for the living of these turbulent days.
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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME
The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS
The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024—Resumed

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 4366, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:
A bill (H.R. 4366) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

Pending:
Schumer (for Murray-Collins) amendment No. 1092, in the nature of a substitute.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER
The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). The majority leader is recognized.

MILITARY APPOINTMENTS
Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, so last night, I filed cloture on President Biden’s nominees to serve as Chief of Naval Operations and Chief of Staff to the Air Force, the remaining vacancies on the Joint Chiefs of Staff which we said we would fill. We will move on these critical military appointments soon here on the floor.

I also filed on the nomination of Lieutenant General Mahoney to be second in command of the U.S. Marine Corps. His appointment has become urgent because this weekend the Commandant of the Marines, Gen. Eric Smith, was unexpectedly hospitalized after a serious medical emergency. Now, normally, Lieutenant General Mahoney would have been able to immediately step in to temporarily serve as Commandant. But, unfortunately, because of the blanket holds of just one Senator, Senator TUBERVILLE, that cannot happen. The situation at the Marine Corps is precisely the kind of avoidable emergency that Senator TUBERVILLE has provoked through his reckless holds. Lieutenant General Mahoney is one of more than 300 nominees Senator TUBERVILLE is currently blocking. So while the Senate will proceed quickly to vote on Lieutenant General Mahoney’s nomination, these holds cannot and must not continue.

Yesterday, my colleague Senator REED, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, introduced a resolution that will allow the Senate to quickly confirm the nominations that are currently being blocked by the Senator from Alabama. The resolution will be referred to the Rules Committee; and when the time comes, I will bring it to the floor of the Senate for consideration.

We must—we absolutely must—ensure that our military is fully staffed and fully equipped to defend the American people, and it begins by confirming these vital nominations that are currently on hold. Every day that Senator TUBERVILLE continues his blanket holds, our military preparedness is degraded. Our military families—most of whom have served decades in the Armed Forces—suffer. Our military appointments risk being further ensnared in partisan politics. These nominees must be confirmed, and both parties should work together to make sure we fulfill our obligation to America’s servicemembers.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING
Mr. President, now on the minibus, for the information of Senators, today we will pass the first of three bipartisan appropriations bills: Agriculture, MILCON–VA, and T–HUD.

When these bills pass, they will be the only—I underscore—the only bipartisan appropriations bills that have passed either Chamber. These bills will make a huge difference for America’s farmers, for our infrastructure, for housing on our military bases, and for veterans. Bipartisanship isn’t easy. On the contrary, it is very difficult. But here in the Senate, we are making sure...
that the appropriations process is succeeding. I want to thank the good work of Chair MURRAY, Vice Chair COLLINS, and all the appropriators. Passing these appropriations bills today is not just terrific news for the country, but an affirmation that what I have said since the start of the year: The only way to get things done in a divided government is bipartisanship.

The House is going through a futile exercise in passing partisan appropriations bills that have no input or support from Democrats. They are going nowhere. The House ought to learn its lesson. The Speaker ought to understand that the 30 hard-right people should not be dictating what the entire House or the entire country does. Those bills are filled with poison pills. They break the agreement and cut below the agreement that we made when we wanted to avoid the debt from being not fulfilled, and they are nowhere.

On the other hand, the Senate has bipartisan bills. And that is the real difference here. Sooner or later, the House and the new Speaker will learn the lesson: If you don’t do it bipartisan, it ain’t getting done. The Senate has broken a strong model for how bipartisanship can work, even amidst the deep disagreement, and I thank my colleagues on both sides for their work on these bills.

**Artificial Intelligence**

Mr. President, now, we continue on our AI Insight Forums. Today, as leaders gather in London for the first AI summit, the Senate will hold our third and fourth bipartisan AI Insight Forums. This morning will be focused on the intersection of AI in the workforce. We will hear from a balanced group of leaders in labor, tech, civil rights, and business about both the opportunities and risks that AI presents to the American worker and to our economy.

Peered many people worry. Will I still have my job as AI kicks in? We want to make sure that we have guardrails that protect workers, not make the mistake that was done with globalization, where so many were thrown out of work through no fault of their own. And then this afternoon, we will discuss AI’s use in high-impact areas like finance, healthcare, law enforcement. We will focus especially on the potential bias AI technologies in these high-impact areas and how Congress can create guardrails to protect our civil rights in the age of AI.

The Senate is continuing to be all hands on deck when it comes to trying to pass legislation. Yesterday, the bipartisan AI gang—Senators ROUNDS, HEINRICHS, YOUNG, and I—had a great meeting with President Biden at the White House on AI. So we are making good progress, but we still have more to learn about AI. We want to move our legislative agenda. And the world is paying attention. There is a forum in London today where the Vice President will attend. And, inevitably, they will be looking. The whole world will be looking to the Senate to see whether and what kind of legislation we can pass. We will work hard to get the best possible bipartisan legislation done.

**Government Funding**

Mr. President, about the supplemental, on Monday, Speaker JOHNSON and House Republicans released a totally unserious and woefully inadequate package that omitted aid to Ukraine, omitted humanitarian assistance to Gaza, failed to address funding for the Indo-Pacific, and made funding for Israel conditional on hard-right, never-going-to-pass proposals. What a joke.

Yesterday afternoon, President Biden issued a veto threat on the GOP proposal, and it is no wonder why: It needlessly politicizes aid to Israel. It balloons the Federal deficit. Here the House is talking about we need to pay for, to reduce the deficit, and they put in a provision that actually increases the deficit. They don’t want their super-rich, megawealthy friends to be audited by the IRS like every other citizen.

As we know, when Trump was President, he almost exempted them from paying taxes because they paid $4,000 a year had a greater chance of being audited than someone making $4 million a year.

It is amazing that the main focus as the world is in crisis—in the Middle East, in Ukraine, in the Indo-Pacific, in our House Republicans are spending more time trying to further reduce taxes of those who don’t pay much tax at all. So I am so glad that President Biden issued a strong veto message. I urge every House Republican, every House Democrat, every Senate Member to read the President’s veto message. It is strong and well thought out.

He talks about politicizing aid to Israel, it ballooning the Federal deficit, and it addressing the national security threats America faces around the globe—particularly our need to help Ukraine, provide humanitarian aid to Gaza, and help in the Indo-Pacific.

So the House GOP proposal is not going anywhere. It is dead before it even is voted on. The Speaker should start over—this time without terrible, partisan poison pills; this time sitting down with Democrats and working this issue through.

Israel has suffered the worst terrorist attack in its history. It needs help. But House Republicans are asking a price for helping them by cutting off funding that holds rich tax cheats accountable. That ain’t happening. House. It ain’t happening.

Now, Speaker JOHNSON says that this supposed pay is needed because of his concern about the national debt; but as I mentioned, every independent estimate shows this partisan bill raises the deficit, by billions, by billions, by billions, what is the end of hypocrisy. It is not responsible. It is reckless. It is utterly baffling—baffling—that at a moment that demands maximum bipartisanship, when the country is in crisis and our friends in Israel and Ukraine are in crisis, that the House GOP is, instead, trying to pick an egregiously partisan fight over wealthy tax cheats.

Years back, both parties would have come together for the good of the country and the good of security in the world when crises like these happen. But the House GOP—continuing the reckless and inflexible kind of inability to get their act together—continues to do these kinds of things.

Their proposal is simply not a serious one. And, worse, it still wastes precious time at a moment when we need to help Israel, Ukraine, and lend humanitarian aid to Gaza ASAP.

All friends of Israel should loudly and clearly say that any move to make the United States-Israel relationship a partisan one, as the House is doing, is a move that hurts Israel. That is what they do, unfortunately: harming our partnership with Israel by politicizing their aid package. I urge Speaker JOHNSON: Quickly change course, Speaker JOHNSON, because this stunningly unserious proposal is not going to be the answer. It is not going anywhere. As I said: It is dead almost before it is born.

**Oil Industry Mergers**

Mr. President, the FTC letter that we sent this morning—and I think people should pay attention to this because this is a very serious issue. Last month, America’s two largest oil companies, ExxonMobil and Chevron, announced two of the largest oil acquisitions of the 21st century—in fact, some of the largest mergers in the history—in the whole history—of the United States. And where are these mergers occurring? In the heavily concentrated oil industry where the consumer has almost no say whatsoever.

These deals have all the hallmarks of harmful, anticompetitive effect. And if they are allowed to happen, Americans could see the consequences through higher prices at the pump. We are complaining, justifiably, that gas prices are too high, and these mergers inevitably will make the price even higher.

So today, I am leading a group of 22 Senators calling on the Federal Trade Commission to use the full powers of the FTC to investigate these mergers. In our letter, we say that if any anti-trust laws may be violated, the FTC should step in and act.

We broke up Standard Oil’s illegal monopoly in 1911. We are quickly getting back to that place. The FTC should also investigate whether it is time to break up today’s anticompetitive conglomerate. When America’s largest oil companies can just buy some of their largest competitors—here we have Exxon, the biggest oil company in America, buying the largest oil driller in the Permian Basin, which is the heart of our energy sector. When it is outrageous. When the largest companies can control the lion’s share of the supply chain, when they are able to act...
with little accountability, the result is a raw deal for American consumers, American workers, and the American economy.

And this isn’t speculation. We have seen this happen before. In the 1990s, there were 2,600 mergers across the petroleum industry. The number of major oil companies was cut in half. I will never forget the day. This was a Democratic President. President Clinton, unfortunately, allowed the merger between Exxon and Mobil—two of the companies. I opposed it at the time. The result of these mergers and lax accountability was market manipulation, an unstable supply, and, ultimately, price hikes for Americans.

Well, why repeat that mistake? We cannot allow it.

With ExxonMobil’s merger with Pioneer and Chevron’s merger with Hess, we are seeing history repeat itself. More consolidation and less competition can only be good for the shareholders and the big oil company execs, but it ain’t good for America, and it certainly ain’t good for the consumer, who will inevitably pay more for gas, oil, and so many other things.

There is something deeply wrong about seeing the largest oil and gas companies in the world manipulate their way to higher profits as Americans are struggling at the pump. Last year alone, the world’s five largest oil companies saw record profits—$219 billion—more than double the profits of 2021.

And where did the profits go? Did they translate to lower prices for Americans? Did the companies invest in worker productivity or in finding new, clean energy sources? No. The soaring profits fueled soaring stock buybacks. Americans, meanwhile, saw higher prices every time they filled up the tank.

And one other point about these mergers: At one point, the big oil companies said: Hmm, we understand that with ExxonMobil's merger with Pione...
Yesterday, Senator Cruz and Senator Barrasso both shared an encounter they witnessed on the border, over the weekend of a 10-year-old girl and a man claiming to be her father. They described the terror on the girl's face as she was held by the administration's family unit loophole to cut the line at the border. As Senator Cruz put it, "the cartels are renting children to grown men."

The crisis that has unfolded on President Biden's watch is inhumane and dangerous. Fiscal year 2022 was the deadliest year on record at the southern border, and fiscal year 2023 set an all-time record for terror watchlist encounters. We are watching a humanitarian crisis that has become a glaring national security vulnerability.

The solution is pretty clear. The solution isn't billions of dollars to make it easier and faster to process illegal immigrants or "money for a welcome wagon," as Senator Barrasso put it yesterday. A solution is a clear and commonsense policy that forces the Biden administration to enforce the law and treat the border with the legal consequences that it demands.

So I am grateful to my Republican colleagues who've been working hard on a policy proposal to deliver actual border security and drawing on ideas put forward by Senator Lankford, Senator Cruz, Senator Grassley, and others.

Washington Democrats have proved that their border supplemental request is just more of the same. It is time to wake up and embrace policy changes that will keep Americans safe.

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.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, we recently learned that fiscal year 2023 set a new record for the number of illegal immigrants apprehended at the southern border—the third record-breaking year of illegal immigration under the Biden administration.

First, fiscal year 2021 set an all-time record. Fiscal year 2022 broke that record. And, now, fiscal year 2023 has broken that record. In other words, we have had 3 straight years of the Biden border crisis getting worse and worse and worse.

Since the President took office, more than 6.2 million individuals have been caught attempting to illegally cross our southern border—6.2 million. If every one of those individuals lived in one city, it would be the second largest in the United States.

I don't need to tell anyone that the kind of unchecked illegal immigration we are experiencing represents a serious security threat.

The Department of Homeland Security recently noted in its 2024 threat assessment:

Terrorists and criminal actors may exploit the elevated flow of migration and increasingly complex security environment to enter the United States, potentially prompting vicious attacks.

And by all indications, bad actors are, in fact, taking advantage of the chaos at the border to try and enter the United States. During fiscal year 2023 alone, 169 individuals on the Terrorist Watchlist were caught attempting to illegally cross our southern border—169 on the Terrorist Watchlist. Those are the ones they apprehended. That is more than in the previous 6 years combined.

The head of the Border Patrol recently said that his Agency is arresting an average of more than 47 people per day who have "serious criminal histories"—more than 47 people per day with serious criminal histories. Those are just the individuals who are being caught.

Since January 2021, when President Biden took office, there have been more than 1.7 million known "got-aways." Those are individuals the Border Patrol saw but was unable to apprehend. We can only imagine the number of unknown "got-aways" who have snuck into the country.

How many of those individuals have "serious criminal histories" or hail from hostile countries? We just don't know, but we can be pretty confident that among those "got-aways" are dangerous individuals who should not be entering our country.

This is a serious issue, and we need a serious course correction from this administration.

Vice President Harris, who is in charge of overseeing border policies for this administration, recently told "60 Minutes" that "we need a safe, orderly, and humane border policy." This has been the purported goal of the Biden administration for almost 3 years now, but the administration has been failing on all three counts.

The current crisis we are experiencing is a predictable result of the Biden administration's decisions. Before the President took office, his team was warned of the possibility of a migrant surge. Yet the moment the President took office, he set about dismantling the immigration policies of his predecessor and weakening our border's security, and the result has been, as I said, 3 successive years of record-breaking illegal immigration.

While the Biden administration has finally started to, at least halfheartedly, acknowledge our Nation's border crisis and put in place policies attempting to encourage legal migration and penalize illegal border crossings. the changes are insufficient—far too little, far too late—or, as one columnist recently put it in the Washington Post, "The Biden administration's various efforts have amounted to Band-Aids on a massive, open wound."

The President's recent supplemental funding request has not left me hopeful that the administration is suddenly going to become more effective. Potentially billions of dollars in reimbursements for blue states struggling to house illegal immigrants won't do a single thing to solve the crisis we are facing at the border.

While the President's proposal does include some funding that would actually go toward security, funding alone is simply not enough. We need meaningful policy changes that will, for starters, end the rampant abuse of our asylum system and sweeping parole designations.

Senators Graham, Lankford, and Cotton, among several others, are working hard to craft a set of changes to our asylum and parole policies that would stem the flow at our southern border. These changes would address obvious flaws in President Biden's immigration policies and make tangible progress toward getting our border crisis under control.

Recent events have underscored the importance of national security, and a porous southern border is a huge—huge—vulnerability when it comes to national security.

Senate Republicans are committed to putting policies in place at the border that will keep Americans safe, and I hope that, in the days and weeks to come, Senate Democrats will join us to make securing our border a priority.

Mr. SANDERS. I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Hickenlooper). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, the situation in Gaza today is a disaster. Congress must take action. The administration must take action. The world must take action.

Today, 3 weeks after Hamas's barbaric attack against civilians in Israel, we have begun this war, many hundreds of thousands of innocent men, women, and children in Gaza are on the brink. Over the past 3 weeks, it is estimated that some 8,000 people in Gaza have been killed in bombings, including more than 3,000 children, and far more have been wounded.

More than a million people in Gaza have been displaced from their homes, and some 670,000 are sheltering in U.N. installations, where they are down to 1 liter of water per person per day. They lack sufficient food, water, medical supplies, or fuel. The hospitals and medical facilities there are in nightmarish conditions, with hundreds of
babies in incubators and patients on life support at risk of death should the generators that sustain them run out of fuel. Corridors are lined with injured and displaced people, and overwhelmed doctors must turn patients away or operate without anesthesia or antibiotics.

The humanitarian crisis is dire and getting worse by the minute. There must be a humanitarian pause now so that sufficient supplies—food, water, medicine, fuel—can reach the people of Gaza. If not, thousands more will die needlessly. We cannot allow that to happen. A stop to the bombing is critical to save innocent lives and secure the safe return of hostages.

Let us never forget the lives of all children—all people—are sacred, whether they are Palestinian children, Israeli children, or American children, and we must do everything we can to protect them. But if we are going to make any real progress in addressing this conflict, the current situation between Israel and Hamas—there have been five wars in the last 15 years—we need to understand somewhat as to how we got to where we are today. If peace is to come to that troubled region and if the Palestinian people are ever going to be able to enjoy lives of security and dignity, there must be a vision of where we go in the future.

So, let us be clear, the living conditions in Gaza before October 7 were horrific and inhumane, and that is before Hamas ignited the latest war. Before this conflict, in Gaza, nearly 80 percent of people there lived in poverty, and two-thirds were reliant on humanitarian assistance. Almost half the population and over 70 percent of young people were unemployed in Gaza. What kind of life could they look forward to? Electricity there was intermittent, with 11- to 12-hour blackouts every day. Water and sanitation systems were inadequate, and there were constant shortages of all basic necessities.

Gaza was mostly cut off from the world, with Israel and Egypt severely limiting the number of people and types of goods that could go in or out. In fact, many observers described Gaza as “an open-air prison”—and all of that is before October 7.

If we are serious about bringing freedom and dignity to the Palestinian people, a situation that has never been allowed to be returned to. The Palestinian people are entitled to much more than that.

In Gaza, Hamas, an authoritarian terrorist organization, ruled by force, stockpiling arms and war matériel, taxing the desperately poor population, and stealing resources to build tunnels and rockets. Make no mistake about it, Hamas is a terrorist organization bent on the destruction of Israel, and long before this horrific attack, they had killed innocent people, including Americans. They advance a fundamentalist ideology which treats women as inferior, second-class citizens and which threatens to kill people who are gay.

Hamas is an authoritarian nightmare, repressing dissent and stealing from Gazans not just many materials of life but the dream of a better future. And that was the situation before October 7.

And what was going on in Israel before Hamas’s terrorist attack? What was going on there? That country had the most rightwing government in its history, a government of history’s most rightwing racists who consistently dehumanized the Palestinian population. Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, was under indictment for a litany of corruption charges, and many believe that Israel’s intelligence—or lack of intelligence—on October 7 had everything to do with his government’s preoccupation with his political problems.

Before the war, this rightwing Israeli Government had systematically undermined efforts at peace. Netanyahu and his extreme partners in the Cabinet had worked to marginalize Palestinian voices committed to peace, pursued settlement policies designed to foreclose the possibility of a two-state solution, diverted development in Palestinian areas, and passed laws that entrenched systemic inequality between Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel.

This last year saw record Israeli settlement activity in the West Bank, where more than 700,000 Israelis now live in areas the United Nations and United States agree are occupied territories. Despite that, the Israeli Government authorized thousands of new homes for settlers and opened up new areas to construction, while bulldozing thousands of Palestinian homes and schools and further restricting Palestinian movement.

Legal experts agree, these policies constituted more than illegal annexation. All of these policies and more greatly increased tension in the West Bank. Before October 7, 179 Palestinians had been killed in 2023—199 Palestinians in the West Bank—which made it the deadliest year in two decades. Since October 7, 121 more Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank, including some by settlers.

These tensions were part of why so much of the IDF, the Israeli Defense Forces, was deployed in the West Bank rather than Gaza itself.

And then came October 7 and Hamas’s atrocities that began this latest and horrific war. The Hamas attack was unspeakable. Over 1,300 innocent men, women, and children in Israel were killed, over 200 Israelis and Americans taken hostage, including young children and grandparents. Young people were gunned down in cold blood at a music festival, babies and older people brutally murdered in their homes.

And yet, let us remember that Hamas did not primarily target the military—no. They intentionally targeted civilians. Their goal was to kill civilians. Their attack was designed to provoke a response, and in that they succeeded.

Many Israelis are now understandably furious, and they want to strike back forcefully. I think we can all understand that. But rage and revenge do not make useful policy. And here in the United States, after the attack on 9/11 in this country, we acted with rage and revenge, and I think many people now understand that that was a horrific mistake.

Many innocent Palestinian women and children in Gaza will not bring back to life the innocent Israeli women and children who have been killed by Hamas. Like any other country, Israel has the right to defend itself and destroy Hamas terrorism, but it does not have the right to kill thousands of innocent men, women, and children in Gaza.

Israel does not have the right to end the lives of millions of Palestinians—half of whom are children—by shutting off water, food, fuel, and electricity. That type of action against a helpless and impoverished population is morally unacceptable and in violation of international law.

Israel does not have the right to bomb an entire neighborhood to target one Hamas leader or installation, but that is what the Israeli Government is doing. One need only look at the satellite imagery and photography of Gaza to see that this is not a carefully calibrated campaign. These are surgical strikes.

Yesterday, Israel struck the densely populated Jabalia refugee camp and killed a Hamas commander, but they also killed some 50 other people and injured hundreds more, although the exact toll is not yet known. That was actually the fourth airstrike on that community. An October 9 airstrike killed 60, an October 19 airstrike killed 18, and an October 22 airstrike killed 30, according to outside researchers.

UNRWA reported yesterday that the head of security for the United Nations Relief Agency—their head of security was killed, along with his wife and eight children. In total, 67 United Nations Relief Agency workers have been killed, and 44 United Nations facilities have been damaged since October 7.

The current Israeli strategy must end. Israel must begin the process of restoring water and electrical services to areas where they are still operable. The American international community must also rush generators and solar capacity to Gazan medical facilities to address acute needs and reduce Israeli fears of diversion to Hamas.

Israel will not stop going after Hamas, but it must do it in a very different way, and additional pauses will be needed.

Let me conclude by saying that Israel must also begin the process of laying out a political strategy. It cannot bomb its way to a solution. Such a strategy must include as minimum first steps a clear promise that Palestinians displaced in the fighting will
have the absolute right to safely return to their homes; a commitment to broader peace talks to advance a two-state solution in the wake of this war; an abandonment of Israeli efforts to carve up and annex the West Bank; and a commitment—work with the Palestinian Authority to build genuine governing capacity.

The United States must make it clear that these are the conditions of our solidarity. Just as we want justice for the Israelis murdered by Hamas, we also want justice for the Palestinian people, and that is not going to happen with Hamas. Palestinians need a state of their own, contiguous, with the freedom of movement and access that can sustain a vibrant economy.

This will be a long and difficult road. It will take concerted U.S. and international support and a doubling down of our political commitment to a two-state solution. But the first step right now must be to stop the bombing and bring in as much humanitarian aid as possible.

I think Secretary Blinken said it well when he said:

Providing immediate aid and protection for Palestinian civilians in the conflict is a necessary precondition for finding partners in Gaza who have a different vision for the future than Hamas—and who are willing to help make it real.

This is a dreadful situation. It is part of a very, very long-term conflict between Israel and its neighbors. But the immediate crisis is to save lives, to stop the bombing, to bring forth a humanitarian pause, and then to go forward to bring peace and stability to the region.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

S.J. RES 42

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I rise today about a resolution to make it harder—well all students—to have access to school meals. I am referring to S.J. Res. 42. We deal with a lot of complex issues here every day. This is not a complex issue.

First, the Federal policy: the USDA memo clarifying that State agencies and programs participating in Federal school meal programs are required to abide by our Nation’s anti-discrimination laws. This means that they cannot deny access to kids on the basis of their religious or sexual orientation. In other words, schools may not deny lunch to LGBTQ+ kids.

Now, this isn’t some strange, new interpretation of the law that USDA came up with and announced out of the blue; this is the USDA implementing anti-discrimination laws that apply across government, in line with the Supreme Court’s reading. This is what the Republicans attempted to overturn with S.J. Res. 42.

Of course, S.J. Res. 42 was never really just about school lunches. The goal was to send a message to LGBTQ+ kids that they are not welcome, to send a message that it is OK to discriminate against these kids because of who they are. I want to be very clear. That is wrong. We proudly stand with LGBTQ+ kids.

Your rights matter. You are welcome at school.

The USDA guidance will help kids. It will also reduce discrimination and bring Agency guidance in line with Supreme Court precedent.

The USDA policy will also ensure that hungry kids get the food they need to do well in school. According to census data, LGBTQ+ individuals are almost twice as likely to live in a household that experiences food insecurity, and trans individuals are almost three times more likely not to have enough food to eat, as compared to cisgender individuals.

The last thing our kids need is adults behaving like classroom bullies and trying to justify taking away their lunches. I am glad the Senate rejected this resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

AMENDMENT NO. 1241

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President, I call up my amendment numbered 1241 and ask that it be reported by number, as I intend to withdraw the amendment shortly due to majority party mischief. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report by number.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Dakota [Mr. CRAMER], for himself and Mr. MANCHIN, proposes an amendment numbered 1241 to amendment No. 1092.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To prohibit the use of funds to finalize, implement, administer, or enforce the proposed rule of the Federal Highway Administration relating to greenhouse gas emissions performance measures)

In title I of division C, insert after section 127 the following:

SEC. 128. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to finalize, implement, administer, or enforce the proposed rule of the Federal Highway Administration relating to greenhouse gas emissions performance measures (title I of division C, insert after section 127 the following:)

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President, the Senate has been preaching regular order for some time, and I have been cheering them on. I have been a strong advocate for order because we need a process that engages all of the Members of this body. But one has to ask why my bipartisan, germane amendment is deemed a “poison pill” and now needs 60 votes to pass. Well, I know the answer. It is simple. Because it was going to pass. That is why suddenly it is a “poison pill.” Senate Democrats would rather provide the Biden administration cover by taking a show vote designed to fail than follow real regular order. The will of the Senate should prevail here, but they are not going to let it.

This appropriation limitation amendment would prevent the U.S. Department of Transportation from finalizing their illegal rule requiring States to measure CO2 tailpipe emissions and then set declining targets for individual States on their roadways.

Congress has not provided any authority for the Department of Transportation to dictate CO2 performance requirements. They can’t do what they don’t have the authority to do. And even if we had, it is not a workable solution. It may be hard for bureaucrats in Washington, DC, to imagine this, but we don’t have the authority to tell North Dakota and Montana that to reduce tailpipe emissions is easy. Just build a subway. Build a subway or dedicate bus lanes on your gravel roads. That is why a majority of the States in this country have submitted comments expressing their concern and opposing—outright opposing—this rule.

When the Environment and Public Works Committee negotiated the last highway bill, we expressly left this authority out. We made the decision to not give this authority to the Department of Transportation.

I would note that that bill moved out of committee unanimously and then became the cornerstone of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Ironically, the Biden administration created the “poison pill” that this amendment is meant to address.

I am not interested in show votes, so I am going to withdraw the amendment.

The administration should scrap this rule, but if they finalize it, I will be back. I will be back with a CRA resolution, and then Senate Democrats can’t force a 60-vote majority on that one, and I will lead an amicus brief pointing to the major questions doctrine, which the Department of Transportation clearly violates with their rule.

With that, I yield.

AMENDMENT NO. 1241 WITHDRAWN

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 1241) was withdrawn.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be up to 5 minutes of debate equally divided on Senate amendments Nos. 1217 and 1347.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 1347

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 1347 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report by number.
The legislative clerk read as follows: The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. PAUL] proposes an amendment numbered 1217 to amendment No. 1092.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require a full audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal Reserve banks by the Comptroller General of the United States—

(a) In general.—Notwithstanding section 714 of title 31, United States Code, or any other provision of law, the Comptroller General of the United States shall complete an audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks under subsection (b) of that section not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) Report.—

(1) In general.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the audit required pursuant to subsection (a) is completed, the Comptroller General of the United States—

(A) shall submit to Congress a report on the audit; and

(B) shall make the report described in subparagraph (A) available to the Speaker of the House, the majority and minority leaders of the House of Representatives, the majority and minority leaders of the Senate, the Chair and Ranking Member of the committee and each subcommittee of jurisdiction in the House of Representatives and the Senate and any other Member of Congress who requests the report.

(2) Contents.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include a detailed description of the findings and conclusions of the Comptroller General of the United States with respect to the audit that is the subject of the report, together with such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Comptroller General of the United States may determine to be appropriate.

(c) Repeal of certain limitations.—Subsection (b) of section 714 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking the second sentence.

(d) Technical and conforming amendments.—

(1) In general.—Section 714 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subsection (d)(3), by striking "or (f)" each place the term appears;

(B) in subsection (e), by striking "the third undesignated paragraph of section 13" and inserting "section 13(3)"; and

(C) by striking subsection (f).

(2) Federal reserve act.—Subsection (a) (relating to "Federal Reserve Transparency and Release of Information") of section 11 of the Federal Reserve Act (12 U.S.C. 241b) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (4)(A), by striking "has the same meaning as in section 714(f)(1)(A) of title 31, United States Code" and inserting "means program or facility, including any special purpose vehicle or other entity established by or on behalf of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System or a Federal reserve bank, authorized by the Board of Governors under section 13(3), that is not subject to audit under section 714(e) of title 31, United States Code";

(B) in paragraph (5)(A) by striking "or in section 714(f)(3)(C) of title 31, United States Code", the information described in paragraph (1) and information concerning the transactions described in section 714o of such title, and inserting "the information described in paragraph (1)"; and

(C) in paragraph (7), by striking "and section 13(3)(C), section 714(f)(3)(C) of title 31, United States Code, and" and inserting "section 13(3)(C), and".

Mr. PAUL. The Federal Reserve effectively controls the economy but without scrutiny. No other institution has so much unchecked power.

The Fed demonstrated its unlimited authority during the pandemic. The Fed printed money, purchased government-backed securities, and doled out massive amounts of money to favorite industries. The result added almost $5 trillion to the Fed’s balance sheet, the largest in our history.

When Dodd-Frank ordered a limited, one-time audit of Fed actions, the Government Accountability Office uncovered that during the financial crisis, the Fed doled out over $16 trillion to domestic and foreign banks. This kind of inflationary bailout should not be kept secret from the public.

While the Fed’s easy money policies make the rich richer, the side effect is high inflation. As Milton Friedman famously explained, "Inflation is taxation without legislation." Congress cannot control the Fed’s actions, but Fed actions can cost Americans dearly. Just ask any parent who has to feed his or her family during historically high inflation rates.

My amendment would require a full audit of the Fed within 1 year. It is time for the Federal Reserve to operate in a manner that is transparent and accountable to the taxpayers. I ask for a "yes" vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in opposition to the Paul amendment.

Members of both parties have always agreed an independent—underscore independent—central bank is critical to a functioning economy. Congress has put in place restrictions to shield the Fed’s monetary policy from political influence. This longstanding restriction ensures that the Fed isn’t subject to the whims of Congress, to the partisanship, to the nihilism—if I could say it—of inflationary bailout should not be kept secret from the public.

Whether it is threatening a default or a government shutdown, all too common because of dysfunction and chaos in the House of Representatives, whether it is a default or government shutdown, we have already seen how partisanship so negatively impacts people’s pocketbooks in the broader economy. We don’t need it here too.

This amendment would make the Fed less effective. It would open it up to all kinds of nefarious political pressure. Congress already requires that the Fed undergo regular review of their operations, of their programs, of their balance sheet, of their financial statements. The House of Representatives in the ways Congress holds the Fed accountable while avoiding dangerous political interference.

This amendment is irrelevant to what we are voting on today. It is yet another impediment to keeping our government open. It shouldn’t be partisan. It shouldn’t be political. Those antics should stay out of this debate.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on the Paul amendment.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1217

Mr. PAUL. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll. The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 46, nays 51, as follows:

[Roll Call Vote No. 280 Leg.]

YEAS—46

Baldwin
Barrasso
Blackburn
Boozman
Braun
Britt
Budd
Casper
Cassidy
Collins
Cox
Cotting
Cramer
Crapo
Cruz
Daines

NAYS—51

Bennet
Blumenthal
Booker
Brown
Brown
Cantwell
Cardin
Carper
Casey
Coons
Carter Masto
Duckworth
Durbin
Enzi
Gillibrand
Hassan
Heinrich

NOT VOTING—3

Lee
Scott (SC)
Tillis

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 46, the nays are 51.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to. The amendment (No. 1217) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

ORDER OF PROCEEDURE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, for the information of the Senate, starting at 2:30 p.m. today, the following amendments are expected to be filed pending: Cruz No. 1249 and Lee No. 1121. Upon disposition of the amendments, the Senate will vote on
adoption of the substitute amendment No. 1092, as amended, and on passage of H.R. 4366, as amended; further, that upon disposition of H.R. 4366, the Senate will vote on passage of H.R. 662, as amended, and that all previous provisions of the order from October 24 remain in effect.

So for the information of all Senators, there will be four rollovers beginning at 2:30 p.m. today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

AMENDMENT NO. 1347 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1092
(Purpose: To reduce the amounts appropriated in divisions B and C and to rescind amounts appropriated to the Internal Revenue Service.)

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I call up my amendment No. 1347 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. PAUL] proposes an amendment numbered 1347 to amendment No. 1092.

(The amendment is printed in today’s Record under “Text of Amendments.”)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be up to 4 minutes of debate, equally divided.

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, the national debt just recently surpassed $33 trillion. That is $290,000 per household. Unless we change course, the debt only increases.

CBO predicts trillion-dollar deficits as far as the eye can see. We borrow over $176,000,000 every hour, $3,000,000 is borrowed every minute, and $50,000,000 every second. It is out of control.

Net interest payments are anticipated to double, from $475 billion to a trillion dollars by fiscal year 2028. Interest will be the largest item of expenditure for the Federal Government.

Americans could pay dearly for Congress’s inability to say no to the welfare and warfare state. It could mean confiscatory tax rates, high inflation, and a weak economy. But it doesn’t have to be this way.

My amendment begins the path toward fiscal health by saving the taxpayers $30 billion. My amendment also cuts $25 billion that the Biden administration wants to use to sic the IRS on taxpayers to squirm them for even more money. That is a reduction of $5 billion for what the government is on track to spend.

I urge a “yes” vote on my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, we have a bipartisian package before us. This amendment that is being offered would slash funding supported unilaterally in our committee in the Ag and T-HUD bills—kicking women and kids off of WIC or gutting funding for our farmers and agricultural research, making our food supplies less safe; laying off air traffic controllers, leading to flight delays and cancellations; booting people from their homes as housing assistance would be cut off; eliminating resources for communities to invest in important local infrastructure needs and a lot more. This would be catastrophic.

The bills we are considering today have been carefully drafted. They are written to the spending levels that were set by the debt ceiling agreement that the House Republicans and the President agreed on. Congress passed it in July, so I urge my colleagues to vote no.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1347
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. PAUL. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted “nay.”

The result was announced—yeas 23, nays 74, as follows:

[Rollocall Vote No. 261 Leg.]

YEAS—23
Barraso
Blackburn
Braun
Coryn
Cotton
Crapo
 Cruz

NAYS—74
Baldwin
Bennet
Hagerty
Booker
Boozman
Boozman
Brown
Butler
Casswell
Capito
Cassidy
Casey
Cassidy
Collins
Cousins
Cortez Masto
Cramer
Daines
Duckworth
Durbin
Ernst
Eskowitz
Fischler
Gillibrand

Gillibrand
Lee
Mast
Paul
Risch
Rawley
Johnson
Lummis
Malin
Paul
Ricketts
Risch
Schumer
Schumer
Schumer
Sinema
Smith
Stabenow
Tester
Van Hollen
Warnock
Young

NOT VOTING—3
Lee
Scott (SC)
Tillis

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). On this vote, the yeas are 23, the nays are 74.

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is not agreed to.

The amendment (No. 1347) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING
Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I rise today to address one of an increasingly important moment in our Nation’s history, to discuss the national security issues that we are currently facing and the ways in which the U.S. Senate can address them.

Mr. President, over the past several weeks, I have repeatedly called for American leadership in support of our allies abroad and in support of the many challenges that we face here at home. Again, today, I renew that call for American leadership and continue to stress the urgency created by the trials at hand: from the vicious, horrific attacks on our allies in Israel by Hamas to Putin’s aggression we see in Ukraine. We must stand together against nuclear posturing to Iranian militias attacking our men and women overseas in uniform; and, of course, the increasing tensions that we see in the Indo-Pacific, where China continues to threaten stability and to pursue the largest military buildup since World War II.

We are currently living in times and are tasked in making decisions that will greatly shape the world in which we and the young people here today will be living in. Our Nation is being tested. Our resolve is being tested. And a country as powerful as ours needs to show strength, clarity, and control that only the United States of America can generate.

This is something I have addressed repeatedly with my constituents across West Virginia and something that I am confident they understand and agree with. The Mountain State is incredibly patriotic. We are very proud Americans. Pride in our country and a steadfast belief in the ideals and values that we stand for are invaluable, both now and in our future. I agree with my fellow West Virginians that this is the greatest country on Earth and that the title requires us to make critical investments in both our own national security and in the security of our allies, before it is too late.

It is imperative that Americans across this country recognize this and that we come together as our adversaries attempt to turn us against one another.

I am appreciative of the Biden administration for proposing a supplemental appropriations package that addresses key areas of concern that I have talked to, but those key areas of concern that we see across our country and around the world. That being said, the administration’s supplemental request needs to be recognized for what it is—a request. The Senate must and will have a say in how this is formulated. The Biden administration has not shown the strength it needs to during these challenging times.

We need to unabashedly stand with Israel. We need to responsibly support
Ukraine as they further deteriorate Putin’s military. They are getting back land that they lost. They are regaining it. We need to strengthen our allies and our own defense capabilities in the Indo-Pacific. And we may need to make strong changes to policies that, until now, have allowed our southern counter to remain in chaos for years now. Any response from the Senate must reflect these four categories because they are directly tied to what is in the best interest of our country and our national security.

Yesterday, I participated in a Senate Appropriations hearing to examine President Biden’s request. This was an important step. It allowed us to grow consensus as we move toward a supplemental that will be crafted by the Senate. I firmly believe that this was one of our most important Appropriations Committee hearings, and I congratulate the chair and the vice chair. This hearing highlighted how investments into the defense of Israel and Ukraine go a long way to strengthening our own defense capabilities and how the lack of deterrence and enforcement at our southern border is creating elevated threats to our national security.

The supplemental underscores the importance of responsible relief efforts that need to be included in a response from the Senate. It is critical that a Senate-crafted supplemental address all four areas that I have mentioned and that we provide the tools needed for our allies to win and to strengthen their own defense capabilities, at the same time, in the process.

Israel is currently under attack by Hamas and Hezbollah and terrorists who are supported by America’s most evil adversaries. American lives have been lost, and far too many innocent families have been left without a home and without their loved ones.

Ukraine is facing an unjust and unprovoked ground war, the likes of which we have not seen in generations—nor did we think we would see in this generation. Putin’s aggression creates dangers all around the globe. The Ukrainian military is decimating Russia’s military strength without putting one American troop in harm’s way.

Additionally, funding toward Ukraine goes straight into replenishing our own stockpiles with new and more advanced weapons. These are weapons that are made in the U.S.A., for the U.S.A., some of which are made in my home State of West Virginia.

Our Indo-Pacific allies remain on heightened alert. I saw this directly when I visited the region last summer. It is irresponsible to neglect the ties between the attacks on Israel, the war in Ukraine, and the security of Taiwan and the increasing aggression from China—and on our southern border, which remains in chaos.

President Biden’s policies have led to record numbers of illegal crossings, with an alarming amount of encounters with individuals on our own country’s Terrorist Watch List. I saw where Secretary Mayorkas testified yesterday that 600,000 “got-aways”—we don’t even count them in the over 2 million who were apprehended. This is 600,000 people who are believed to have entered our country without any interception at all. We don’t know who these people are.

We do not just need funding for a border wall; we need substantial changes in policy, as I said earlier, that will strengthen our security and protect our homeland. Hamas from the Gaza has been left under siege for far too long.

It is important that Congress and the American public recognize the importance of support across those four categories. The investments will support our own defense industrial base. It will increase the security of the United States. We will support our allies in their time of need, and, most importantly, we will keep U.S. servicemembers from fighting in these battles.

Each of these categories is in the direct line of nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Meanwhile, the United States is barely keeping up with modernizing our nuclear forces.

The report emphasized the need to grow our nuclear and conventional forces, not only in Israel but elsewhere, to expand our production capability, including our workforce, supply chain, and infrastructure.

As Senators, we regularly receive briefings and intelligence reports that clearly outline the threats we face. But there has been no effort to outline the threats we face from actors like Russia and China. I have often said that if the American people had access to more of this information themselves, they would better understand the nature and the severity of the threats we face. Investment in national security would move to the top of their priority list.

These events—the release of a disquieting defense report and the assault against our ally Israel—should serve as a wake-up call for the United States to support our allies as well as bolster our own defense systems amid the escalating global threats.

A few days after the heinous attacks on Israel, a bipartisan, bicameral congressional commission released its report on the strategic posture of the United States. This report, based on the consensus of respected national security experts from across the political spectrum, concluded that the United States will be woefully underprepared for the threats we are facing.

Our two peer nuclear adversaries, Russia and China, have dramatically expanded their nuclear forces over the decades. They continue to develop novel nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Meanwhile, the United States is barely keeping up with modernizing our nuclear forces.

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working with my colleagues to ensure that the supplemental includes these priorities.

We have been asleep to changes in the global threat environment for too long, and now is the time to wake up. It is time to get real about border security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, yesterday, the Senate Appropriations Committee heard from the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State about the administration’s request for supplemental appropriations. We heard about a wide range of threats to the national security and the national interests of the American people.

Now, I believe that we need to support Israel, our staunch ally. We see the Israelis fighting for their very existence. They need our help, and they need it now. I believe this includes not only military assistance but also humanitarian assistance. Various attacks have been launched at U.S. forces across the Middle East since October 7, and they have been launched at the behest of Iran—we know that—and we must make it clear to Iran that there are consequences for attacking U.S. forces.

In addition to support for Israel, I also recognize that we need to support Ukraine. We know from history that tyrants like Putin do not stop. They must be stopped, and as we support Ukraine, we need a strategy for victory to end this war, not to have a continued stalemate. Ukraine does not want the war to drag on, and neither do we. So I will continue to press the Defense Department, as I did yesterday with the Secretary of Defense, to ensure that we are on a path to win, that Ukraine is on a path to win and end the conflict, not to have an ongoing war.

So we need to support Israel, and we need to support Ukraine. But at the same time, enhancing our national security means we also need to secure the homeland, and that means securing our southern border.

Border security is national security—I will repeat that: Border security is national security. But this administration, the Biden administration, does not have a plan in place to secure the border. They are doing just the opposite. We have an open border—an open border at a time when we are concerned about attacks from terrorists.

Last month, we had a record 270,000 illegal encounters at the southern border. Last year, we had 2.5 million illegal encounters—a record. That includes 108 individuals who are on the Terrorist Watchlist. I am sure our adversaries are very much aware of this vulnerability.

The supplemental calls for funding to support ‘border security.’ This administration’s definition of ‘border security’ in processing migrants who come across the southern border and then providing them with housing, transportation, and other services once they enter the United States. That will only encourage more illegal immigration when we should be making every effort to get the border under control.

The keys to securing the border and stopping the illegal crossings at our southern border are simple, and we know what they are. The solutions are there, but the administration won’t apply them. And we know—we are not guessing at this—because the last administration put these in place, and they worked. They are reinstating the Migrant Protection Protocol, the ‘Remain in Mexico’ policy, and enforcing the safe third country agreements. They work. We know they work. We have seen them work. The Biden administration has those tools, but they won’t use them. They won’t enforce the law. As a result, we have an open border, with 270,000 illegal encounters last month, 2.5 million last year, and 169 people encountered who are on the Terrorist Watchlist.

How many people who are on the Terrorist Watchlist whom we don’t know about—the ‘got-aways’—at a time when we are worried about the possibility of there being a terrorist attack in our country? What is going on? As we hear about the construction of the border wall so that the CBP can truly control this border. It is way past time to get this done. These are the things that, I think, must be included as we consider this funding. If we are going to be as secure as well. If we are talking national security, we have to recognize that border security is a vital part of national security, and that must be part of what we include as we consider this funding. Again, I emphasize that border security is national security.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Ms. ROSEN. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, we heard yesterday the Senator from North Dakota talking about the imperative of ensuring that our borders are secure, particularly at the southern border.

We had an opportunity yesterday in the Senate Appropriations Committee to hear from Secretary Austin and Secretary Blinken about the administration’s supplemental funding request. If there were one common thread there that was underscored over and over, it was that we must abandon our allies, our allies who are locked, really, in two existential wars that threaten both their sovereignty and their people. So the support for Israel and the support for Ukraine, in my view, is one that I share with the two senators; that we must inextricably linked and our support for both must be inextricably linked.

We have all watched with horror as Hamas has unleashed the terrorist attacks on civilians, killing more than 1,400 Israelites and taking at least 240 Israeli civilians hostage; then in Ukraine, with Russia’s brutal invasion of Ukraine homeland killing over 70,000 Ukrainians in just a hellbent mission to reclaim their old Soviet territory.

It is times like this when I think we look to the role that the United States should be playing. We are not—no, we are not there as the police force for the world. We are not there to fight the wars for others. But when the world is watching democracy face direct assaults from terrorists and from authoritarian regimes, this is the time that the United States must be leading from the front. This administration put these tools in place, and we have a responsibility to the world at large, whether that is providing humanitarian aid, promoting stability, or lending support through the most powerful military in the world.

This is the United States. These are responsibilities that, I think, are significant, and, again, others from around the world look to us for that leadership.

Now, there are some who would suggest that we have supported Ukraine enough; that we should move and direct our attention only to our borders; that the situation in Israel is such that we should focus exclusively there. As we heard yesterday in the Appropriations hearing, we do not have the luxury of dealing with one crisis at a time. That would certainly make things easier, but we do not have that.

So to those who would suggest that we should abandon our allies, I would remind them that this defense spending comes right back to the United States through our own defense industrial base, providing an opportunity to refresh outdated war-readiness items, making the United States stronger in return as well as providing jobs to Americans. So this is not just about providing aid to others outside our borders. This is also helping to strengthen us.

There was a comment that I had read: The United States can lead through the power of example; but in order to be most effective, we need the example of our power.

It is that industrial base that we know we have work to do there. Then, to those who say we need to be looking at home—again, as the Senator from North Dakota mentioned—we do. We must pay attention to those who would threaten us from within. We cannot ever, ever lose sight of that obligation and the responsibility; but I think it is important to recognize that this supplemental request does include support for our Department of Homeland Security to strengthen our border. It also provides over $1 billion toward combating fentanyl—just the devastating drug that has taken the lives of far, far, far too many Americans. So that also must be part of this effort to ensure we have a responsible and effective defense industrial base.
that chair that you are sitting in sta-
ble. You have got four pillars here. One
essential imperative: We must be there
to support our friends in Israel. We
must be there. An imperative is to con-
tinue our support for Ukraine. We must
address our southern border—an abso-
late imperative. Then that fourth un-
derpinning that provides for that
bigger stability is the threat from the
Indo-Pacific.

So I think we know that, within the con-
texts of this package that the President has sent to us, there is room to move things around; there is room to subtract or add. But I think it is these four fundamental pillars here that are so intrinsically linked that we cannot lose sight of what it means and what our role here in the United States is.

The violence that we see may be across the globe, but the eyes of the world are squarely on us. Our enemies are preparing to fight us. Our friends and allies are praying that we fail to take this up—"as, again, that balance. So we will and we should discuss and debate the contours within, but I would hope that we would stand together and unite on a package that is good, that is solid, and that is stable for our country and for our friends and allies.

I would suggest that this supple-
mental package is measured, and it is
necessary as a strategic response. I will
tell you, our opponents are praying that we fail to take this up—as, again, that balance. So we will and we should discuss and debate the contours within, but I would hope that we would stand together and unite on a package that is good, that is solid, and that is stable for our country and for our friends and allies.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, let me say that I associate myself with the remarks that were just made by the previous two speakers—the senior Senator from the State of North Dakota and the distinguished Senator from Alaska.

I rise today to follow on with the im-
portance of national defense and, in
that regard, to speak specifically about the United States—inside the United States, em-
ploying American workers. It will mod-
ernize our shipyards, accelerate main-
ding, and ensure that our submarine fleet is
better. We are not prepared to fulfill
that chair that you are sitting in sta-
ble. You have got four pillars here. One
essential imperative: We must be there
to support our friends in Israel. We
must be there. An imperative is to con-
tinue our support for Ukraine. We must
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necessary as a strategic response. I will
tell you, our opponents are praying that we fail to take this up—as, again, that balance. So we will and we should discuss and debate the contours within, but I would hope that we would stand together and unite on a package that is good, that is solid, and that is stable for our country and for our friends and allies.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, let me say that I associate myself with the remarks that were just made by the previous two speakers—the senior Senator from the State of North Dakota and the distinguished Senator from Alaska.

I rise today to follow on with the im-
portance of national defense and, in
that regard, to speak specifically about the United States—inside the United States, em-
ploying American workers. It will mod-
ernize our shipyards, accelerate main-
ding, and ensure that our submarine fleet is
better. We are not prepared to fulfill
that chair that you are sitting in sta-
ble. You have got four pillars here. One
essential imperative: We must be there
to support our friends in Israel. We
must be there. An imperative is to con-
tinue our support for Ukraine. We must
address our southern border—an abso-
late imperative. Then that fourth un-
derpinning that provides for that
bigger stability is the threat from the
Indo-Pacific.

So I think we know that, within the con-
texts of this package that the President has sent to us, there is room to move things around; there is room to subtract or add. But I think it is these four fundamental pillars here that are so intrinsically linked that we cannot lose sight of what it means and what our role here in the United States is.

The violence that we see may be across the globe, but the eyes of the world are squarely on us. Our enemies are preparing to fight us. Our friends and allies are praying that we fail to take this up—"as, again, that balance. So we will and we should discuss and debate the contours within, but I would hope that we would stand together and unite on a package that is good, that is solid, and that is stable for our country and for our friends and allies.

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AUKUS. From what I understand, the study will document what we already know: We need significant additional funding to fulfill Australia’s needs alongside those of our fleet. But here is the problem: We commissioned the study. Inexplicably, the Biden administration did not invite Congress to see the specifics of the study—not Members of the Democratic leadership, not Members of the Republican leadership. Until the elected Members of the U.S. Senate and the House see this study, we cannot make this strongest argument for submarine investment.

I led a letter, signed by a bipartisan group of defense leaders, asking the administration to send us the study without delay. This was a bipartisan letter. Friends from both sides of the aisle joined me on that. We are an equal part of the government. We have authorized this study, and, for heaven’s sake, the elected Senators and Representatives of the United States should see this study. And, for heaven’s sake, the administration ought to release the study promptly. They ought to release the study to us today.

This study is just one element of strengthening AUKUS. Of course, the most crucial element is increasing overall American sea power. For years, we have cast a vision for restoring America’s sea power, and his team several times during that period.)

As癜 compromised the American bond than the AUKUS mechanism by committing $3 billion to our industry. America is centrally 💠 America’s bond with the United States. The bond between our two nations is deep and abiding. It stood the test of World War II, and it will continue to stand the test of the 21st century. This alliance is symptomatic of our national security. The answer was that Russia could not act as fast as we could. The strength of our free enterprise system, the clarity of our mission set by our Federal leaders, and our collective appetite would deter any Soviet threat. It was a focus, a singular focus, and it allowed the American system to unleash our arsenal of democracy, and we prevented a war with the Soviet Union by maintaining our naval supremacy. We need to unleash that arsenal again.

According to Admiral Rickover, “We shall let nothing deter us from building a nuclear Navy in the shortest possible time.”

Once more, we cannot let anything deter our skilled shipbuilders from cutting the steel and constructing the fleet that will safeguard America for a generation to come.

We have submarines to build. Let’s get to work.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip, UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I rise to discuss the Senate’s urgent need to confirm nominations of Rebecca Lutsko to be U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Ohio and April Perry to serve as U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Illinois.

On five previous occasions, I have come to the floor of the Senate to request unanimous consent to move these nominees forward. Each time, the junior Senator from Ohio has objected. He campaigned for the Senate, claiming he would be tough on crime, but now that he is here, he proudly brags that he wants to “grind the Department of Justice to a halt.” These communities desperately need these nominees in place. There are 85 U.S. attorneys across the United States. Under President Donald Trump, we approved all 85 without a record rollcall—voice vote. It was the understanding that we would voice—we would debate the issue of an attorney general. When it came to the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, that he is holding up? The entire Nation has been impacted by the opioid epidemic, but Ohio has been especially hard-hit.

In recent years, fentanyl has been involved in 80 percent of unintentional drug overdose deaths within the State of Ohio. Last year, Federal law enforcement officials and local partners in Ohio seized over 77,000 fentanyl-laced tablets in a span of less than 4 months. And over the course of 1 year, from April 2022 to April 2023, more than 5,000 Ohioans lost their lives to drug overdoses—5,000. Let that sink in.

This is a serious problem. Every day, hundreds of families lose a loved one to drugs. How important is it to have a U.S. attorney in Ohio—and in Illinois—working on this drug crisis that claims so many lives every single day? Can we really make an argument that we are taking this crisis lightly? Can we really ask the President to fund a study on the floor of the Senate that stops us from putting a prosecutor in place to stop this drug trafficking?

The U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Ohio plays a significant role in holding drug traffickers accountable. Last month, the office secured a 320-month sentence for a Toledo-based man who was a local drug distributor for the Sinaloa Cartel. This helped traffic fentanyl, heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamine into the State of Ohio. In addition, Federal prosecutors found this defendant engaged in sex trafficking and secured a 140-month sentence after he was convicted.

Notably, the U.S. Attorney’s Office coordinated this with both the Toledo Metro Drug Task Force and the Toledo Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation Task Force. That is what an effective U.S. Attorney’s Office does to keep the people of Ohio and Illinois safe.

Why in the world would any Senator stand up and object to a U.S. attorney prosecutor who is working to stop this drug trafficking across his State?

Well, the Senator from Ohio explained it. He is upset, Madam President. He is upset that the U.S. Department of Justice, through a special counsel, would actually be investigating the former President of the United States. And because he is upset—and he calls it weaponization—he is going to make sure that, in his own State, there is not a Federal prosecutor doing the job that should be done to stop the sale of narcotics and, in my State of Illinois, the same thing. This is unprecedented. It has not happened in the history of the Senate.

You can be upset, petulant, worried, hate it that a friend of yours in politics has been indicted, but to hold that against the people of Ohio and the families who are dying on such a regular
The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, so, on average, every day, 14 Ohio families lose a loved one to drugs.

The explanation: We want to send a message to the Department of Justice. We want to keep the U.S. attorney off the job who would try to attack this narcotics epidemic.

It just doesn’t make sense. How can you explain to the people of Ohio and Illinois that you are trying to get some way to make it even on political grounds at their expense? For goodness sake, for the sake of families in your own home State, give these U.S. attorneys a chance to fight to make life safer for these families.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

AMENDMENT NO. 1249 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1092.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 1249 and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), for himself and Mr. CORNYN, proposes an amendment numbered amendment No. 1092.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To ensure that United States diplomats and officials of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission are able to advance efforts seeking compliance by the United Mexican States with the 1944 Treaty on Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande.

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. 3. ADVANCING EFFORTS SEEKING COMPLIANCE BY MEXICO WITH TREATY ON UTILIZATION OF WATERS OF THE COLORADO AND TIJUANA RIVERS AND OF THE RIO GRANDE.

The Secretary of State shall use the voice, vote, diplomatic capital, and resources of the United States to ensure that United States diplomats and officials of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission are able to advance efforts seeking compliance by the United Mexican States with the Treaty on Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande, signed at Washington February 3, 1944, and to establish understandings to provide predictable and reliable future deliveries of water by the United Mexican States. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be up to 2 minutes of debate, equally divided.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, this is an amendment that should be a simple and bipartisan, commonsense amendment.

Under a treaty in 1944, Mexico is obliged to provide 350,000 acre-feet of water per year to the Rio Grande Valley. Farmers in the Rio Grande Valley are facing drought right now, and Mexico has been slow in meeting its treaty commitments. This amendment simply instructs the water negotiators to press Mexico to meet its treaty agreements and provide the water that is owed.

I would note that the language of this amendment was worked out in a bipartisan manner and was cleared by both Democrats and Republicans on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This language was also worked out directly with the negotiators of the International Boundary and Water Commission. It is designed not to negatively impact any other State but to instruct States to urge Mexico to meet its treaty commitments so that farmers who need water can get the water they need.

Fifteen Members on both sides of the aisle to support the amendment.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. We yield back our time.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 1249.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. CRUZ. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 45, as follows:

(Rollcall Vote No. 282 Leg.)

YEAS—52


NAYS—45

Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment (No. 1292) was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Kentucky.

AMENDMENT NO. 1121 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1092.

(Purpose: To require congressional review of major rules or regulations)

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, I call up my amendment, No. 1121, and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The amendment (in printed form) in the Record of September 12, 2023, under “Text of Amendments.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be up to 2 minutes of debate equally divided.

The junior Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, our Declaration of Independence asserts that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. Yet, while legislators elected by the people may elect members of Congress, Americans are increasingly governed by bureaucrats they do not know, will never meet, and cannot hold accountable.

In 2022, the Biden administration imposed an estimated $1.1 trillion in new regulatory costs on the American people. Unlected, unknown, and unaccountable bureaucrats should not unilaterally develop the most significant public policies that impose costly burdens on American families and businesses.

To restore republican accountability to our government, Senator LEE and I propose that we adopt as an amendment a bill that I have introduced for several years called the REINS Act. The REINS Act would require Congress to affirmatively approve every new major rule proposed by the executive branch before it is permitted to become effective.

By passing the REINS Act, the American people, through their elected officials, will reclaim the ability to prevent unnecessary government interference in everyday life.

I ask for a “yea” vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Madam President, this amendment would prevent Federal Agencies from effectively serving the American people. It would weaken the government's ability to enact key health and safety standards. It would endanger a range of public protections for the environment, American workers, and people with disabilities. It would stifle innovation for emerging technologies, such as self-driving cars, artificial intelligence, and other tools that will help carry our country forward.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting no on this amendment.
government in a bipartisan way, avoid another massive, end-of-the-year omnibus, and address pressing issues like aid to our allies, disaster relief, childcare prices, and more.

By passing this bill today, we can send a crucial message to the American people that, yes, Democrats and Republicans can work together; and, yes, the United States is still strong and still responsive to the challenges before us.

So I urge everyone who wants to avoid another year-end omnibus, everyone who has worked with us to put this package together, to vote with us to pass it. Let’s get the job done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, the Senate is about to cast its vote—a key vote—on passage of the first package of fiscal year 2024 appropriations bills. They include the Military Construction-VA bill, the Agriculture and FDA legislation, and the Transportation and Housing and Urban Development appropriations.

I want to thank everyone involved for their cooperation for getting us to the point of passing this significant package.

First, let me thank Chair MURRAY for her strong, persistent, and dedicated leadership.

The support of Leaders McCONNELL and TRUNE and Leader SCHUMER were also absolutely essential.

I want to express my thanks to our hard-working staff, led by Betsy McDonnell and Evan Schatz.

We have a great Republican team on the Appropriations Committee. And I want to thank all of them for working with their Democratic counterparts to bring about truly bipartisan bills. Particularly, I want to thank on the Agriculture Subcommittee, the chairman, Senator HEINRICH, and the ranking member, Senator HUEYEN.

I want to thank my Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Committee, Senator MURRAY, for playing a double role there, as well as Senator BOOZMAN.

And on the Transportation-HUD Subcommittee—a subcommittee I chaired for many years and was ranking member on—I want to thank Senator SCHUTZ and Senator HYDE-SMITH. They all worked incredibly hard.

After working for weeks with our colleagues, we considered 40 amendments to these three bills. All three of these bills passed the Appropriations Committee unanimously this past summer. And I appreciate the hard work of every single one of our members.

Giving Senators a voice in funding decisions through a robust committee and floor process was an early goal that Chair MURRAY and I established. It guided the process as the committees approved all 12 of the appropriations bills by the end of July for the first time in 5 years. It also has guided our process on the Senate floor. Well, it was certainly not easy and certainly took far longer than either the chair or I would have liked. The amendment process allowed for Senators of both parties to fully debate these bills and be heard.

I look forward to working with Chair MURRAY and her colleagues to build on this progress by continuing to process our committee-approved appropriations bills on the Senate floor.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for this important legislative package that honors and serves our Nation’s veterans, supports our farmers, ranchers, and rural communities, and improves transportation infrastructure and housing opportunities all across our great country.

I urge a yeas vote on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the third time.

The amendments were ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill, as amended, pass?

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll. Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted “yea” and the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) would have voted “nay.”

The result is announced—yeas 82, nays 15, as follows:

**[Rollcall Vote No. 284 Leg.]**

YEAS—82

Barron
Braun
Budd
Budd
Crane
Crapo
Crescenz
Cromwell
Crump
Cruz
Daines
Duckworth
Duckworth
Emmer
Emmer
Feenstra
Fischer
Gillibrand
Graham

NAYs—15

Barrasso
Braun
Budd
Budd
Crane
Crapo
Crescenz
Cromwell
Crump
Cruz
Daines
Duckworth
Duckworth
Emmer
Emmer
Feenstra
Fischer
Gillibrand
Graham

Lee
Scott (SC)

NOT VOTING—3

Tillis

The bill (H.R. 4366), as amended, was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Kaine). The Senator from Washington. Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, what we have just done is really important, and I want to thank everyone who helped us here: my vice chair, the senior Senator from Maine; our subcommittee leaders, the Senators from Arkansas, New Mexico, North Dakota, Hawaii, and Mississippi; and all of our colleagues—all of our colleagues—who worked hard to craft and strengthen these bills. I want to thank Senate leadership and, of course, all of our tireless staff who have Tales of this challenge this process has thrown at us.

Today, months of hard work paid off. We just passed a strong bipartisan spending package—the only bipartisan spending bills in Congress, by the way—and we did it with an 82-to-15 vote.

So let us be crystal clear about what that means. Unlike the funding measures we have seen pushed through the House, these are serious and reasonable bipartisan bills that can actually be signed into law.

They are the product of months of hard work, careful negotiation, and thoughtful input from Members on both sides of the aisle.

They stick to the spending levels that House Republicans and President Biden signed and negotiated and that we all passed into law this past spring.

And despite the tough funding constraints, these bills move our country forward, not back, with important investments to keep our promise to our Nation’s veterans, to get Americans where they need to go safely, to increase our housing supply, address the homelessness crisis, support our farmers, our ranchers, and keep American families healthy and safe and more.

What we have done here—finding common ground to produce reasonable, bipartisan bills—is not just a template; it is the only way to get our jobs done in a divided government. There is a clear lesson from the last few months here in Congress, and it is that we must work together, not retreat to extreme partisan corners.

So let us be clear to our colleagues. We have a lot more work to do. Our mission here isn’t just to send a message or pass a bill through the Senate. We have to work to get these bills signed into law. And I don’t just mean these investments but crucial funding in all of our bipartisan appropriations bills.

While we may need another CR before our work is done, we absolutely have to remember: Long-term CRs are no way to govern, and they certainly
are no way to lead. When we operate under long-term CRs, our Agencies are stuck in neutral. They cannot plan for the future. They have to delay initiatives and investments. They are far less equipped to meet the pressing challenges we face. Governing by CRs hurts families who need a government that works reliably, seriously stunts our economy and American innovation, and dangerously impedes our national security.

I think we all know that our competitors across the world are not putting their budgets on autopilot. They are doing everything they can to get ahead, and they are hoping that we fall behind into the chaos of partisan infighting. We cannot let that happen. We need to pass full-year funding with the investments we need to keep the United States strong and safe and competitive—especially in a moment that truly calls for American leadership. There is no question that we have got our work cut out for us, but today, we have shown a clear roadmap for how we can get our work done. So I am talking with my vice chair about the next set of bills we will work to move in the Senate and continuing work to move a comprehensive, bipartisan supplemental funding package.

We need to start conferencing our appropriations bills. That will require House Republicans to get serious about governing, to get back to the spending agreement that they negotiated and work with us to finalize these bipartisan bills. It is critical that happens. We do not have time to waste. The clock is ticking. The American people are tired of watching Congress wait until the last second before kicking the can down the road. Our constituents do not want to see chaos. They do not want to see shutdowns or threats, and they do not want to see our country's future limited by CRs. They do want to see their elected officials roll up their sleeves, sit down at the table, and do the hard work of governing to help people and solve problems. That is what we have to do. So let's get to it, and let's get our work done.

I yield the floor.

BLOCK GRANT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2023

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Committee on Appropriations is discharged from further consideration of H.R. 662, and the Senate will proceed to consideration of the bill, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 662) to amend the Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023, to improve disaster relief funding for agricultural producers, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1357

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, substitute amendment No. 1357 is considered and agreed to.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute) Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Block Grant Assistance Act of 2023.”

SEC. 2. DISASTER RELIEF SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2023, AMENDMENT.

Title I of the Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023 (division N of Public Law 117-338; 136 Stat. 3281), is amended, in the matter under the heading “DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE—AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS—PROCESSING, RESEARCH AND MARKETING—OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,” by inserting “Provided further,” that the Secretary of Agriculture may provide assistance for losses described under this heading in this Act in the form of block grants to eligible States and territories before the period at the end.

SEC. 3. EMERGENCY DESIGNATION.

Amounts repurposed under the amendment made by section 2 that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4001(a)(1) of S. Con. Res. 14 (117th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2022, and section 1(e) of H. Res. 1151 (117th Congress), as engrossed in the House of Representatives on June 8, 2022, are designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 4 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to the next roll call vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, as we work to get the agriculture community back on their feet, I won’t stop fighting to make sure the Federal Government keeps showing up.

Following natural disasters in prior years, we have encountered block grants to many of our States. The Block Grant Assistance Act would explicitly give USDA the authority to provide block grants as an option to States and territories to assist agricultural producers with losses due to natural disasters occurring in calendar year 2022.

Importantly, it provides streamlined relief to growers by freeing up USDA resources at State FSA offices; allowing States to allocate funds directly to growers impacted most by covered disasters; and allowing farmers to perform necessary and time-sensitive tasks on their farms without the danger of foregoing disaster aid.

This bill does not mandate States to request disaster funding through State block grants; it only opens up this option.

I have talked to many of you about this bill in the last few days, and I understand that some of my Democratic colleagues would act against this legislation. I want to address those concerns directly and why we are even talking about this right now.

First, this bill doesn’t take anything away from anyone’s State. It creates an option for block grants that help our growers and ranchers who have been impacted by disasters. Again, this bill will not negatively impact any State. I want to make sure that is clear.

I have also heard some of my colleagues say that this isn’t needed because just this week, after refusing to take action for 14 months, Biden’s Ag Department finally opened up the ERP portal for growers and ranchers to apply for assistance just as this was to come to a vote. Our farmers have still not received a dime.

Here is the deal: I don’t trust this process—I know my constituents sure don’t—and I don’t think the assistance being offered is anything close to what is needed for our farmers to actually recover.

This bill helps farmers all across the country, but let me speak for Florida. We have been waiting over a year—14 months to be exact—and nothing was done by the Biden administration until they knew that the Senate would be voting on my bill, and it is still just an application process. I don’t think anyone can blame us for feeling uneasy about this process.

If we pass this bill today, we can give certainty to growers and ranchers in all of our States that they have a reliable partner in the Federal Government to make sure they can recover from natural disasters. That seems like something we can support.

Folks across the country who put food on our tables and create jobs in our States are hurting. I have been clear to the Ag community in Florida: I won’t stop fighting to make sure the Federal Government keeps showing up.

This is a good bill that helps hard-working people. It has already unanimously passed in the House, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it in the Senate today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, our Nation has experienced a series of recent natural disasters: the tragic Maui wildfires, flooding in Vermont and California, and the damage caused by Hurricane Ida. Communities in my home State of New Mexico have been impacted by destructive floods and mudslides following last year’s historic wildfire season.

We must get these Americans the help they need during these difficult times, and we must do it as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, this bill would do the opposite.

On Friday, the Biden administration announced that producers impacted by disasters last year are now eligible to apply for critical emergency assistance. H.R. 662 would delay that funding, essentially stopping the application process that the U.S. Department of Agriculture just got underway. In addition, the administration already has the authority under law to provide
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be discharged from further consideration of the bill, as amended, and ordered to be reported to the Senate, to be passed to the House of Representatives.

The Senator from New Mexico.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. Lujan. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in morning hour with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

The Senator from Alaska.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. Sullivan. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues for coming down here tonight. It is a very important issue that we are getting ready to talk about.

We are in a very dangerous world right now. Our country is being challenged on multiple fronts across the globe. We have American troops under attack in the Middle East.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, as a U.S. Marine Corps colonel, I know—we all know here in the Senate—that America needs to have our best combat-capable leaders on the field, and, right now, that is not happening. It needs to change.

I just want to begin by saying something very clear. You are going to hear this a lot. I am as pro-life as they come. I strongly disagree with what Secretary Austin and President Biden have done with their politicization of the military on a whole host of fronts, including the abortion policy, which I think is illegal and violates the Hyde amendment.

And I have been working with many colleagues, but especially Senator Tuberville from Alabama, side by side, for months, trying to get this reversed, trying to get this compromises. At the same time, we have been telling the majority leader: Do your job. Bring up nominees so we can vote on them.

Now, we have had to force them to do it. Tomorrow, we are going to be voting on the GNO of the Navy, a member of the Joint Chiefs; the Chief of Staff of the Air Force; the Assistant Commander of the Marine Corps—not because the majority leader brought them up, but because we forced them to. He needs to do his job.

But I also firmly believe that one of our most core basic principles—certainly, as Republicans—which I think in many ways distinguishes us from our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, is our serious focus on national security, readiness, a strong military, and taking care of our troops and their families.

We all know there are current holds on our military. I want the American people to know right now. 37 percent of the one-star, two-, three-, and four-star generals and admirals are being held. It is estimated that, by the end of this year, 89 percent of all general officer positions in the U.S. military will be affected by the current holds from Senator Tuberville. Either the members have to be forced to retire, positions not filled, or acting capacity, or will be unable to retire—this is pretty much the entire officer corps. This is highly disruptive to our military.

A couple of examples: 238 one- and two-star generals are being held. These are the men and women who run the military right now. We are going to talk about other places. The First Marine Expeditionary Force—the Third Marine Expeditionary Force—these are the war fighting organizations of the Marine Corps—the Seventh Fleet, which is our fighting naval force in the Taiwan Strait; the Fifth Fleet, the fighting naval force in the Middle East. It goes on and on. NATO Deputy Chairman, a three-star job, empty; Deputy U.S. CENTCOM Commander, empty. The head of the Navy nuclear program, the head of missile defense—all non-operational.

We have a big challenge right now. Let me be a bit more blunt on the issue of morale. The military has a huge readiness and retention problem. These holds are not helping.

I mentioned. I am a senior colonel in the Marines. Many of the one-star and two-star who are being held right now are in my peer group. I have known these men and women for 30 years. There is growing bitterness within the ranks, driven by this fact, and I want people to understand this. The men and women in the military who served our country so well for decades—probably the most combat-experienced generation since World War II—have made huge sacrifices, multiple deployments, and now their careers are being punished over a policy dispute they had nothing to do with and no power to resolve.

That is what is happening right now, and the idea that these officers are supposedly woke or desk jockeys is ridiculous. These are some of the most combat-experienced generals and admirals we have ever had in our country.

Finally, these holds also pose strategic risks to our force. What does that mean? We are starting to see military officers saying: Admirals and generals, I am getting out. Or they have to get out if they are going to be timed out.

We had a scandal in the U.S. Navy several years ago called the "Fat Leonard" scandal. It literally wiped out a combat-experienced generation. We do not want to be responsible for a Senate-inflicted hollowing out of our most experienced military officers, especially given how dangerous the world is right now.

So I have mentioned this before. I have worked closely with Senator Ossoff. On this vote, the yeas are 43, the nays 53.

The 60-vote threshold having not been achieved, the bill, as amended, falls passage.

The bill (H. R. 662), as amended, was rejected.
of Defense for Policy, who is in charge of this issue. Let’s do that. That is a good compromise.

But we haven’t made progress, and the world is a dangerous place. So tonight we are taking another approach. For months Senator TUBERVILLE has said, if individual nominees are brought up for a vote one at a time, he will be fine with that. On September 6, he said: I am not holding up nominations for being approved. They can bring them to the floor one at a time. We mustn’t do anything at all.

We have dozens. I hope the Senator from Alabama meant what he said on this issue, and he backs our troops, who are true warriors and, yes, heroes, who along with their families have dedicated their lives for this country, and have nothing to do with this current policy dispute—nothing at all.

Last night on TV, Senator TUBERVILLE said he was “all for the military”—in particular, our military heroes. You are going to hear a lot about military heroes tonight, and, hopefully, we are going to get a bunch of them confirmed, one by one, as we bring them up.

I yield the floor to my colleague from Iowa.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, the world is on fire because of Joe Biden’s failed leadership and ongoing weakness. Our enemies are on the march. Our service-members are under attack by Iran-backed proxies. And our country is under greater threat than it has been in years.

Innocent lives are on the line here at home and abroad. At home, the Biden DOD is waging a war on the unborn—a war that is immoral and unlawful.

I am a mother. I have carried a baby girl in my womb who is now a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army, and my baby girl is now carrying a baby of her own. And I am proudly, adamantly, and unabashedly pro-life. I always will be. That is why I have—I have—led the legislation to overturn this woky Dodd policy and will not rest in this fight for life, especially as we work through this year’s Defense Bill.

Abroad, our friend and ally Israel is under assault by ruthless Iran-backed Hamas. Jewish babies have been murdered, burned in ovens, and some even stripped from their mothers’ wombs.

As a 23-year combat veteran and retired lieutenant colonel of our great U.S. Army, I firmly believe the Pentagon should be focused on protecting innocent life, not destroying it.

Joe Biden and Secretary Austin are weak and woke. The architects of this immoral policy should be held accountable. Anyone trying to insert their radical agenda into the military has no place in the Pentagon. No Senator should support any person or dollar that threatens the lethality of our warfighters.

Catering to the far left does not win wars or keep Americans safe. Our service-members have been failed by their Commander-in-Chief, and we must do right by them and the security and protection of our own Nation.

For over 9 months now, CHUCK SCHUMER has used our military men and women to push through policy, refusing to allow the Senate to do its job of vetting and voting on military nominees. Only when Republicans forced the majority leader’s hand did he finally relent and move on a few of those nominees.

Tonight, we are once again standing up for valiant individuals who have answered the call to selfless service. Unlike in the past, when promotions were quietly approved on bloc with no discussion, tonight, we will be highlighting the distinguished careers of each and then putting their nomination before the Senate for confirmation individually by voice vote.

And with that, I yield the floor. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Thank you to my colleagues. Thank you for your leadership here.

Senator TUBERVILLE, I hope we can find a way to get this behind us, if possible. So my contribution to the debate is as follows: The bedrock of our democracy is that the military will be subordinate to civilian control. This has served our Nation well—that no matter who is in uniform, they answer to civilian authorities, and they are subordinate to the will of the civilian leadership elected and appointed. That has really helped our country be who we are today.

One of the things that I can’t understand is, if you require our military to be subordinate to the people above them in the civilian world, why would you punish them for something they have nothing to do with?

All of these people—and if we need to call all 376, I will be glad to do it. I will get some rest this weekend and come back next week. I am going to start with two. All I am asking is to allow Major General Lenderman to get promoted. I will make that request in a minute.

Major General Lenderman is a two-star general. She got promoted to three-star because her peers—the military promotion system—saw in her leadership qualities. And after I read her bio, I now know why she got promoted.

But the job she is going into, she is going to be the Deputy Commander, Headquarters, Pacific Air Force, Hawaii. She would be responsible for Air Force activities over half the globe. The command supports 46,000 Airmen serving principally in Japan, Korea, Hawaii, Alaska and Guam. That has a lot to do with the Indo-Pacific theater.

She has zero to do with the Indo-Pacific theater.

She is a graduate of Duke University. She has had every major job I can think of in Transportation Command, Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, which I have been to several times.

I am asking tonight that she be allowed to be promoted because she has had nothing to do with the policy we all object with. Holding her hostage doesn’t help the pro-life cause. It hurts the military. The most pro-life people I know are the ones willing to die for us. She is willing to do just that.

She has proven herself time and time again. She needs to be promoted.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive calendar No. 189, Laura L. Lenderman, to lieutenant general and Deputy Commander, Pacific Air Forces; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the nominee be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Reserving the right to object, I want to start by thanking my colleagues for their service in the Armed Forces in the greatest country on earth. There is no country in this world I honor more than the U.S. military. I am thankful to every veteran in this country.

I also want to note that I respect my colleagues’ strong pro-life voting records. The Republican Party has been the pro-life party for half a century. We ought to be proud that we stand for life. We stand for the most vulnerable of our society: the unborn. I know my colleagues here share that conviction. The disagreement we are having today is about tactics.

Let me explain why I am doing it, how we got here, and where we go from
here. Nine months ago, the Pentagon announced that they would start using our taxpayer dollars to facilitate abortion. Let me say that one more time. Nine months ago, the Pentagon announced—announced by memo—that they would start using our taxpayer dollars to facilitate abortion. The Pentagon is now paying for travel and extra time off for servicemembers and their dependents to get abortions.

Congress never voted for this. We also never appropriated the money for this. There is a law that says to do this. In fact, there is a law that says they can’t do this, created in this room. It is 10 USC, Section 1093. It says the only time the Pentagon can spend taxpayer dollars on abortion is in cases of rape, incest, and threat to the health of the mom. So this is a policy that is illegal and immoral. This is about life, and it is also about the rule of law. It is about our Constitution. It is about whether we make laws at the Pentagon or whether we follow the Constitution.

This is also about the integrity of our military. The only thing in this world I honor more than our military is the Constitution. We all swear to hold the Constitution. I also feel very strongly about the obligation to uphold it every day in this room. I cannot simply sit idly by while the Biden administration injects politics in our military—again—injects politics in our military from the White House and spends taxpayers’ dollars on abortion.

The only power that a Senator in the minority has is to put a hold on a nomination—the only thing. I am not the first person to do this. Holds on nominations happen all the time. Holds on military nominations have happened many, many, many, many times before. Typically, they don’t last as long because the administration will work with us, but this is about whether we hold the Constitution. I also feel very strongly about the obligation to uphold it every day in this room. I cannot simply sit idly by while the Biden administration injects politics in our military from the White House and spends taxpayers’ dollars on abortion.

Abortion is the most important thing to the Democrats that they have, and they won’t negotiate. One more time: Abortion is the most important thing to the Democrats that they have, and they won’t negotiate. Their families can’t enroll in school. Some of them are going to be knocked out of promotion because of time and grade problems. There are families...
struggling out there because they can’t move to the next assignment. This doesn’t help anybody. It doesn’t help any cause.

So I ask unanimous consent that this promotion be taken up under Executive Calendar No. 189; Rear Admiral Kacher, 7th Fleet Command, on a recommendation that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?
The Senator will hold.

Mr. GRAHAM. Oh, sorry, sorry. This is why I didn’t get promoted. Executive Calendar No. 85.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. GRAHAM. Frederick W. Kacher.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. GRAHAM. And we will be doing this 57th time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I thank the President for the recognition.

Let me begin with the obvious because I think Senator GRAHAM did a great job of laying out what is at stake. He offered multiple arguments for why these amazing patriots who dedicated their professional lives to defending our safety, our security, our way of life should be promoted and should be promoted this evening.

But a different take is just to begin with the obvious: We are in the midst of the most complicated and, therefore, the most complex and perilous security environment that I have ever experienced in my adult lifetime, certainly.

Israel, our closest friend, our ally, is at war. Ukrainian freedom fighters remain at war against our adversary, Russia. We have a porous southern border. Last month alone, we had 18 individuals apprehended who are—just those who were apprehended—who are on the Terrorist Watchlist. There are all sorts of concerns about what might happen in the Indo-Pacific amidst this environment. We need a fully staffed, fully competent, fully engaged, and focused security establishment.

We need these individuals to be put in place to assume the jobs that they are prepared for. So the security environment is incredibly dangerous. That means Mr. TUBERVILLE’s constituents in Alabama, my constituents in Indiana, and Americans all across the country, all across the world, their safety and security is in danger amidst this perilous time. So that is unique, but what is also unique is the number of holds.

My friend—and he is my friend. He is a genuine friend. I have got a lot of respect for this man, Senator TUBERVILLE, to my right. But the number of holds is certainly extraordinary. I think he would concede that because he is also a smart colleague.

The length of the holds is extraordinary as well, but the tactics here, this is something that Senator SUZUKI, Senator GRAHAM, and I haveled great leadership on this issue, Senator ERNST, myself, and many other colleagues have questioned. I am fervently, I am passionately, I am unapologetically pro-life in conviction and in deed. My reputation is unblemished, and it is unambiguous in that regard.

So I have every interest in seeing that we assume a smart tactic, a smart game plan, if you will. And to hold responsible, effectively, 300 nominated patriots who ought to be pinning on a star or another star right now—hold them professionally responsible for this and, by extension, to undermine the safety and security of the American people during this perilous time just doesn’t make any sense to me.

Instead, it makes more sense for us to hold accountable someone whom the President has nominated to fill the policy position at the Pentagon who would actually oversee implementation and administration of this horrible policy. I said that publicly, and to the extent Mr. TUBERVILLE would remain open—to put it delicately—to taking that hostage, I would be open to that tactic. But because that is not the case, we have disagreement here, and it is going to have to be reconciled. I know Senator TUBERVILLE wants to be a good teammate, a good pro-life teammate and a good national security teammate. There is an opportunity here for him to agree to at least—to allow the following patriot to be confirmed this evening.

Mr. President, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 131, VADM Karl Thomas, U.S. Navy, to be Vice Admiral and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information Warfare, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Director of Naval Intelligence; that the Senate proceed to executive session for consideration of the following nomination, Executive Calendar No. 131, Karl Thomas, to be Vice Admiral and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information Warfare, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Director of Naval Intelligence; that the Senate vote on the nomination of this esteemed individual, with whom I visited when I was in Japan earlier this year, without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider would be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?
The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. ROMNEY. Mr. President, I rise out of great concern for our military, for its readiness in a time of great peril but also out of concern for the men and women who are being held up and whose careers and prospects and families and plans are being interrupted by virtue of the decision by, in this case, two people—one is Secretary Austin and the other is Senator TUBERVILLE—to take intractable positions.

And it is simply a, in my opinion, an abuse of the powers we have as Senators to say if there is something we vehemently disagree with, that we are going to use that power to hold up the promotion of over 350 men and women in our military.

We each have things we might disagree with, with the military, and some would come with deep personal convictions about their morality. But if each Senator felt empowered to hold up all promotions in our military unless we got our way on one of those issues, why, our military would grind to a halt.

This power is extraordinary that we are given as individual Senators, but it is incumbent upon us to use it in a reasonable way and not to abuse it in such a way that we end up putting in harm’s way the capabilities of our military and the well-being of our men and women in uniform.

Senator TUBERVILLE correctly pointed out—I believe he is absolutely right—that what Secretary Austin did was in contravention of the Hyde amendment, against the law. We have a process for pursuing things that are done by an administration that are against the law. It is the court process. I am happy to join with an amicus brief or even file a legal action to reverse the Pentagon’s policy. That is the process we should follow in a circumstance like this, not one that is being exacted upon 350 men and women whom we need to have in service and whose lives are being so badly disrupted.

I would also offer this: Senator TUBERVILLE, if the Department of Defense, Secretary Austin were to say: OK. We will no longer pay for the travel of these individuals and their dependents but instead allow a private charity to do so, would that be acceptable to you and allow this to go away? I am looking for—yes. So for instance, if Secretary Austin agrees, all right, we will eliminate this policy, but we will allow a private charity to provide travel for someone who wants to receive an abortion in a State where that procedure is legal, would that satisfy you and allow this impasse to be resolved?

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Senator, that was the type of negotiation I have been looking for, for the last 9 months. Nobody—zero—has come to me with any alternatives to bypass to get this done. Mr. ROMNEY. Would that be an acceptable alternative?

Mr. TUBERVILLE. It would; it would be a good starting point. We can sit down and work this out, but we can’t do it without negotiations. That is
what I was saying earlier. There have been zero negotiations. There has been no give. It has all been take—three 1-minute calls with the Secretary. I haven’t talked to him since June. There has been no more conversation. So I think we have sort of a problem without communication.

Mr. ROMNEY. Yes. Well, I have ways of doing that, which is I will pick up the phone and have that conversation. But we have to make sure that we do not continue to hold up 350-plus people from getting promoted. That is essential to our military.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, we are going to start moving through some of these nominations. My colleague from Alabama has said publicly, hey, bring them up one at a time. And we are asking for a voice vote, so that is a vote. So we are doing what he said, not sure why he is objecting. Maybe he can explain that in a minute when I bring up another—a real hero by the way.

And, look, what Senator TUBERVILLE said about the policy and Austin and Biden on this abortion policy, I fully agree. I also should be suing to stop it. I think it is illegal. And he is also right; everybody uses holds. I certainly use holds.

But the key is you put a hold on someone who typically has some kind of control over the issue that you are trying to fix, some kind of responsibility. One of the things I have been talking to the Senator from Alabama on is, all right, let’s put a hold on the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. He is the guy. He is a civilian, and he is in charge of this policy dispute. Let’s put a hold on him—that is the right guy—and squeeze him. But why are we putting holds on war heroes? I am going to get to one here in a minute.

Again, I just—I don’t understand. And, look, we can go in and out of readiness, but my colleague from Alabama is 100 percent wrong, no kidding. The readiness is being impacted when you have—I will just give a couple of examples here. This is just from one theater: EUCOM, the Deputy Chairman of NATO, pretty important job. It is a three-star billet. It is empty.

The Deputy Commanding General of U.S. Army Europe—really important job—okay. Like I said, I MEF—that is the big Marine Corps combined force that fights anywhere in the world; 25,000 marines, commanded by a three-star—it is a two-star. Now, for those who did serve in the military, we understand this is a problem. Same with III MEF. OK. This is just from EUCOM, European Command—72 officers are unable to assume their new positions. These 72 officers include 52 who cannot move because they have been nominated for a position in the Senate confirmation, as well as 20 other officers who are projected to be assigned to a new position now held by one of the previous 52 officers. It is creating a giant blockage in the way in which the military operates.

To say there are no readiness issues—I am the ranking member of the Readiness Subcommittee on the Armed Services Committee. There are readiness issues. And that is the whole point. We have a really dangerous world, a really dangerous world right now, and to say, “Oh, don’t worry; this isn’t impacting readiness,” with all due respect to my colleagues, that is just wrong. It is not even a close call. It is wrong, and it matters to this country.

Let me give you another example: the head of the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program, the nuclear navy—one of the best run organizations on planet Earth, if you know anything about the military or just its organizations. It was started by Admiral Rickover. To not have the leadership in charge of the nuclear navy? That is a problem.

So, look, we can debate readiness, but my colleague on this, in my view, is respectfully informed.

I am going to bring up my first nominee. Now, this goes to the issue of some comments that have come out during this. Well, these one-star and two-star generals are kind of desk jockeys, right? These comments have been made. They are not warriors, right? The real warriors are the captains and the sergeants.

Look, I love the whole military, but the one- and two-star Generals—I know a lot of them. That is my peer group in the Marine Corps. I am a little bit behind them. I am not going to be promoted. I am getting out here probably soon. But I know these guys, and the idea that somehow these are desk jockeys or not warriors? Do you know who these people were, the one- and two-stars we are holding up right now, 289 of them? These are the Captains and Lieutenants who were going fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq after 9/11.

The current Commandant of the Marine Corps—by the way, every American should be praying for him; big health issues—he has a Purple Heart, distinguished combat. These were the people who were kicking in doors in Fallujah, shooting terrorists in the face, and we have people saying they are desk jockeys and they are not warriors? That is just ridiculous. It is ridiculous, and it is insulting.

So I am going to talk about a warrior. I am getting ready to call up Col. Robert Weiler. He has been nominated to be a one-star Brigadier General, to be the 1st Marine Division Assistant Commander. That is the big division on the west coast of the U.S. Marine Corps infantry. I used to be part of the 1st Marine Division. I am proud of that. You need a Division Assistant Commander. They don’t have one, OK?

Let’s talk about Colonel Weiler—28-year career; commanded the 5th Marine Regiment—I was in that regiment, the most decorated regiment in the Marine Corps; 2d Battalion 4th Marines; 2d Battalion 24th Marines; deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan I think six times.

So I am going to bring up his nomination. Let’s talk about what his family went through, OK? Think about what his family has sacrificed. And right now, people are being told: You are not going anywhere, Colonel, because we have a dispute on an issue you have nothing to do with that you can’t resolve, and that is just wrong.

Let’s hear a little bit more about this Colonel in the Marine Corps. He received a Silver Star for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action against the enemy while serving as Commanding Officer, Weapons Company, 2d Battalion 4th Marines, 5th Marine Regiment, 6 through 10 April 2004, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom; heavily engaged by enemy forces for an over 4-hour firefights while providing fire support for the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines.

He received a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with a combat distinguishing device for heroic action in another deployment—2d Battalion 4th Marines, 1st Marine Division, on 6 September 2001, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He took decisive action by directing fires of his raid force, quickly gaining fire superiority and suppressing and killing the enemy. Although dazed by a major blast, he continued to lead and direct his team in combat, where they killed and captured all five insurgents on their target raid list. So we are going to block him tonight.

The Senator from Alabama last night on TV said he respects all military, especially the heroes.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Reserving the right to object, first of all, I would like to correct something my colleague just said. Not one time in my life have I ever heard anything in our military was a desk jockey. I don’t know where he got that from. I guess that is a military term. I would not do
that, I would not disrespect anybody in any job in the military that they have ever done. So I just want to set that story straight with people who will write a little bit about this disagreement tonight.

But with that, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, I know this is a frustrating exercise, but we are going to flush out some of these nominees tonight, truly incredible individuals who have served our Nation through thick and thin. These are folks who deserve to be promoted.

So I rise today to talk about Lt. Gen. Gregory M. Guillot on his promotion to the grade of General and his nomination to be the next Commander of U.S. Northern Command and the North American Aerospace Defense Command, also known as NORAD.

General Guillot is from Tucson, AZ, and he is a proud graduate of the United States Air Force Academy. I am sorry he could not get into West Point. He has successfully commanded a flying squadron operations group, two flying wings, a numbered Air Force, and has also served on numbered Air Force, major command, and combatant command staffs.

He is an expert in his field, as demonstrated by having been an Air Force Weapons School instructor and graduate of the National War College.

General Guillot is a decorated warfighter and a senior air battle manager by training who is currently the Deputy Commander of U.S. Central Command. He has been instrumental integrating air, missile, and drone defense systems across the Middle East—experience that is applicable to the challenges facing NORTHCOM’s air and missile defenses.

I believe that General Guillot’s qualifications, his record, and his outstanding character make him the right nominee to serve in this important role.

So we can confirm this nomination by voice vote right here, now, and therefore I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 236, Lt. Gen. Gregory M. Guillot to be General; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, if I can just address this very briefly before we move to my colleague from Indiana. I have a discharge petition that was signed at our conference lunch the other day for Lt. Gen. General M. Guillot. That discharge petition was signed by Senator TUBERVILLE, meaning that Senator TUBERVILLE believed that we should be voting on General Guillot. I was asking for a vote for General Guillot this evening.

I am not sure how we remedy this situation, but I can tell you we will keep working on these nominations, and we will get answers someday, and they will be confirmed someday if we have the intestinal fortitude to do what is right by our military men and women, who have absolutely nothing to do with the policy that was put in place by Secretary Lloyd Austin and President Joe Biden.

I yield to the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 238, Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Inherent Kruse, U.S. Air Force, to be Lieutenant General and Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency.

General Kruse currently serves as the Director Advisor for Military Affairs at the Office of the DNI. This is a post he has held since 2020. One need not have me explain to them—especially if they are tuned in to matters of national security—the importance of our Defense Intelligence Agency at a time like this.

Previously, Mr. Kruse served as the Director for Defense Intelligence for Warfighter Support in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security.

Prior to his OSD and interagency roles, General Kruse served as the Director for Intelligence at U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, deployed as Director of Intelligence for Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve, and served as Senior Special Advisor for the Commander of U.S. European Command and Supreme Allied Commander in Europe.

He has commanded Air Force units at all levels across seemingly every geography, and he has deployed on multiple occasions to combat theaters around the globe.

Feeling good about this one. We can confirm this nomination by voice vote right now.

Feeling really good. Senator TUBERVILLE.

It is for that reason that I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 238, Jeffrey A. Kruse to be Lieutenant General and Director, Defense Intelligence Agency.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. YOUNG. I further request that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. YOUNG. Well, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 188, Lt. Gen. Kevin B. Schneider, U.S. Air Force, to be General and the Commander of Pacific Air Forces.

General Schneider has been serving as the Director of Staff for the Air Force since 2021. He has served at all levels, including a combat wing in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. General Schneider is a command pilot with more than 4,000 flight hours, with 530 combat flight hours on multiple airframes. He has also earned numerous commendations, including the Bronze Star and the Air Medal.

We can confirm this nomination by voice vote right now. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 188, Kevin B. Schneider, to be General and the Commander of Pacific Air Forces.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, that being the case, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 107, Lt. Gen. James W. Bierman, Jr., USMC, to be Lieutenant General and the Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations for Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps.

General Bierman has held numerous command postings, most recently serving as the Commander of the Third Marine Expeditionary Force and Marine Forces Japan. He has shown a true commitment to service in this posting, ensuring that marines remain prepared to face any future threats. General Bierman has also deployed multiple times, including to Afghanistan and Iraq, where he led marines in combat operations. His many commendations include the Bronze Star with Combat Distinguishing Device and the Legion of Merit.

We can confirm this nomination by voice vote right now. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 107, James W. Bierman, Jr., to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?
the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?
The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. YOUNG. Having heard that objection, Madam President, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 132, Lt. Gen. Michael S. Cederholm, U.S. Marine Corps, to be Lieutenant General and Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force.

General Cederholm has been Deputy Commandant for Aviation since July 2022, a position he held with high distinction. He has held many operational assignments, including in U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command and as a TOPGUN Instructor Pilot. He has flown operational tours in all aircraft that the Marine Corps has to offer. General Cederholm has held numerous other assignments, including the deployments in furtherance of Operation Enduring Freedom, Joint Task Force Southern Watch, and Iraqi Freedom. He has also served in many Commanding Officer postings, including Commanding General of Task Force Baltic Watchtower and Commanding General of 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing.

We can confirm this nomination by voice vote right now. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 132, Michael S. Cederholm, to be Lieutenant General and Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?
The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, I am going to make one further attempt.

I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 84, RADM George M. Wikoff, to be Vice Admiral and Commander, Fifth Fleet; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?
The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. YOUNG. Having heard that objection, Madam President, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 84, RADM George M. Wikoff, to be Vice Admiral and Commander, Fifth Fleet; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?
The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. YOUNG. Having heard that objection, Madam President, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 84, RADM George M. Wikoff, to be Vice Admiral and Commander, Fifth Fleet; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?
The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. YOUNG. Having heard that objection, Madam President, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 84, RADM George M. Wikoff, to be Vice Admiral and Commander, Fifth Fleet; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?
The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. YOUNG. Having heard that objection, Madam President, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 84, RADM George M. Wikoff, to be Vice Admiral and Commander, Fifth Fleet; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?
The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.
Here is a little bit about Major General Gainey: 33 years—33 years—of patriotic service. He has served as Deputy Commanding General for the U.S. Army Air cadet Command, the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command, and on the Joint Staff and the Director for Force Protection, J8, overseeing the Joint Integrated Air and Missile Defense Organization. Major General Gainey has deployed in support of Operation Joint Task Force-East and Operation Enduring Freedom. Most recently, Major General Gainey served as the Director, Joint C-415 Office, and Director of Fires in the G3/5/7 at Headquarters of the Army.

In essence, this general is an expert not just on missile command but on fires to protect our Nation—very qualified. I hope we can confirm him right now. Our country needs him. Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 293, Lt. Gen. Philip A. Garrant, U.S. Space Force, to be Lieutenant General and Commander, Space Systems Command, U.S. Space Force; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Senator from Alabama. Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard. Lieutenant General Garrant most recently served as Deputy Chief of Space Operations Strategy, Plans, Programs, and Requirements for the U.S. Space Force.

We can confirm him right now by an individual voice vote, Madam President. So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 293, Lt. Gen. Philip A. Garrant, U.S. Space Force, to be Lieutenant General and Commander, Space Systems Command, U.S. Space Force; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Senator from Alabama. Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, let me move on to another service. This is RADM Daniel Cheever, U.S. Navy, to be Vice Admiral and Commanding Officer of Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

One thing that we always think about in the military, when you think 28, 29, 30 years and the combat experience, is that the experience that they have just remarkably the way, the best military in the world. And this Rear Admiral, in his career, has this in spades.

With 34 years in the Navy so far, Rear Admiral Cheever commanded Carrier Strike Group 147—the VFA 147. So a carrier strike group—that is commanding a carrier strike group. That is several ships around an aircraft carrier. That is giant experience, and we are making this position, this choice, sit on the bench when our country is in peril. Rear Admiral Cheever has extensive EUCOM and CENTCOM experience as a Naval Amphibious Liaison Element for the Commander, U.S. Sixth Fleet and 17th Air Force, and as a battle director at Combined Air and Space Operations Center, U.S. Central Command.

Most recently, Rear Admiral Cheever served as the Director of Plans, Policies, and Strategy at the North American Aerospace Defense Command and Director of Policy and Strategy at U.S. Northern Command—so, again, a great warrior right here, a carrier strike group commander. Only America produces these great warriors.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 181, Daniel L. Cheever, to be Vice Admiral and Commander of the Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, the fleet that will take on China—we have a war there; we need this officer—that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, and the President immediately be notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Senator from Alabama. Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.
Ms. ERNST. Madam President, we are bringing to the floor right now—right now—by voice vote, VADM Brad Cooper. One of the signatures on that petition is of my colleague from Alabama. He agreed to go on this, and we are giving him the opportunity to vote on this nominee, who will be the Deputy Commander of U.S. Central Command, where we have what could be World War III brewing. Our dear friends, the Israelis, need every last good man and woman that the United States has serving in these important positions.

A little bit about VADM Brad Cooper: He is the son of a career Army officer. He attended high school in Montgomery, AL. Vice Admiral Cooper joined the Navy and received his commission from the U.S. Naval Academy. He is a career surface warfare officer. He served on guided missile cruisers, guided missile destroyers, aircraft carriers, amphibious assault ships, and successfully commanded both the USS Russell and the USS Gettysburg.

If anyone knows Admiral Cooper, he is a very humble man. He is very proud of the extraordinary men and women with whom he served on sea duty during his 9 deployments and 13 real-world operations all around our globe.

He has served in a variety of positions throughout his career, and he has been nominated to serve in the U.S. Central Command as their Deputy Commander.

He has been instrumental in maintaining the stability and security of the Middle East regions’ maritime environment through NAVCENT. His skills and experience gained in this position at NAVCENT make him absolutely the right choice to be the Deputy Commander of U.S. Central Command, and I am excited to see him confirmed.

So, Madam President, we can confirm that nomination by voice vote tonight. We will vote on this man: 9 deployments, 13 real-world operations. He is a warrior.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 196, Charles B. Cooper, II, to be Vice Admiral; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama. 

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, I am bringing forward VADM Brad Cooper on the floor once again, and I hope that my colleague will choose to support him.

So I served in the Iowa Army National Guard, and I am really proud of that service. So I deployed overseas with the Iowa Army National Guard as a young Company Commander. I was the first female to command my unit. It was the same unit that my father had served in when he was a young Sergeant in the Iowa Army National Guard. He was a mechanic. He is the salt of the Earth.

And I was so proud to grow up and serve alongside some really incredible Iowa Army National Guardsmen. They worked so hard. They worked so hard on that deployment, Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Now, I was gone from 2003 to 2004. My daughter, she was 3 years old when I deployed, and she was nearly 5 years old when I returned home. So my daughter—again, she is a Second Lieutenant serving Active-Duty U.S. Army. And she told me—it has probably been a year ago—she had read an interesting statistic about children who have mothers that wore the uniform. And she told me that that statistic was that 80 percent of the children who have mothers that wore the uniform will go into the service.

She said: Mom, I didn’t have a choice. So she did; she went into the U.S. Army. And I encouraged that, and I am so proud of her for her service. Again, she is a young officer. I know she is disappointed by what she sees today—in particular, this evening. And I hope that I want the folks to know—and in a roundabout way I am coming to this. But all of these holds are affecting our men and women in the military. They are affecting the families of these men and women. Like I said, 80 percent of the children whose mothers wore the uniform are more likely to go into than those who didn’t have a mother who served.

But right now, today, 37 percent of Active-Duty families are likely to receive military aid. And I hope that is going on today.

And I have heard my colleague say we shouldn’t be injecting politics into
the military and that President Biden did that and Lloyd Austin, Secretary of Defense, did that. But what are we doing to these military men and women? Politics are being injected right here, today. We have men and women who deserve to be promoted, to serve where their country knows they are needed.

And our military families today are saying: You know what, I don’t want my kid serving in the military because they won’t be used as political pawns.

That is dishonorable, and it is abhorrent. So I served. Col. DAN SULLIVAN served. We understand the significance of service and being willing to lay down your life for a fellow countryman.

This next gentleman that I am bringing forward, we have something in common because this gentleman is a native of Spencer, IA. He enlisted into the Iowa Army National Guard, OK? He enlisted in 1981. That was my Salt of the Earth, just like my father, who enlisted in the Iowa Army National Guard.

This gentleman is LTG James J. Mingus. He is appointed to the grade of General and nominated to be the next Vice Chief of Staff of the Army. Again, he enlisted into the Iowa Army National Guard in 1981. He graduated from Winona State University in Minnesota, our neighbor to the north, and he commissioned into the Army infantry.

During more than 38 years of service, Lieutenant General Mingus has commanded at every echelon from company to brigade in addition to working in key staff positions in both Army, Special Operations Forces, and joint units. He is a decorated warfighter with extensive combat service. He deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom 12 times from 2001 to 2012.

Lieutenant General Mingus has distinguished himself with honor, having been awarded for meritorious achievement in a combat zone. He is the hardworking public servant who knows the needs of our soldiers and their families. I have full confidence that he will continue to modernize the Army and maintain our highly trained and lethal force to fight and win our Nation’s wars. The problem is, he can’t do it if he is not serving in that position.

I firmly believe that his qualifications, record, and character make him exceptionally eligible for this promotion, and I look forward to confirming him to be the Deputy Commander of U.S. Africa Command, a very important position.

I firmly believe that Major General Brennan’s qualifications, record, and character make him exceptionally eligible for this promotion, and I look forward to confirming him to be the Deputy Commander of U.S. Africa Command.

I want to talk about making these individuals political pawns in the grand scheme. So the VFW has recently done a survey. And they did surveys in every State and overseas territory of their members. These are veterans. Polls indicate those who are sworn to be apolitical. Those are the men and women who earned this promotion, is recognized for serving in a key position to national security and regional stability. The Captain is a two-time Naval Attache, having served in Athens, Greece; and Tel-Aviv, Israel.

He has extensive experience within the Defense Intelligence Agency Directorate of Operations, having served as the Chief of Operations for the DIA, Defense Attache Service, and the East Asia Division Chief.

He is a decorated warfighter with extensive combat service, having deployed to Afghanistan in direct support of Operation Enduring Freedom as a team leader in support of a sensitive collection mission.

Captain Schlereth distinguished himself with honor, having been awarded the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat “V” for valorous achievement in a combat zone during his deployment.

I also believe that the Captain’s qualifications, record, and character make him exceptionally eligible for this appointment and promotion.

Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 103, Frank G. Schlereth, III, to be Rear Admiral (lower half); that the Senate vote about MG John W. Brennan, Jr., on his appointment to the grade of Lieutenant General in the U.S. Army and his nomination to be the Deputy Commander of U.S. Africa Command.

Major General Brennan is currently serving as Special Assistant to the Commanding General of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command. This is no paper pusher, Madam President—and I have heard that phrase. Army Special Operations play a crucial role in competition and deterring great power war. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure this deserving officer, who earned this promotion, is confirmed to this key national security position.

The good Major General is a decorated warfighter with extensive combat service in Iraq, Afghanistan, and in the Inherent Resolve Campaign, having recently served as Commander of Combined Operations Inherent Resolve just last year. He distinguished himself with honor, having been awarded a Bronze Star with “V” for valor.

I firmly believe that Major General Brennan’s qualifications, record, and character make him exceptionally eligible for this promotion, and I look forward to confirming him to be the Deputy Commander of U.S. Africa Command, a very important position.

Again, “V” for valor.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 130, John W. Brennan, Jr., to be Lieutenant General in the U.S. Army and his nomination to be the Deputy Commander of U.S. Africa Command; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, we will proceed to COL Peter G. Hart, Jr., to the grade of Brigadier General.

Colonel Hart is currently fulfilling a crucial role as an Army Strategist for the U.S. Central Command. As a 23-year combat veteran and retired Lieutenant Colonel of our great U.S. Army, I am proud to stand up for this valiant officer who has answered the selfless call to service and earned this promotion in the U.S. Army.

I want to talk about making these individuals political pawns in the grand scheme.
who serve in uniform. There is a growing division. It will continue to grow wider.

So, therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Colonel Peter G. Hart to be Brigadier General in the U.S. Army, under Executive Calendar No. 94; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be cancelled; and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I just want to spend just an instant here and lay on the table. I just want to hear about from two officers just today on this issue of readiness, on this issue of maybe this whole episode is creating a “Fat Leonard” scandal 2.0 that is like I said earlier when the Navy had several of their top officers kind of wiped out due to corruption. They lost a whole generation of senior officers with specific fleet experience, which we are still actually dealing with.

What we are starting to see here—I am hearing it; I have a lot of contacts; I have my colleagues whom I have served with. We are starting to see that here. Imagine we are facing a really, really dangerous world, that we have Senate politics driving military officers—our best—I mean, are you listening to these bios? All 30, 35 years of incredible combat experience. And we are driving them out.

As Senator GRAHAM said, some are going to be timed out, eventually. A couple are hitting that already. If you get selected and you don’t pin on by a certain time, you are gone. Think about how bitter you would be.

But here is the other thing. Just today, I heard it, too—I am not going to name them—Navy officers who are saying: You know, I think I am done with this. I did 28 years. I did seven deployments, and I am hearing it. I have a lot of contacts; I have some who are saying: You know, I think I am done with this. I did 28 years. I did seven deployments.

So, Madam President, let’s get back to this. Maybe my colleague will have a change of heart here. Maybe he will get back to folks—whoa, maybe we should. And, by the way, we have the perfect opportunity for someone in a really, really important billet. This is a regular order, by the way, for 200 years, the Senate has voted for nominees by voice vote at one- and two- and three-star General levels. It is different for the four-star. But this is regular order.

So my colleague hasn’t answered the question yet. It would be good to hear why because we are putting time and effort into it. I actually thought he was going to come down and say, Hey, you know what? You guys did what I mentioned, one at a time, each one, regular order.

So, what are you going to make us vote on a Brigadier General with a Silver Star twice? That probably has never happened in U.S. history. I don’t know. It would be good to get an answer to that question.

By the way, on Iowa, what a great story from my colleague. You know, I was doing some training in Alaska many years ago, and the Iowa National Guard had an issue; by the way, there was a huge, big, got a picture, sent it back to Senator ERNST, Corn-fed. You don’t want to mess with the Iowa National Guard. I would say that for sure.

So, Madam President, let’s get back to this. Maybe my colleague will have a change of heart here. Maybe he will get back to folks—whoa, maybe we should. And, by the way, we have the perfect opportunity for someone in a really, really important billet. And this is for Maj. Gen. David Iverson, to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Chief of Staff, U.S. Forces Korea—Commander, Combined Air Component Command; United Nations Command; Combined Air Command, Combined Forces Command, Korea, and Commander, 7th U.S. Air Force, Pacific Air Forces; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be cancelled and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, what was another downgrade of readiness for America right there.

Madam President, let me go into another very, very impressive military member. We don’t talk about this part of our military that much; but, boy, oh boy, did I talk about this part of our military. This is for Maj. Gen. Andrew Gebara, of the U.S. Air Force, to be promoted to Lieutenant General and Deputy Chief of Staff...
for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration, Headquarters, U.S. Air Force.

Let me run that by you again: strategic deterrence with nukes and nuclear integration.

I would say that is a pretty darned important billet.

Let’s hear about Major General Gebara’s 32-year career. He has served as the Commander of the 323rd Weapons Squadron, Eighth Air Force, and Joint-Global Strike Operations Center. Major General Gebara is a command pilot with more than 3,800 flight hours.

There you go. The best, most experienced military members in the world, right here, sitting on the sidelines, not in the game. On the bench. And we can change that right now: 46 combat air sorties, and everything—get this—from the A-10 to the B-2. This guy is a stud.

In support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Major General Gebara most recently served as Special Assistant to the Head of the Staff of the Headquarters, U.S. Air Force. And we can confirm this nomination by a voice vote right now.

Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 51, Andrew J. Gebara, to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Deterrance and Nuclear Integration, Headquarters, Air Force; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama. Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, again, strategic nuclear deterrence. Pretty darned important. I guess he is going to have to sit on the sidelines for longer.

I want to go now to another element of our military, and that is Special Operations. And this is an opportunity for a really storied military leader, Lt. Gen. James Slife, U.S. Air Force, to be four-star General and Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force. Again, you have the Chiefs of Staff—those are the Joint Chiefs—and then they have the Vice Chiefs. The Vice Chiefs are so important because they run the enterprise of the Air Force. This General will essentially run the Air Force in so many ways. Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force. This is one of the most important nominations of the evening.

Let’s hear about Lieutenant General Slife. Again, 33-year career. Putting all his time, effort—I am sure his family’s efforts—dedicated patriot to America. Has served most of his career in aviation special operations. Senator Ernst knows a lot about that. He has held commands at the Air Force Special Operations Command, 1st Special Operations Wing, and 27th Special Operations Group—33 years. Imagine what this patriot has done to protect America. He probably can’t talk about half of it. He has deployed extensively over three decades of combat operations all over the world, most recently in Afghanistan. Lieutenant General Slife most recently served as Deputy Chief of Operations for Headquarters, Air Force. This General, right now, if we just have one Senator say “good to go,” will be confirmed as Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force. Therefore, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 338, James C. Slife to be General and Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama. Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. This next one, I believe, is an empty billet. I am pretty sure. I have to double-check my math here.

This is Shoshana Chatfield to be Vice Admiral and U.S. Military Representative to NATO, NATO. There is a lot going on in NATO right now, and we don’t have this Vice Admiral in her position as a Military Representative to NATO? That is not impacting readiness?

Let’s hear about Rear Admiral Chatfield’s 35-year naval career. She is a pilot. She has commanded HC-5 and, upon its disestablishment, was the Commanding Officer of HSC-25, the Island Knights. She subsequently commanded a Joint Provisional Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan, was a Type Wing Commander of the HSC Wing in the U.S. Pacific Fleet, and the Commander of the Joint Region Marianas.

Think about that experience. Think about that experience. We need people with that experience that we are talking about tonight. Everybody is at least 30 years. It is like over 1,000 years. It makes you proud as an American. It makes me sure darn proud.

Thank you, Rear Admiral Downey. For your 36 years of service to our great Nation and great U.S. Navy.

He served as the Commander of the Navy Regional Maintenance Center—both do we need excellent maintenance for our Navy—and as the Program Executive Officer for U.S. Aircraft Carriers. Wow, that is great experience, and we need that every day.

He most recently served as Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition. Additional operational assignments include Intelligence Briefing Officer to the Commander and Chief, Combined Forces Command, U.S. Forces Korea, and multiple deployments in the North Atlantic, Baltic, Arctic Circle—probably up in my neck of the woods in Alaska—and the Indo-Pacific. Incredible experience here.

We need to promote him, and we can do it right now with a voice vote, right here. We are bringing up individual nominees, individual votes, as my colleague from Alabama requested, so let’s do it.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of
Ms. ERNST. Madam President, we have another opportunity to vote on another outstanding officer. This one is COL Scott D. Wilkinson, and he has been promoted to the grade of Brigadier General.

As an Army veteran myself, I know and understand the importance of recognizing this deserving officer who earned his promotion in the U.S. Army. He is a decorated warriorfighter. He distinguished himself with honor for meritorious achievement in a combat zone during his deployment.

As a Captain—a young O3 is what we call them in the Army—Colonel Wilkinson provided precision close air support over a 6-hour period using night vision goggles, with zero illumination, in a complex urban environment, enabling the assault and ejection of a combined joint task force under heavy enemy fire.

I am proud to be here on this floor as well standing shoulder to shoulder with my Marine Corps friend, COL Dan Sullivan of Alaska.

You can read through this little, brief description of COL Scott D. Wilkinson.

For those of us who have served and have been part of a team and have been deployed, we understand the significance of having close air support.

I served as a Transportation Company Commander when I deployed, and I will tell you that having close air support training in the training manual is different than having it call away—always made my drivers and me feel a lot better about things. I know Colonel Sullivan, as an infantryman, also understands what it is to have that close air support and how important those men and women over here are during battle.

So, COL Scott D. Wilkinson, I am really glad to give you close air support tonight. Those of us who have worked on a team understand how significant it is to have one another's back and make sure these men and women are protected.

With this close air support, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: COL Scott D. Wilkinson to be Brigadier General in the U.S. Army under Executive Calendar No. 94; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, we are going to move next to COL Joseph W. Wortham II.

I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 94, COL Joseph W. Wortham II to the grade of Brigadier General.

Again, we are seeing a pattern. We have Colonel Wortham. He is a decorated warriorfighter and, again, as a Captain, as an O3, his brave and decisive actions saved the life of a severely wounded American and defeated a large enemy force in Iraq in 2005. Again, he was part of an incredible team. He didn't turn his back on his teammate; he saved his life. It is crucial to ensure that this deserving officer, who earned this promotion, is recognized.

Colonel Wortham, again, is part of a glorious team and was first commissioned into the Army in 1996 through Auburn University's Reserve Officer Training Corps.

During his 25 years of service, he participated in operations in Egypt, Israel, and Lebanon, as well as combat operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria. His understanding of Kurdish culture and training in the Turkish language proved essential for his repeated deployments to the Kurdish regions of Iraq and Syria.

I firmly believe that Colonel Wortham's qualifications, record, and character make him exceptionally eligible for this promotion, and by the fact that he went through Auburn University's ROTC Program.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: War hero who saved the life of a fellow soldier, COL Joseph W. Wortham II, to be Brigadier General in the United States Army under Executive Calendar No. 94; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa.
to Members who are on this floor, off the floor, if they would like to talk about Captain Donovan.

I truly believe that we must stand up for the security and protection of our Nation, and I am proud to recognize this deserving officer, who earned this promotion, and highlight his selfless call to serve.

I firmly believe that Captain Donovan’s qualifications, record, and character make him exceptionally eligible for this appointment and promotion.

Now, I know Captain Donovan. I know him quite well. There may be mufflings over some of these younger officers. We have spent just a brief time talking about them on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Those who are out watching on C-SPAN, or maybe in clips tomorrow, will understand why some of these presentations are very brief.

For those in this Chamber that don’t understand why these presentations are very brief, they shouldn’t be here obstructing these nominations. I will let that sink in.

OK, CAPT Thomas A. Donovan.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: CAPT Thomas A. Donovan to be Rear Admiral (lower half) in the Navy, under Executive Calendar No. 97; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. And I am very sorry to hear that.

Agreed, we have got another very short presentation here. I will have to explain it to my colleagues that maybe haven’t served why they are brief.

Madam President, I call to the floor Executive Calendar No. 97, CAPT Joshua Lasky, for appointment to Rear Admiral (lower half).

As a 23-year combat veteran myself and a retired Lieutenant Colonel of our great U.S. Army, I am proud to stand up for this valiant officer who has answered the call to service and earned this promotion in the U.S. Navy.

I firmly believe that Captain Lasky’s qualifications, record, and character make him exceptionally eligible for this promotion. And, again, I will have to visit with folks off the floor to explain more about Captain Lasky. He is fully deserving of this promotion, and I am very sorry to acknowledge that he also will probably be objected to—one more hero that will be objected to this evening.

So not only have we seen Senator SCHUMER dragging his feet on these nominations, but tonight we have had the exceptional opportunity—I think we have had maybe 40 of these nominations brought forward, but we are still dragging our feet on these. We are voting on them one by one, one by one, one by one—just as our colleague asked, one by one. These are men and women who wish to uphold the Constitution, the very Constitution that my colleague is saying he is protecting. They are sworn to uphold, and they would do it with their blood. Some of these men have done it with their blood. I am waiting.

So, Madam President, we can confirm this nomination by voice vote right here, tonight, individually—individually brought up, just as my colleague has asked.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: CAPT Joshua Lasky to be Rear Admiral (lower half) in the Navy under Executive Calendar No. 97; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I am still—I think we are both, Senator ERNST and I. We are still just kind of confused on the “one by one.” As my colleague and friend—he is my friend. So I mean that sincerely. He said: I am all for it if nominees come up one at a time, one by one, as my colleague and friend—he is my friend. I know him quite well. There may be some confusion on the “one by one,” as my colleague and friend—he is my friend. We are still just kind of confused on the “one by one.”

And some of these, you know, if you serve in the military long enough, you know these people personally. And the next nominee I want to talk about I know quite well, Kenneth Wilsbach. He is a four-star General right now, and he is in charge of the Pacific Air Forces—incrédible experience. General Wilsbach will move in to be the U.S. Air Force Commander of Air Combat Command, one of the top billets in the U.S. Air Force—a guy with incredible experience, a wonderful family and a wonderful wife.

He served as the Alaska Command Commander. That is the subcommand under INDOPACOM and NORTHCOM for Alaska—a three-star General in charge of all forces in Alaska. So I know him. He is an exceptional patriot and so deserving of this promotion.

And, by the way, it has nothing to do with the policy dispute that we actually agree on, all my colleagues here. Senator War in Afghanistan, and other soldiers—we will do it with their blood. I think it was Secretary Austin that light this fire was not helpful at all. The civilian military leadership over at the Pentagon—that is where I do agree with my colleague from Alabama. Certainly, there is more focus on nonwarfighting issues—the civilians, not the uniformed ones.

But let’s go back to General Wilsbach, a 38-year career in the Air Force—38 years. I know this guy, a wonderful family. He is a patriot warrior. He has commanded a fighter squadron and operation group, two wings, two numbered Air Forces, and held various staff assignments, including Director of Operations, Combined Air Operations Center, Director of Operations U.S. Central Command.

Central Command—that is the Middle East. I was a staff officer out there, for a year and a half, to our CENTCOM Commander many years ago.

So General Wilsbach has great Middle East experience, which we need today, but he also has great INDOPACOM experience. Right now, he is the Commander of Pacific Air Forces—right now. He is doing a great job. If General Wilsbach is going to be in wartime with China, this is the guy who knows it. I mean, you can’t ask for better experience.

Let’s continue with General Wilsbach. He is a command pilot with more than 5,000 hours of flying—and we are going to put him on a bench—in multiple aircrafts, primarily F–15Cs, F16Cs, MC–12s, and F–22 Alphas. We have a lot of those in Alaska. And he has flown 71 combat missions in Operation Freedom Watch, and Operation Enduring Freedom.

As I mentioned, General Wilsbach currently serves as the Commander of the Pacific Air Forces, the Air Component Commander of U.S. INDOPACOM, and the Executive Director of the Pacific Air Combat Operations staff.

A great patriot, whom we need to confirm right now—we can do it. We can do it right now by voice vote—regular order, by the Food, War, regular order. Don’t say it is not because it is, and we are doing them individually, which is what was asked.

So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 198, Kenneth S. Wilsbach, to be Commander of U.S. Air Combat Command, one of the most important commands in the U.S. Air Force—in the U.S. military, let’s face it—that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, let me talk about another really important billet that I know a lot about, given that a lot of its assets are in...
The Senate from Alabama.
Mr. TUBERVILLE, I object.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.
Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, by the way, thank you for presiding tonight. America is doing, and we always need people, and all the staff. It is getting a little late here. So we appreciate it. This is important for our country, and maybe we are going to get a change of heart from my colleague at a certain point because I am going to turn now to the Navy. I got a bunch of nominations that relate to the Navy.
Now, I have been very critical of the Biden administration. The President's budget the last 3 years has shrunk the Army, shrunk the Navy, shrunk the whole darn Nation, our great warriors up there, and the Missile Defense Agency is really, really important. Here is the opportunity. The Missile Defense Agency is really, really important. Let us do it. Let us do it right now.
So let us do it right now, by voice vote, for this great patriot.
I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 192, Yvette M. Davids, to be Vice Admiral and Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy.

Yvette M. Davids is currently the Acting Commander for Naval Surface Force for the U.S. Pacific Fleet—an important position. The Naval Academy—I know it because I am on the Board. We want her to get there. We certainly want her to get there in time for the Army-Navy game so the U.S. Naval Academy can beat Army badly. Sorry, my colleagues from the Army. We got to have a little fun here tonight.
So let us do it right now, by voice vote, for this great patriot.
I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 192, Yvette M. Davids, to be Vice Admiral and Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?
The Senator from Alabama.
Mr. TUBERVILLE, I object.
So let us hear about Rear Admiral McLaine's 33-year Navy career. Again, are you noticing something? It is 33, 34, 35—General Wilsbach, 38 years. Patriots—and now they are like: Wait. Why am I stuck? Why are they going after my career? It is something I have to deal with. It is wrong. We all know it is wrong. It is wrong.

In Rear Admiral McLaine's 33-year naval career, he has served as the Commander of Destroyer Squadron 50—a huge deal—commanded Task Force 55 and Coalition Task Force 152, U.S. Fifth Fleet. Additionally, he served aboard the USS Lewis B. Puller, the USS Vicksburg, the USS Moosbrugger, Destroyer Squadron 14, the USS Simpson. Jeez, look at all of these commands and deployments.

While in command of the USS Kearny, his ship won the Battle "E" and Battenberg Cup and deployed with the Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group for the U.S. Fifth Fleet. By the way, the "Ike" carrier strike group is in the Middle East right now.

In major command, he served as Commodore of Destroyer Squadron 50, commanded Task Force 55 and Coalition Task Force 152, U.S. Fifth Fleet—again, the Middle East.

Most recently, Rear Admiral McLaine served as the 60th Commander of Naval Surface Force Atlantic.

The amount of experience we are hearing tonight that we are not letting go fight and protect our nation—it makes you humble, by the way, when you hear about all these great patriots, but it sure makes me frustrated. They are on the bench.

But let us try and get them off the bench. We can confirm this nominee by voice vote right now.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 198, Christopher S. Gray, to be Admiral and Commander, Navy Installations Command; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama. Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. I would ask that my colleagues yield so that I can ask unanimous consent to prepare for tomorrow's session.

Ms. ERNST. I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REED. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 367; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I yield the floor, and I yield back to the Senator from Iowa.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

Mr. REED. Madam President, our next nomination is a fine officer serving in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve.

Our colleague from Alaska, Col. DAN SULLIVAN, also serves in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. I will read a little bit about this gentleman, and we will take an individual vote on the floor this evening. I am hoping, because this gentleman does deserve to be promoted and placed into his next position.

So this gentleman is Maj. Gen. Leonard F. Anderson IV, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, to be Lieutenant General and Commander of Marine Forces Reserve, Commander Marine Forces, South. So here is a little bit about the good General. The Major General most recently served as the Commanding General of the 4th Marine Aircraft Wing. He does have some prior experience as well in serving as the Assistant Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations, but Major General Anderson also served in a marine aviation logistics squadron. So it is interesting that the Executive Calendar number for Maj. Gen. Leonard F. Anderson is 268. I also—no, in the Marines, but I served in an aviation battalion, which is a logistics battalion, supporting aviation, the 248th Aviation Support Battalion. This gentleman has...
The Lieutenant General most recently served as Deputy Commander of U.S. Cyber Command. Anyone, if they are paying attention, understands how important Cyber Command is. Again, the Lieutenant General has served as the Deputy Commander of U.S. Cyber Command. He is a fellow marine. It is H-A-U-G-H. Please pronounce his name. It is H-A-U-G-H. I apologize to the gentleman if I am mispronouncing his name. It is H-A-U-G-H.

Ms. ERNST. “Oorah.”

Mr. TUBERVILLE. “Oorah.”

OK. A fellow marine.

To my good friend and colleague, Col. DAN SULLIVAN, Senator Sullivan of Alaska, we have Maj. Gen. James H. Adams III to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Commandant for Programs and Resources Headquarters of U.S. Marine Corps.

Brigadier General Hanson has most recently served as the Mobilization Assistant to the Director of Operations for Air Combat Command. A number of us who serve in the Senate have worn the uniform of our Nation and have deployed, and we understand how important these activities are. Especially when you have a good friend at Mobilization and Operations for Air Combat Command.

Through the mobilization process, there are a lot of logistics there in moving folks around. So we know that Brigadier General Hanson is very well qualified to move into this position at Programs and Resources at the Headquarters of the U.S. Marine Corps. He has served in numerous positions at the squadron, the group, and numbered Air Force and Combatant Command levels as an Active-Duty and traditional Reservist and individual mobility augmenting member.

General Hanson has flown the A-10 and F-16 in a variety of operational assignments and is a command pilot with more than 3,400 flying hours and over 200 combat hours. He has deployed in support of Operations Desert Storm, Southern Watch, Noble Eagle, Willing Spirit, and Enduring Freedom.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I object. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. OK. We will move on to the next nominee, and we will bring to the table now No. 291, James H. Adams III to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Commandant for Programs and Resources Headquarters of U.S. Marine Corps.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I object. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I object.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I object. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I object. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, our next nominee as well is hoping to be confirmed this evening, again, by an individual vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Just as my colleague has asked, has demanded, my colleagues and I this evening are attempting to satisfy that demand for single votes on the floor of the U.S. Senate. We are providing that avenue of opportunity this evening and are hoping that we will see the confirmations of some of America’s finest fighting men and women, who have absolutely nothing to do with the policy that has been proposed by the Senate and the President.

In front of us, we have MG Charles D. Costanza. He is a member of the U.S. Army. He is being nominated as Lieutenant General and Commanding General of V Corps.

Over Major General Costanza’s 32-year career—again, another plus 30 years of experience and decorations during war—he has served as the Commanding General of the 3rd Infantry Division, the Deputy Chief of Staff for U.S. Army Europe, and the Director of Training for the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff. Major General Costanza’s deployments include to Iraq in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. Major General Costanza has most recently served as Special Assistant to the Commanding General, U.S. Army Forces Command.

Once again, as an individual vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 282, Timothy D. Haugh, to be Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, and Director of the National Security Agency—an extremely important position.

Mr. President, I object. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Ms. ERNST. OK. We will move on to the next nominee, and we will bring to the table now No. 291, James H. Adams III to be Lieutenant General and Deputy Commandant for Programs and Resources Headquarters of U.S. Marine Corps.

Brigadier General Hanson has most recently served as the Mobilization Assistant to the Director of Operations for Air Combat Command. A number of us who serve in the Senate have worn the uniform of our Nation and have deployed, and we understand how important these activities are. Especially when you have a good friend at Mobilization and Operations for Air Combat Command.

Through the mobilization process, there are a lot of logistics there in moving folks around. So we know that Brigadier General Hanson is very well qualified to move into this position at Programs and Resources at the Headquarters of the U.S. Marine Corps. He has served in numerous positions at the squadron, the group, and numbered Air Force and Combatant Command levels as an Active-Duty and traditional Reservist and individual mobility augmenting member.

General Hanson has flown the A-10 and F-16 in a variety of operational assignments and is a command pilot with more than 3,400 flying hours and over 200 combat hours. He has deployed in support of Operations Desert Storm, Southern Watch, Noble Eagle, Willing Spirit, and Enduring Freedom.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 282, Timothy D. Haugh, to be Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, and Director of the National Security Agency—an extremely important position.

Mr. President, I object. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.
The Senator from Alabama.  
Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I object.  

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.  

The Senator from Alaska.  
Mr. SULLIVAN. It is good to see the Presiding Officer in the Chair. I appreciate his being here.  

Mr. President, several of my nominations that I have been trying to get my colleague to agree with—again, he still hasn’t answered the quote “If they want to vote on these nominees one at a time, I am all for it. I will probably vote for them.” He still hasn’t answered that. We are doing it. We are doing it. This is not a joke either. We are watching the experience of America’s greatest military generation probably since World War II just kind of being flushed down a river right now. Just listen to this.  

Now, the one thing that is really disturbing to me is how many of these nominees are from the U.S. Navy. My dad was in the Navy. I love the U.S. Navy. But we know that the Navy right now is being stressed. The President sent two carrier strike groups over to the Middle East. We need carrier strike groups in the INDO PACOM.  

President Biden—and I criticize him a lot for this—is shrinking the Navy. That is idiotic. But our Navy officers and enlisted are going through a really stressful period because they are needed all over the world and they are ready or are trying to be ready for any kind of contingency. It is tough to do a 9-month deployment and then come around, do the maintenance, and get back at it.  

But what I have been noticing is how many of these holds are impacting the Navy. I am going to go through like five more right now. I just did five. If we want to be a global, capable, powerful nation, especially today, you need a strong Navy.  

And the idea of reading these military members’ experiences and how there is this big jam-up now, that this is not impacting readiness is patently absurd—patently absurd—with all due respect to my colleague.  

So let’s just keep talking about the Navy and the men and women in the Navy and the great experience that they have. We need a lot of help from our Navy and the Chinese are loving it. How dumb can we be, man?  

But we can confirm this guy, if my colleague just has a change of heart, because we are going to bring them up individually.  

So, therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 197, James E. Pitts, to be Admiral and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfighting Requirements and Capabilities, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.  

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?  

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, here we go again, more Navy. Like I said, the Navy is stressed, but we do have a great Navy. God love the U.S. Navy. And our submarine force, like I said, keeps Xi Jinping and his communist dictator admirals up at night. And it should because we could crush them with our Navy, as long as it is ready—as long as it is ready.  

Well, let’s talk about Admiral Dwyer. He is the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Integration, the N2, the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. Admiral Dwyer’s prior operational assignments include service in both fast attack and ballistic missile subs. Who has that experience? No one else in the world has that experience. It includes service as a division officer, USS Flying Fish, SSN–673; navigator officer, USS Oklahoma City, SSN–723; executive officer, USS Maryland; commanding officer, USS City of Corpus Christi to be Vice Admiral and Commander of Allied Submarine Development Squadron 5.  

I certainly hope that this isn’t one of these Admirals who is going to be like: You know what, 35 years, I have all of this experience, I am sick of this. I am leaving.  

Could you imagine if this Admiral, with this submarine experience, walked out the door because of the games being played right now? That is a risk. That is a risk, and we don’t seem to give a damn. I give a damn.  

During these tours, he completed three strategic deterrent patrols in U.S. submarines, as well as deployments to the Arctic—my neighborhood—and the Caribbean, North Atlantic, and the Mediterranean. This is incredible submarine experience.  

By the way, Xi Jinping is watching us right now going: I can’t believe they are not letting these guys command. I am scared to death of subs. He is loving this, so is Putin. They are loving it. How dumb can we be, man?  

And our submarine force, like I said, keeps Xi Jinping and his communist dictator admirals up at night. And it should because we could crush them with our Navy, as long as it is ready—worried about a dispute, which is a serious dispute. I don’t deny that at all. Again, I am where the Senator from Alabama is on that. But these guys have nothing to do with it. All we are doing is hurting our own national security by keeping them on the bench.  

So let’s get him confirmed right now. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 204, Robert Gaucher, to be Vice Admiral and Commander of Naval Submarine Forces Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, and Commander of Allied Submarine Command; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.  

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?  

Mr. SULLIVAN. It is good to see the Presiding Officer in the Chair. I appreciate his being here.  

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, here we go again, more Navy. Like I said, the Navy is stressed, but we do have a great Navy. God love the U.S. Navy. Again—I just thought of this—the Chinese admirals and their military, they are probably watching this debate right now, going: I can’t believe my luck. I can’t believe our luck. Maybe we should attack Taiwan tomorrow.  

The whole Navy is being held up. Let’s go to another Navy officer.  

This is Daniel W. Dwyer to be Vice Admiral and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfighting Development, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. OK. We have had a lot of good bios here tonight, with a lot of experience. When I saw Vice Admiral Dwyer’s experience, I was like: Wow. This should scare the heck out of every Chinese admiral, every Chinese military official when they read this guy’s bio.  

So let me read it. I hope we can get him confirmed because he is sitting on the bench, and the Chinese are cheering.  

Over Vice Admiral Dwyer’s 35-year naval career—there we go; 35 years, 40 years—he has commanded Strike...
Fighter Squadron, VFA–27; Provincial Reconstruction Team, Kunar Province, Afghanistan; Fleet Replacement Squadron, VFA–106; Carrier Air Wing 8; Carrier Air Wing 17.

As a flag officer—that means as an Admiral—Admiral Dwyer commanded the Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group, the big stick that every country in the world, including China, fears. He commanded the Teddy Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group. That is unbelievable experience. And he was the 36th Chief of Naval Operations—very impressive career—over 30 years. He has commanded the Commander of Joint Forces Command, Commander of Second Fleet, Commander of U.S. Space Forces—so damned qualified; that is the USS Pittsburgh, SSN–720; executive officer, operations officer aboard Submarine NR–1; and executive officer of the USS Maine. These are all subs. This is another great Admiral with great submarine experience, just what keeps the Chinese up at night, and we are going to bench him. That is SSBN–741.

His deployment experiences span the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, the Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic, and Pacific—essentially, the whole world. As commander of the条条and the Commander of the Second Fleet, he led the ship on highly successful deployments to the Eastern and Western Pacific. Again, that is a sub. Perry has served as Commander of the Submarine Development Squadron 5, where he led Submarine Force Development of Unmanned Systems and Tactics and Employment and commanded the Navy squadron of Seawolf-class fast-attack subs. These guys are all submariners. The Chinese are scared to death of them, and we are benching them. What are we doing?

Most recently, Perry served as Director of Undersea Warfare Division of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. He is another great submariner to keep an eye on. He is another great submariner to keep one more before I turn it over to Maj Gen Douglas A. Schiess. And I apologize for saying that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama, Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard. Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, here we go, crushing the Navy. Here is another Navy Admiral that we are going to have him sit on the bench. This is kind of remarkable. I mean, we are going to get to about 60 of these tonight. The experience here is unbelievable, but the U.S. Navy is really being hurt by this, and we need a strong Navy.

Again, the Chinese are like—they are watching it, I guarantee you. Hello, guys. And they are like: Gosh, I can’t believe these guys are here.

So let’s keep talking about whom we are going to bench now. This is Douglas G. Perry to be Vice Admiral and Commander of Second Fleet, Commander of Joint Forces Command Norfolk.

Let’s look at Rear Admiral Perry’s incredibly impressive career—over 30 years. He began his career serving as a sea division officer, Navy diver, aboard the USS Pittsburgh, SSN–720; executive officer, operations officer aboard Submarine NR–1; and executive officer of the USS Maine. These are all subs. This is another great Admiral with great submarine experience, just what keeps the Chinese up at night, and we are going to bench him. That is SSBN–741.

HIS deployment experiences span the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, the Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic, and Pacific—essentially, the whole world. As commander of the条条and the Commander of the Second Fleet, he led the ship on highly successful deployments to the Eastern and Western Pacific. Again, that is a sub. Perry has served as Commander of the Submarine Development Squadron 5, where he led Submarine Force Development of Unmanned Systems and Tactics and Employment and commanded the Navy squadron of Seawolf-class fast-attack subs. These guys are all submariners. The Chinese are scared to death of them, and we are benching them. What are we doing?

Most recently, Perry served as Director of Undersea Warfare Division of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. He is another great submariner to keep an eye on. He is another great submariner to keep one more before I turn it over to Maj Gen Douglas A. Schiess. And I apologize for saying that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama, Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The Senator from Iowa, Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, so I am going to pick up where my colleague is leaving off. We will keep on with the Space Force theme as we go forward here.

I am bringing forward another really fantastic nominee, and this is Maj Gen Douglas A. Schiess. And I apologize again if I am getting these names wrong, but, heck, maybe we will get them confirmed tonight, and we won’t have to read it again on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

So Maj Gen Douglas A. Schiess, U.S. Space Force, to be Lieutenant General and Commander, U.S. Space Forces—Space Combined Joint Force Space Component Commander—again, serving as a joint force, just as Senator SULLIVAN and I are operating as a joint force here on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

We have another really great nominee with a lot of years of service to this incredible country. He has a 31-year career. And we have heard a lot of these guys. They are 30-plus. We have seen a lot of lower officers just being promoted to Brigadier General. But let me tell you, these men and women who have over 30 years of service are to be commended. As my colleague from
Alaska has said, they have been put on the bench. I would think we would want the players with the most experience, the most finesse, the means to get a job done—I think we would want them in the game.

So Maj Douglas Schiess has that 31-year career. He has commanded 4th Space Operations Squadron. He has been with the 45th Operations Group, the 21st Space Wing, and the 45th Space Wing. He deployed to Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar in support of Operations Enduring Freedom, Resolute Support, and Inherent Resolve. Most recently, he served as the Vice Commander for Space Operations Command, U.S. Space Force.

Those who have paid attention in the last handful of years as we have developed our U.S. Space Force understand that this is a very important domain moving forward. So not only do we have land, sea, and air; now we have space as well.

I am hopeful that we will move forward on this nomination—again, 31 years of honorable service. He certainly deserves to be placed in this position of authority, Mr. President.

So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 392, Douglas A. Schiess to be Lieutenant General and Commander, U.S. Space Forces—Space/Combined Joint Force Space Component Commander; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, we will move on to the next individual vote, as requested by my colleague from Alabama. Here we are moving on the floor of the U.S. Senate. I am glad to be joined by a number of colleagues in the Chamber this evening to support our men and women in uniform.

I do want to make the point—because we continue to talk about these incredible women in our service, who are working in the gray zone areas, we very, very bad policy at the Department of Defense, The men and women who are being brought forward tonight by Senator Dan Sullivan, by Senator Todd Young, by Senator Lindsey Graham, and myself, they have nothing to do with the DOD abortion policy; nothing to do with the DOD abortion policy.

I have joined in life marches. I have given life speeches. I have objected to the practice of abortion, late-term abortion, in Western Iowa, in Council Bluffs. I have done this, as I said, for three decades. I challenge anybody in this Chamber to be more pro-life than I am or more military than I am. I have served, and I have borne a child.

So our next nominee is Michael A. Guetlein. He is a Lieutenant General, U.S. Space Force, to be General and Vice Chief of Space Operations—an other incredible individual, a 32-year career. He also has served in command, leadership positions, at the flight, squadron, division, directorate, Program Executive Officer, and field command levels.

Lt Gen Guetlein’s commands include the Director of Remote Sensing Systems and the Commander for the Rapid React. As the Lieutenant General Guetlein most recently served as the Commander of Space Systems Command.

So, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 392, Michael A. Guetlein for appointment in the U.S. Space Force to be General and Commander, U.S. Space Force, to be General and Vice Chief of Space Operations—another incredible individual, a 32-year career. He also has served in command, leadership positions, at the flight, squadron, division, directorate, Program Executive Officer, and field command levels.

Lt Gen Guetlein’s commands include the Director of Remote Sensing Systems and the Commander for the Rapid React. As the Lieutenant General Guetlein most recently served as the Commander of Space Systems Command.

So, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 328, Lt Gen Stephen N. Whiting for appointment in the U.S. Space Force to be General and Commander, U.S. Space Command; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, this one hits home. It is another nominee from the Navy. Hey, I am Army, but I love my Navy brothers and sisters. I love them all. This one is a Navy sister.

This is Executive Calendar No. 347, Heidi K. Berg to be Rear Admiral. RDML Heidi K. Berg has—and as I was reading through the nominees, this struck me because she has an over 30-year career.

Now, I know—because I was commissioned over 30 years ago—I know what a difficult climb it has been for women who were entering into the U.S. armed forces at that time. Those women who entered in the seventies, eighties, nineties—they were trailblazers. They increasingly were put into positions of authority.

This Rear Admiral, Heidi Berg, has commanded in some very significant positions. She has commanded the Navy Information Operations Command in Bahrain, the Navy Element of...
the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the Joint Military Intelligence Training Center.

Rear Admiral Berg’s operational tours include Navy Security Group Activity in Rota, Spain, where Berg flew over 1,000 hours as a Communications Intercept Evaluator on board EP-3E aircraft in support of Operations Provide Promise/Sharp Guard, aboard the USS LaStalle, Italy, and as Director of the International Security Assistance Force Red Team at ISAF headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Most recently, Rear Admiral Berg served as the Assistant Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Operations, Plans and Strategy. And, again, we have had a number of women who have been brought up this evening in this debate, many of them having decades-plus experience. And I can tell you that women who were commissioned and have served over these last number of decades, they are to be commended. They have broken down barriers and allowed other women to see her and be her.

So for You, Admiral Heidi K. Berg, I commend you.

And I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 347, Heidi K. Berg, to be Rear Admiral; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Another one that I have known for a number of years now—this one is in the U.S. Army—and I am very proud to be able to bring forward this nomination this evening—again, an individual vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate, as asked by our colleague from Alabama. I hope that we can get this one over the finish line tonight.

So this nominee is Executive Calendar No. 390, Douglas A. Sims II. And he has been nominated to be Lieutenant General and Director of the Joint Staff. We have brought up so many incredible individuals this evening. All of them are incredibly important positions.

Now, if you are familiar in the military, we do have a Joint Staff. And as a Director, this gentleman would be making sure that that Joint Staff operates efficiently. Things just don’t happen in the military, especially when you don’t have the right leadership in the right positions.

So we have Lieutenant General Sims. He has a 32-year career. He has served as the Commanding General of the First Infantry Division, the Deputy Director for Regional Operations and Force Management, and the Deputy Commanding General for Operation Freedom’s Sentinel in Afghanistan.

Let me say that again: the Deputy Commanding General for Operation Freedom’s Sentinel in Afghanistan. The weight of his authority.

Lieutenant General Sims has completed three deployments to Afghanistan and two to Iraq. Most recently, Lieutenant General Sims, an exemplary man serving in the U.S. Army, served as the Director for Operations of the Joint Staff J-3.

Mr. President, I am going to try again. And I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 390, Douglas A. Sims II, to be Lieutenant General and Director, Joint Staff; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I just want to comment on my colleague here—Joint Forces, Marine Corps Army operation—but Senator ERNST was talking: she is being very humble. She is doing such a strong job on pro-life issues in the Senate and such a strong voice. And I just wanted to really commend her on that. We have had Senator GRAHAM here before. I am proud of my strong record on pro-life issues, I care deeply about it.

Ironically—I mean, of course, we don’t know, but I guarantee you—both of us know in the military so well—that these 380 officers and their families—I am sure not all but probably many, many—have very similar strong views on that important issue. And it is ironic that, somehow, they are being caught up in this, when you think about it. I am sure it is really bitter for them.

It is not just pro-life; it is pro-military women that we have here. And it is not just words. A lot of people just say: I support the troops. No. We have lived it. That is why we are here. It is 10 at night. That is why we have been on the floor for 4 hours. We have lived it, and we have seen the heroes we are talking about today. And we have seen their families.

When you join the military—I always tell my wife and three daughters—you know, whether you are wearing a uniform or not, you are serving. And sometimes—in my view, a lot of times—it is harder for the spouse and the kids who are home when you have deployments and they are caught up in all of this. We haven’t even talked about them. They are caught up, thousands of them—thousands of them. And there is polling out right now that is showing that the kids of military families, who are really the big pipeline in the continuing recruiting and people wanting to join the service, that the numbers are declining dramatically, when they are saying to me: Do you know what? I don’t think I want to do what mom and dad did. I think I am going to not do that. Those numbers are declining. And this isn’t helping. This isn’t helping.

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Again, my colleague—oh, no readiness problem. That is such baloney. Balone. And everybody knows it. Spend one day in the military, and you know it. It really makes me frustrated. Really frustrated. Yeah, guys taking incoming rights caught up in this. I have talked to them. This is just not right. It is not right. We all know it. We all know it.

Mr. President, let’s continue on. Another important promotion: a Major General in the U.S. Army, David Isaacson, to be Lieutenant General and Director for Command, Control, Comms and Computers and Cyber Chief Information Officer, J-6, for the U.S. Army.

By the way, that is another theme: subs, Navy, and a lot of cyber—a lot of information Officer, J–6, for the U.S. Army.

Let’s talk about Colonel Gallman: 29 years in the U.S. Marine Corps. He served as the Commanding Officer of the Marine Corps Marine Air Group 26—MAG-26—personnel support detachment, Marine Tilt Rotor Squadron, VMGR–162. He served on these air crews, Marine Aviation and Weapons Tactics Squadron, MAWT–1. Colonel Gallman has several deployments in support of combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Here we go, another Marine hero—an other Marine hero. By the way, he has nothing to do with this—nothing. He sacrificed—I am going to read what he did. And we are saying: Oh, these guys aren’t the warriors. What? Who the hell is saying that?

Colonel Gallman received the Air Medal with a Combat Distinguishing Device for heroic achievement in connection with operations against the enemy as a pilot of a CH–46 Sea Knight helicopter while attached to Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadr

Do I need to read that again for anybody? Pure courage. Pure heroism. And what is happening here? This Colonel needs to be promoted to Brigadier General in the Marines.

That is the way that is really hard to do in the Marines. There are not many Brigadier Generals.

Let’s look at Captain Mattingly’s 28-year career. And he is being benched at one of the most dangerous times since World War II. This isn’t hurting readiness? Come on. Mr. President, maybe we can get him confirmed.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 391, David T. Isaacson, to be Lieutenant General and Director for Command, Control, Communications, and Computer/Cyber and Chief Information Officer, J-6, Joint Staff—I misstated it earlier. That is not just for the Army. That is for the J-6. That is for the Joint Staff of the U.S. Military. Wow. Really important—that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.
AFRICOM, and CENTCOM; areas of responsibility as commander of multitask force groups. His major command was Commodore of Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 11. During his tenure as Commodore of CPRW-11, supported by a large initiative to include the inaugural INDOPACOM deployments of the MQ-4 Charlie Triton unmanned aerial systems in the PA Poseidon Advanced Airborne Sensor—that is a sub hunter—as well as the P-3C radar system.

Captain Mattingly’s most recent assignment was serving as Senior Military Advisor to the Secretary of the Navy. He is a naval aviator. He hunts subs, Russian and Chinese subs. How long has been he doing that? He has a little bit of experience here. Captain Mattingly—3,900 flight hours in P-3C Orions and P-8 Poseidon aircraft.

If you are a sub and you are an enemy of America, this guy has tracked you. Again, subs. The Chinese are scared to death of P-8s, and we have one of the best P-8 pilots in America, and he is on the bench, and Xi Jinping and his communist dictator buddies are smiling.

Maybe we can get him done with a voice vote because our colleague asked for individual votes. I think we are almost at 60 individual votes right now—great Americans.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: CAPT Craig T. Mattingly to be Rear Admiral (lower half) of the U.S. Navy under Executive Calendar No. 97; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama. Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, we have just a couple more to go as we wrap up the evening. We have been reading off these nominations as fast as our staff could get them to us, and I guarantee that my colleague, Senator SULLIVAN of Alaska, and I would go all night if we could. We won’t keep you in the Chair, Mr. President.

But we have seen a number of really incredible human beings come in front of us. Before I move on these nominations, that is what I want all of us to remember.

For those who might be viewing this evening, those who will read through this tomorrow, I want them to understand that these are human beings. They are men and women who serve our country for all different reasons. I can’t speak for Col. DAN SULLIVAN, but I believe it was that when I decided as a young woman to serve my country, it was truly because I wanted to serve my country because I believe that our country provided great opportunities for kids like me who came from nothing.

I literally came from nothing in Southwest Iowa. I am the first in my family to graduate from a 4-year school. My brother did not have the opportunity to go to college. He went into the workforce. My sister has an associate’s degree from a community college. My parents are both high school educated, and I am blessed that they were high school educated.

I had the great opportunity to attend an agricultural exchange while I was at Iowa State University, and that ag exchange took me to the USSR in 1989, to a place we now know as Ukraine. After living on that collective farm with my Ukrainian brother and sister and their then mother, I realized how important it was to have refrigeration, no car, no telephone. The kids I lived with had never traveled off of the collective farm.

After that experience and coming back to the United States, I understood the growing up on the farm in Southwest Iowa, that I was so very blessed to be an American.

My country afforded me all kinds of opportunities. Even though I came from a family without means, I could do anything. And I tell you what, when I was that kid, that 19-year-old kid who had traveled to the Soviet Union and back, I can tell you that my grandparents, at that time, would have never believed that that little kid would grow up and become a senator.

But what I took from that experience was that I was blessed. DAN was blessed. Coach is blessed. I think all of us are blessed by virtue of our birth and our citizenship here in the United States.

So it was that experience that led me into the U.S. Army ROTC Program at Iowa State University because I didn’t come from wealth or means, but what I did have was my service. And I knew that I needed to give back to my country and protect the values that we all hold dear. And I do not question anyone who serves in this U.S. Senate. We are all sent here for a purpose.

But I do know that many of these men and women whom we have talked about tonight, they believe in their country as well. They are human beings. Many of them have backgrounds just as I do. They are flesh and blood, and they have chosen to wear the uniform and the flag of our United States.

They have done that without any mental reservation. They have stepped forward to support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. And they do it because they believe in our country. And it is really unfortunate that tonight these men and women have been denied their promotions. We have done the best that we can to honor the request of a few Senators that these nominations be brought to the floor and voted on individually.

And I really respect men of their word. I do not respect men who do not honor their word. We have brought forward nearly 60 nominees. Every one of them have been denied an opportunity to move forward.

They have given more than most of us have. Certainly, they have given more than I have in this Chamber. They have given more than I have given in this Chamber. We talked about many that had over 30 years of honorable service, and we are punishing them for what all of us here believe to be
be a very bad policy at the Department of Defense—a policy that they have absolutely nothing to do with.

There are 379 nominations as of the end of October, concerning 375 general and flag officers here in the Senate for consideration. Of the 375 officers, 372 are currently impacted by a blanket hold as they wait here on the Senate floor pending confirmation. We gave opportunity to nearly 60 of them this evening. These military families in line to deploy are families of 12 officers have been disrupted by these holds. Again, these are men and women. They have families who are being impacted. Their salaries are being impacted. Their retirements are being impacted. They had forced cancelations of coast-to-coast moves with homes that were sold. Many of them are now living in temporary housing and paying out of pocket for storage without any clarity about the length of time that they will be in this hold.

Many of their children were disenrolled from current schools—and—again, these are innocents—they are unable to reenroll in school or enroll in a new school since they do not have a permanent address. And there were many spouses who had employment that was terminated. That is a kick in the seat. I was a military spouse. I understand how difficult it is doing those PCS moves from duty station to duty station because your country demands it and having to start your life all over again.

So I am going to bring up these last two nominations, and maybe we will see a result, again, bringing the nominations individually to the floor of the U.S. Senate to be voted on. I anticipated a man of his word would honor his word. We haven’t heard an explanation. But I will tell you, this was not time wasted tonight. I will do this all over again. I will do it all over again. I will do it all over again. I will do it all over again. I will do it all over again. I will do it all over again.

I am bringing forward now Capt. Frederic C. Goldhammer to be Rear Admiral (lower half) in the U.S. Navy, under Executive Calendar No. 97. Capt. Goldhammer has a 28-year career, actually over 28 years now, and he has held several command positions, including while deployed aboard USS Enterprise, USS Nimitz, and USS Eisenhower, supporting Operation Southern Watch, Joint Endeavor, Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Capt. Goldhammer also completed Individual Augmentee assignments as an Air Planning Officer for the Coalition Combat Air Operations Center in Saudi Arabia, Liaison Officer to the U.S. Army’s 18th Airborne Corps in Afghanistan, and as a Search and Rescue Watch Officer for the U.S. Navy 5th Fleet staff in Bahrain. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Capt. Frederic C. Goldhammer to be Rear Admiral (lower half) in the U.S. Navy, under Executive Calendar No. 97; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama. Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Ms. ERNST. And our final nomination this evening—so I mentioned that I was a former military spouse, and Senator SULLIVAN had brought up First Ranger Battalion. And those who have served around many of those in the Rangers, they understand that there is a—there is a stanza of the Ranger creed that is “I will never leave a fallen comrade to fall into the hands of the enemy.”

We have talked about those who have saved the lives of other men and women in uniform. We heard about the marine who saved a life of many other men and women in uniform and went to retrieve those who have fallen so that they wouldn’t forever be in the hands of the enemy.

We have spoken about women who led the way, as well, with their service and showing other young women that they could serve and do great things for the Nation that has given them so much. We have heard so many stories about heroes and heroines and Silver Star, Valor, Silver Star. We have heard brief resumes of warriors we really can’t go into on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Again, those of us who served understand why we can’t do that.

But these are people. They are human beings. They are flesh and blood. They have done everything they possibly can and given more than most for their country; duty and honor, their service, sacrifice for this Nation.

And what is this body, this Nation doing to them? This will be remembered. It is a dark evening. This will be remembered. I want to thank them so much for their service to our country.

We will continue pressing forward because we will not leave them to fall. We will not leave them to fall. We will not leave them to fall.

So, with that, I will turn the floor back over to my colleague and thank you—oh, excuse me, I haven’t completed this final nomination.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I have three more that we are going to do. That will be 61 tonight. And Senator ERNST and I—one and—oh, excuse me, I haven’t completed this final nomination.

Ms. ERNST. Oh, we have more. We could go all night, Dan. We have done it before.

But I am going to move on Col. Kevin J. Merrill to be a Brigadier General in the U.S. Air Force. Col. Kevin Merrill most recently served as the Deputy Director of Strategic Plans, Programs and Requirements for Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command.

Previously, Col. Merrill was the Mobilization Assistant to the Director for Operations Special Operations Command, AFSOC.

Col. Merrill conducted around-the-clock HH-60G battlefield and medical evacuation for coalition forces during Operation Enduring Freedom. He most certainly did not leave a man behind. He led rescue operations in response to the aftermath of Hurricane Rita and provided 24-hour combat search-and-rescue coverage for coalition assets during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Col. Kevin J. Merrill to be Brigadier General in the U.S. Air Force under Executive Calendar No. 86; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama. Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, we have three more that we are going to do. That will be 61 tonight. And Senator ERNST and I—and I know a lot of our other colleagues want to join us—aren’t going to keep coming down here. So let me get through these, and then I will have a few words to conclude. And I want to thank the Presiding Officer for staying late. I know you care about this issue as well. This is Brig. Gen. Robert M. Blake, and he is being considered to be promoted to Major General in the U.S. Air Force—again, incredible, incredible background. He most recently served as the Mobilization Assistant to the Commander Air Force Global Strike Command, Barksdale Air Force Base, LA.

He has flown the C-130 H2 Hercules. He has amassed more than 4,500 hours as a transport aviation pilot in C-130H. He has flown over 300 combat sorties and tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. Brig. Gen. Blake flew 16 total missions, including 12 air refueling sorties supporting C-5s and C-17s in Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. And he flew 10 missions in support of humanitarian relief for operations for Operation Southern Watch and Enduring Freedom.

Again, a transport aviation pilot, incredible. Just, I mean, we look at these numbers like oh, no big deal—4,500 flying hours in military aircraft. That is incredible experience for our military. So let’s get him confirmed. Let’s get him confirmed by voice vote, right here, individual, as our colleague requested.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Brig. Gen. Robert M. Blake to be Major General in the U.S. Air Force under Executive Calendar No. 86; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon
the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, another heroic Air Force pilot with incredible talent. Let’s just move on to Brig. Gen. Mitchell Hanson. We are trying to get him confirmed to be Major General.

By the way, Senator Graham made this point at the beginning: All of these military leaders went through their promotion board process. As we all know, the military is kind of an up-or-out organization, right? So for Brigadier General Hanson to go from Brigadier General to Major General—a two-star General—that is really hard to do. These guys are the best, right? We just kind of take it for granted. That is all done by the military in the military selection boards. They are picking their own, but we have to confirm it.

So again, think about the frustration—let me read about his background—that they have done all this, the boards have met, they said these are our top people, and we are going to keep promoting them.

Normally, for the last 200 years—by the way, as stated earlier, there are a lot of holds. I have put holds on. No one has ever done a blanket hold on every flag officer promotion for this long. Time is up. These are our top people, and we are going to keep promoting them.

People have threatened it. They have done it for a couple of weeks, but it has never been done for almost a year in the history of the United States of America. That is a fact. Contemplate that one.

So I look at Brigadier General Hanson’s background. He most recently served as Mobilization Assistant to the Director of Operations, Air Combat Command. Brigadier General Hanson has served in numerous positions at the squadron group wing in numbered Air Force. That is getting bigger in each unit. You know that, Mr. Chairman, but some people watching might not know.

Brigadier General Hanson has served as a individual mobilization augmentee member on the Reserve side of the military. He has flown the A-10 and the F-16 in a variety of operational assignments and as a command pilot, with more than 3,400 hours—again, just enormous experience, flying over 200 combat hours.

He has deployed in support of Operations Desert Storm, Southern Watch, Noble Eagle, Willing Spirit, Enduring Freedom. Brigadier General Hanson executed 20 close air support combat missions, 98.9 percent of NATO and international security forces battles Taliban insurgent fighters in Afghanistan.

He provided armed overwatch for dismounted infantry patrols—the grunts on the ground looking up: Oh, my God, I got air cover. Thank God.

He conducted convoy and helicopter escorts and responded to U.S. infantry platoons on the ground receiving effective fire from an enemy gun team. He deployed 160 rounds of 30 mikes-mikes against the insurgents and killed them all—killed them all. He saved American grunt lives on the ground. Another hero. Another hero. See a guy get shot. See a guy get killed. We all have done that.

By the way, it is a great way to say thanks for your service, Brigadier General Hanson. We will just keep you on the icebox. Thanks for your service. Very heroic.

Maybe my colleague will relent here. We are down to one more. So maybe, maybe it will work.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Brig. Gen. Mitchell A. Hanson to be Major General, U.S. Air Force, under Executive Calendar No. 88; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table and the President immediately be notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama. Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, the final one. It is so ironic. I didn’t mean it to be this way, but I am so proud of it. It is a U.S. Marine Colonel—I am a U.S. Marine Colonel; these are my peer groups—to be Brigadier General of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Let’s read about Col. Richard Joyce to be Assistant Deputy Commandant for Aviation, U.S. Marine Corps again, another heroic American. Colonel Joyce has deployed numerous times to Iraq and Afghanistan and served as the Commanding Officer of an attack squadron. He is a Cobra pilot. That is an attack helicopter, the AH-1. He was Director of the staff group for Gen. Robert Neller when he was the 37th Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Colonel Joyce received the Air Medal with the combat distinguishing device—that means heroism in combat—for heroic achievement while participating in aerial flight as an attack helicopter pilot of an AH-1—that is a Cobra helicopter—assigned to Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 169, deployed with Marine Air Group 40 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom on 22 May 2009. He was under direct fire from three different directions, with enemy forces effectively engaging his aircraft—landing from three different directions. He placed precision fires on each of these enemy positions, destroying them and providing direct relief to outnumbered friendly forces on the ground.

Not a paper pusher. Not a woke warrior. A real, true American hero right here, and we are going to tell him: Stay on the bench.

Maybe not. This is the last one, Mr. President, No. 61 for the night—a Marine Colonel to be promoted to Brigadier General, who has nothing to do with this damn dispute on the floor here—nothing—and, somehow, he is going to get caught up in this.

By the way, these are the kinds of guys I am hearing about. These are my peer group. They are saying: You know what? Seven deployments, tough on the wife and kids. I am getting stuck in an issue that I have nothing to do with. I can’t—you know what, I am punching out. I am punching out.

So we are going to lose guys like this. We are going to lose guys like this.

The Chinese, Putin, Xi Jinping—they are going to be like: Oh, my God, I am so scared of a marine like this. He would come over and kick the you know what out of the Chinese and Russians.

We are going to drive him out of the Marine Corps—drive him out of the Marine Corps.

But maybe not—maybe my colleague will relent here. This has just been one last one, just out of good grace. He still hasn’t explained why, all that he said about not being able to do—nothing. He single-won nominees one at a time. I am all for it. I will probably vote for them. We just brought up 61, one at a time, in regular order. Come on.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Col. Richard D. Joyce to be Brigadier General of the U.S. Marine Corps on Executive Calendar No. 95; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama. Mr. TUBERVILLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SULLIVAN. I am just going to conclude. I am disappointed. We are done here. We don’t have any more for tonight, but I think this has been enlightening. I think this has been enlightening because what we have been able to do—hopefully, some people are watching in our great Nation—is to distill to the people of the country: Look at how blessed we are to have these incredible Americans. Look at how blessed we are, how heroic they are.

So my message to our Generals and Admirals who are being held up: Hang in there. Hang in there. Some of us have your back. We have your back.
will be coming here every night to try and get you guys confirmed.

I have been very honored to be here with Senator Ernst on the floor. And I will tell you that I think she and I both have feeling that I think a lot of people have—but the Chinese fear—mainly—just the love for our military, military families.

I am coming up, just at 30 years in the Marine Corps. The INDOPACOM theater that the Chinese fear—they look at submarine forces in the Indo-Pacific theater as a young infantry officer, in two carri

...
SEC's Staff Accounting Bulletin No. 121

SEC was established in the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the Exchange Act). 15 U.S.C. §§78a–78r. The Commission is composed of five members who are appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. Id. The Exchange Act grants SEC broad authority over the securities laws, in part, by delegating to SEC the power to oversee certain organizations dealing with securities, to exercise disciplinary authority over covered parties that participate in the national securities markets, to conduct, and to the periodic reporting of information by companies with publicly traded securities. Id. In exercising these powers, SEC publishes some of its reports relating to financial reporting matters in the Code of Federal Regulations. See 17 C.F.R. Part 211. These interpretations include Financial Reporting Releases (Subpart B), Staff Accounting Bulletins (SAbs) (Subpart A), and Accounting and Audit Enforcement Releases (Subpart C).

SEC also publishes these interpretations on its official website in order to "provide guidance to those who must comply with the federal securities laws." SEC, Staff Interpretations, available at https://www.sec.gov/regulation/staffinterpretations (last visited Oct. 25, 2023).

SAbs in particular are used by SEC to publicize its staff’s "views regarding accounting-related disclosure practices." SEC, Selected Staff Accounting Bulletins, available at https://www.sec.gov/oca/staff-accounting-bulletins (last visited Oct. 25, 2023). According to SEC, SAbs specifically represent the interpretations and policies followed by the Commission’s Division of Corporation Finance (Division) and Office of the Chief Accountant (OCA), two internal organizational units of SEC. Id. The Division is tasked with ensuring that investors are provided with material information to make informed investment decisions. SEC, About the Division of Corporation Finance, available at https://www.sec.gov/divisions/corpfin/ (last visited Oct. 25, 2023). In furtherance of this goal, the Division selectively reviews filings made under the Exchange Act in order to identify and enhance disclosure and accounting requirements. Id. Division staff "may issue comments to a company to elicit better compliance with applicable disclosure requirements." and, in response, a company has the opportunity to amend its disclosure or revise its financial statements and other disclosures. Id. The Division “may refer [matters to the Division of Enforcement]” when appropriate. Id. OCA, headed by the Chief Accountant, provides advice to the Commission on accounting and auditing matters, including accounting policy determinations. SEC, Office of the Chief Accountant, available at https://www.sec.gov/pageweb/oca-lead (last updated Oct. 25, 2023).

Starting in 1975, the Division and OCA instituted the practice of releasing SAbs to more widely publicize staff interpretations regarding financial reporting. SEC, Selected Staff Accounting Bulletins, available at https://www.sec.gov/oca/staff-accounting-bulletins (last updated Oct. 25, 2023). The SAbs generally had multiple opportunities to exchange information and views with SEC staff, but that small accounting firms might have had a much harder time accessing the new rules and benefits of the SEC’s new and revised practices and interpretations to the public. 46 Fed. Reg. 35557.

On March 31, 2022, SEC published the Bulletin to express its staff’s views regarding the accounting obligations for covered entities that provide custodial services of crypto-assets. See https://www.sec.gov/oca/staff-accounting-bulletin-121 (last visited Oct. 25, 2023). The Bulletin was issued in response to SEC staff’s observations on the number of entities providing platform users with the ability to transact in crypto-assets. Id. In the Bulletin, SEC staff state their belief that the requirement, and disclosure guidance[1] will enhance the information received by investors and other users of financial statements, thereby assisting in making informed decisions and other capital allocation decisions.” Id. The Bulletin presents a hypothetical situation regarding Entity A, an example entity engaging in crypto-asset services, and then provides interpretive responses to three questions concerning how SEC staff would expect Entity A to account for and disclose its custodial obligations. Id. For example, according to the Bulletin, covered entities that are responsible for safeguarding platform users’ crypto-assets may be required to present a separate liability on their balance sheets to reflect this obligation. Id. Additionally, the Bulletin states that staff would expect such entities to include clear disclosures of the nature and amount of crypto-assets, available for holding for their platform users in the notes to their financial statements, with separate disclosure for each significant crypto-asset, and that they have due to any concentration in such activities. Id.


The Congressional Review Act

CRA, enacted in 1996 to strengthen congressional oversight of agency rulemaking, provides for a rulemaking requirement of a result new rule to both Houses of Congress and to the Comptroller General before it can take effect. 5 U.S.C. §801(a)(1)(A). The report must consist of a concise general statement relating to the rule, and the rule’s proposed effective date. CRA, allows Congress to review and disapprove rules issued by federal agencies for a period of 60 days using special procedures. 5 U.S.C. §802. If a resolution of disapproval is enacted, then the new rule has no force or effect. Id. CRA makes clear that its provisions "shall apply notwithstanding any other provision of law." 5 U.S.C. §806(a).

In the past, the Comptroller General (CG) has relied on the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), 5 U.S.C. §551 (4), which states that a rule is "the whole or a part of an agency statement of general applicability and future effect designed to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy or describing the organization, procedure, or practice requirements of an agency." 5 U.S.C. §804(3). CRA excludes three categories of rules from coverage: (1) rules of particular applicability; (2) rules relating to agency management or personnel matters; and (3) rules of future effect. CRA, makes clear that the definition of "rule" is expanded to include rules including implementing or procedural rules that do not substantially affect the obligations of non-agency parties. Id.

CRA requires a CRA report to Congress or to the Comptroller General in regard to the Bulletin. In its response to us, SEC maintained that the Bulletin is not subject to CRA because it does not meet the APA definition of a rule as it is not an “agency statement” of “future effect.” Response Letter, at 2. We disagree. We find that the Bulletin does meet the definition of a rule under APA and that no exception applies. Thus, the Bulletin is subject to CRA’s submission requirement.

Discussion

At issue here is whether the Bulletin is a rule for purposes of CRA. First, we must consider whether it meets the definition of a rule under CRA. We conclude the Bulletin is a rule for purposes of CRA.

The Bulletin is a Rule Under APA

The Bulletin meets the APA definition of a rule. First, the Bulletin is an agency statement because it was published on SEC’s official, public-facing website as a representative of the views held by its own employees. Second, the Bulletin is of future effect because it explicitly states that it applies to certain entities and establishes for [these] entities to consider when they have obligations to safeguard crypto-assets held on their platforms. From this, we ascertain that SEC intended the Bulletin’s guidance to apply prospectively to covered entities’ future accounting and disclosure practices. Lastly, the Bulletin interprets and prescribes policy because it announces a preference for how covered entities should account for and disclose crypto-asset-related custodial obligations.

SEC contends that the Bulletin is not a rule under APA because it is not an agency action. Response Letter, at 2. In its response to us, SEC stated that the Bulletin is not an agency action because it is not binding on the agency and “at most” indicates “how the Office of the Chief Accountant and the Division of Corporation Finance would recommend that the agency act.” Response Letter, at 3. Additionally, SEC asserts that the Bulletin is not an agency statement because it was published on a platform maintained by the Exchange Act and SEC’s organizational rules prohibit the Commission from delegating rulemaking authority to an individual Commissioner or to staff. Response Letter, at 31324, and B–331324, Oct. 22, 2019 (finding that SR 12–7 and SR 14–8 are rules for purposes of CRA). In those opinions, we recognized that agency actions published by the Federal Reserve System (FRB or Board) were ruled to be rules under CRA. B–330843, Oct. 22, 2017. The Bulletin is a statement made by SEC. While it is true that the Bulletin was not held out by SEC as a statement representing the full Commission, a statement issued by a subset of the agency may still constitute an agency statement for CRA purposes.

In particular, our prior opinions have recognized that agency actions published by less than the full agency can still constitute agency statements for the purposes of APA and CRA. In those prior opinions, we examined whether various Supervision and Regulation Letters (SR Letters) issued by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System were rules for purposes of CRA. B–330843, Oct. 22, 2019 (finding that SR 12–7 and SR 14–8 are rules under CRA, but that SR 15–7 is not a rule under CRA because it was an exception to the Act), B–331324, Oct. 22, 2019 (finding that SR 11–7 is a rule under CRA), and B–331360, Apr. 16, 2020 (finding that SR 10–2 is a rule under CRA). In those opinions, we noted that FRB has the authority to inspect the financial condition of financial institutions under its jurisdiction. B–330843, B–331360, and B–331324. We explained that FRB examiners tasked with inspecting and monitoring these
institutions can issue SR Letters when they believe guidance on a particular issue is necessary and clarified that such guidance is not binding on any institution. B–330843, B–331324, and B–331560. \(\text{**}[\text{all of these or other related documents involved in the rulemaking process] B–330843, B–331324, and B–331560.}\) We explained that the SR Letters were agency statements "as [they were] issued by FRB." B–330843, B–331324, and B–331560. The fact that the SR Letters were issued by FRB rather than the Board as a whole did not diminish the fact that the SR letters constituted the FRB speaking as an agency.

While we recognize that the Exchange Act and SEC's organizational rules limit the Commission's ability to delegate its rulemaking function to its staff, these sources speak only to how the Bulletin does not stem from the Commission's general rulemaking authority. On this point, we find it helpful to draw a parallel between the organizational structure and practices of both the SEC and FRB. Both are multi-member, independent executive agencies that are statutorily restricted from delegating rulemaking authority. The Federal Reserve Act expressly provides that "[r]ules and regulations of the Board [are] the rulemaking function "[t]o ... objects or employees of the Board." 12 U.S.C. § 248(c). FRB adopted this language from the Federal Reserve Act in its own organizational rules, similar to how SEC's Division and OCA publish SABs to announce how staff intends to administer certain accounting-related disclosure practices. FRB's Division of Supervision and Regulation publish SR Letters to "address significant policy and procedural matters related to [FRB's] supervisory responsibilities." B–330843, B–331324, and B–331560. We explain by a division FRB, we can presume that the letters are published outside of FRB rulemaking authority since FRB is not authorized to delegate its rulemaking function to its employees. Our determination that the Bulletin is an agency statement is consistent with our previous recognition of FRB's SR Letters as agency statements in B–330843, B–331324, and B–331560.

Additionally, we have consistently concluded that CRA also covers agency actions outside of the APA rulemaking process. For example, in B–331711, Dec. 17, 2020, we recognized that "[t]he sponsors of CRA intended the definition of rule that would be necessary and sufficient to implement a congressional review of agency action." B–331324, Oct. 22, 2019, we cited to a CRA sponsor's statement that "[a]lthough agency interpretive rules, general statements of policy, guideline documents, and agency policy and procedure manuals may not be subject to the notice and comment provisions of [APA], those documents do not meet the definition of rule that would be necessary and sufficient to implement a congressional review of agency action." B–331324, Oct. 22, 2019, we found that FRB's SR 12-17 did not meet the third CRA exception because it did not have a substantial impact on the regulated community. SR 12-17 put forth actions institutions should take to ensure their resiliency if they enter a period of financial distress through the financial system in case of the institution's failure. Id. We noted that the actions from SR 12-17 could change covered entities' expectations of FRB and could lead to and encourage changes in the covered entities' internal operations and policies. Id. For those reasons, we determined that SR 12-17 had a substantial impact on the regulated community and thus did not qualify for the third CRA exception. Id.

Here, the Bulletin recommends best practices and principles that should apply for their obligations to safeguard the crypto-assets they hold for their platform users. Bulletin. Similar to the FRB guidance in B–330843, FRB could lead to and encourage changes in the covered entities' internal operations and policies. Bulletin's guidance when preparing their own financial disclosures to the agency. SEC states that the Bulletin reflects standard practices promulgated by the Division and OCA. Response Letter, at 3. According to SEC, the Division uses its filing review process to monitor and to encourage compliance with certain financial disclosure requirements. Since SEC monitors the covered entities' compliance with certain financial disclosure requirements, it is reasonable to believe that these entities might change their internal operations and policies to align with the accounting practices suggested by the Bulletin. Additionally, in a recent statement about the Bulletin, an SEC Commissioner recognized that the Bulletin "provides definitive interpretive guidance" for public companies and contains a "detailed description of disclosure the staff expects to see, including a full paragraph describing relevant disclosures that 'may also be required outside the financial statements under existing Commission rules.'" We agree with this characterization. Because the Bulletin changes covered entities' expectations of how SEC will evaluate their compliance, it encourages these entities to change their internal operations and policies, we conclude that the Bulletin has a substantial effect on financial disclosure obligations of non-agency parties. Thus, the Bulletin does not fall within CRA's exception for rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice that do not substantially affect rights or obligations of non-agency parties.

CONCLUSION

The Bulletin is a rule for purposes of CRA because it meets the APA definition of a rule and thus does not qualify for any of the three CRA exceptions apply. Accordingly, the Bulletin is subject to the CRA's submission requirement.

EIDOA EMMANUELLI PEREZ,
General Counsel

RECOGNIZING AIW TURNOVER AT IDAHO NATIONAL LABORATORY

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, alongside my esteemed colleagues Senator Jim Risch and Representative Mike Simpson, I rise today to honor the formal turnover of the Naval Reactors AIW Prototype from Naval Reactors Idaho Branch Office and Fluor Marine Propulsion, LLC, to the U.S. Department of Energy Idaho Cleanup Project and Idaho Environmental Coalition. This momentous occasion marks the early completion of the turnover of the AIW Prototype, a defueled naval nuclear propulsion plant, which holds significant historical and strategic importance and none of the three CRA exceptions apply.

The goal in this endeavor is clear: to remove the three prototypes, SIW, AIW and SSG, from the Navajo Reactor Facility by 2030. This effort aligns perfectly with the program's overarching commitment to managing radioactive and hazardous materials from cradle to grave, ensuring no adverse effects on the environment or public health. Decommissioning older, nonmission-critical facilities not only reduces workforce needs but also allow us to allocate resources more efficiently towards our core mission, while creating space for the workplace of the future.

S3512

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The significance of this turnover lies in the remarkable collaboration among various Agencies involved. Originally scheduled for 2027, achieving this turnover 4 years ahead of schedule is a monumental achievement. It is a testament to the unwavering dedication of hundreds of professionals from four organizations involved. We express our deepest gratitude to the entire team whose exceptional teamwork has made this moment possible. Their remarkable efforts throughout this endeavor have been extraordinary.

The A1W Prototype, born in 1956 and operational from October 1958 to January 1994, stands as a technological marvel. It represents a pivotal chapter in our Nation’s scientific and engineering history. Over nearly four decades, this remarkable prototype played a critical role in training over 14,500 enlisted personnel, officers, and civilian operators. As the second prototype built, the A1W’s contributions to science, technology, Cold War military applications, and the U.S. Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program have earned it the esteemed recognition as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Moreover, the A1W Prototype paved the way for the construction and commissioning of the world’s first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, USS Enterprise, CVN-65, which utilized the A1W design. Enterprise’s 51-year journey serves as a testament to the dedication and strength of our naval forces, as it stood as a guardian of freedom, protector of our national interests and a symbol of American power worldwide.

While there is still more work ahead, it is important that we take a moment to celebrate this milestone. It serves as a testament to the incredible results that can be achieved when people and organizations come together with a shared purpose. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each person involved for their unwavering dedication and hard work. This turnover signifies a significant step toward ensuring that the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program continues to power maritime dominance for the Navy and our Nation well into the future. It also reaffirms our steadfast commitment to safeguarding our national defense, paying homage to our history, and preserving our national treasures.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DUCKWATER SHOSHONE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Duckwater Shoshone Elementary School and the important place this school occupies in our great State’s history. Duckwater Shoshone Elementary School exists because parents wanted to provide their children with the best education possible and help them take pride in their heritage. The Duckwater Shoshone Tribe came together in 1973 to create their own school, founded on the principle of self-determination, to better oversee their children’s instruction, and preserve their culture. And the Duckwater Shoshone Elementary School has continued that legacy ever since.

The Duckwater Shoshone Tribe is located in the Railroad Valley of central Nevada near the Big Warm Spring; one of several thermal springs found in the State. Taking their children’s education into their own hands, the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe formed an education committee, which became the Duckwater Shoshone School Board, on July 26, 1973. The parents and community of the Duckwater Shoshone were committed to their children receiving every opportunity, no matter who they were or where they lived and worked hard to establish their own school. This commitment is reflected in a statement hanging on the main hallway of the school: “The mission of the Duckwater Shoshone Elementary School is to provide a learning environment that promotes individual student success and develops lifelong learners.”

On November 26, 1973, the Duckwater Shoshone Elementary School opened its doors. The school remains a centerpiece of the Tribe’s efforts to support its families and stands as a testament to the value the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe places on education into future generations. On the wall of the school, there hangs an accounting of the school’s formation written in longhand by former Duckwater chairman Paul Walker, and it reads in part: “What is hard to convey is the determination and work of a whole rural Indian Community to see that their children receive a better education than they obtained and to witness a general betterment of our people.”

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Duckwater Shoshone Elementary School for 50 years of service to the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe and surrounding communities and the important role the school plays in educating children and preserving traditions.

TRIBUTE TO DR. REIKO JOHNSON AND DR. NATHAN SWANSON

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I am honored to recognize Dr. Reiko Johnson of Newfields and Dr. Nathan Swanson of Durham as October’s Granite Staters of the Month. The duo is a shining example of the Granite State spirit of coming together to help people in need. Many of the clinic’s patients, including people experiencing homelessness and people without insurance, would not be able to receive this vital care otherwise. I applaud Dr. Johnson and Dr. Swanson’s dedication to making a difference, and I look forward to seeing how they continue their Dental Day of Caring initiative.

TRIBUTE TO LYDIA EDWARDS

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I would like to offer my congratulations to Ms. Lydia Edwards as she becomes a Judge Advocate General in the Massachusetts Army National Guard. Senator Edwards has devoted her career to protecting our most vulnerable—from her time as a public interest attorney with Greater Boston Legal Services, to her service on the Boston City Council, to time as a public interest attorney with the Commonwealth, including passing the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, protecting Boston’s affordable housing stock, creating the Restaurant Revitalization Fund, passing the CROWN Act, which bans discrimination based on hair texture or style, and reforming the budgetary process to build participatory budgeting to the city of Boston.

Lydia is a dedicated public servant who approaches every question before Catholic Medical Center, and she was itching to be face-to-face with patients again. When she was not able to find a volunteer clinic in the area, she decided to take matters into her own hands and start her own mobile clinic, modeled on a free health clinic that she had previously volunteered at in Hampton.

Dr. Johnson established the Volunteers in Medicine of New Hampshire—VIM-NH—and held its first free clinic in January of this year, providing primary and acute care services for uninsured and underinsured patients and connecting them to long-term primary care providers. However, over the months that followed, it became clear to Dr. Johnson that many of the clinic’s patients had critical dental issues that she and her volunteers were not equipped to deal with.

To address this issue, Dr. Johnson partnered with Dr. Nathan Swanson last month to host VIM-NH’s first Dental Day of Caring. Dr. Swanson had heard about Dr. Johnson’s work from Emily Komerska, a UNH pre-med student and longtime family friend, and he immediately knew he wanted to get involved. During the event, which took place at Dr. Swanson’s office, the 4 volunteer dentists and 6 assistants provided 19 extractions, 10 fillings, and 1 root canal—donating $1,151.31 in total services.

Dr. Johnson and Dr. Swanson’s partnership is a shining example of the Granite State spirit of coming together to help people in need. Many of the clinic’s patients, including people experiencing homelessness and people without insurance, would not be able to receive this vital care otherwise. I applaud Dr. Johnson and Dr. Swanson’s dedication to making a difference, and I look forward to seeing how they continue their Dental Day of Caring initiative.
her with passion, deep intellect, and a commitment to make government work for everyone, not just those at the top. It is a reflection of Lydia’s character and her commitment to our country that Lydia has chosen to serve not only in the State senate but also as a member of the Massachusetts National Guard. I congratulate Lydia on her commisioning as a Judge Advocate General officer and am grateful for her continued partnership and service.

I once again congratulate her on her commissioning and wish her the best of luck in this new chapter.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Stringer, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 12938 OF NOVEMBER 14, 1994, WITH RESPECT TO THE PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION—PM 27

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the Federal Register and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction declared in Executive Order 12938 of November 14, 1994, is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the Federal Register for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction declared in Executive Order 12938 of November 14, 1994, is to continue in effect beyond November 14, 2023.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.
The WHITE HOUSE, November 1, 2023.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:25 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives was delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4394. An act making appropriations for energy and water development and redeclared agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 4394. An act making appropriations for energy and water development and redeclared agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–2690. A communication from the Executive Secretary, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Standard for Determining Joint Employer Status” (RIN3142–AA21) received in the Office of the President on September 13, 2023; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2691. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13067 of November 1, 1997; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2692. A communication from the Deputy Director of Congressional Affairs, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Implementation of Additional Export Controls: Certain Advanced Computers, Computer and Semiconductor End Use; Updates and Corrections” (RIN0964–A194) received in the Office of the President on September 13, 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2693. A communication from the Deputy Director of Congressional Affairs, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Export Controls on Semiconductor Manufacturing Equipment” (RIN0966–A219) received in the Office of the President on September 27, 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2694. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, notification of his intent to terminate the designation of the Central African Republic, the Gabonese Republic (Gabon), Niger, and the Republic of Uganda as beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries under the African Growth and Opportunity Act; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2695. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Mortality Tables for Determining Present Value under Defined Benefit Pension Plans” (RIN1545–BQ14) received in the Office of the President on October 30, 2023; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2696. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Relating to Enrolled Actuaries” (RIN1545–BQ26) received in the Office of the President on October 30, 2023; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2697. A communication from the Secretary of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report regarding Determination Under Section 7034 (1)(5) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2023 (OSS–2023–1053) to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2698. A communication from the Secretary of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report regarding Determination Under Section 7034 (1)(5) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2024 (OSS–2024–1054) to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2699. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Publica- tion, Coordination, and Reporting of International Agreements Amendments” (RIN1400–AF63) received in the Office of the President on October 30, 2023; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2700. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notification of intent to provide assistance to Ukraine under drawdowns previously directed under section 506(a)(1) of the FAA, including for self-defense and border security operations; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2701. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of firearms, parts, and components abroad controlled under Control List I of the Arms Export Control Act to Israel in the amount of $1,000,00 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 22–651); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. Kaine (for himself and Mr. Padilla):
S. 3176. A bill to establish a grant program to support schools of medicine and schools of osteopathic medicine in underserved areas; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. Whitehouse (for himself, Ms. Warren, and Mr. Merkley):
S. 3176. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose an excise tax on excessively disparate wages paid to chief executive officers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. Sullivain (for himself and Mr. Merkley):
S. 3177. A bill to provide for a review of sanctions with respect to Hong Kong; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. Bennett (for himself and Ms. Murkowski):
S. 3178. A bill to establish the Children's Court to improve the adjudication of immigration cases involving unaccompanied alien children; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PRESCOTT (for himself, Mr. BRAUN, and Mr. BUDD):

S. 3179. A bill to require the Department of Homeland Security to publish various publications and reports regarding the number of alien apprehensions along the southern border of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. McCUDDEN, and Mr. PADILLA):

S. 3180. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to extend eligibility for child's benefits until age 26 for certain individuals who are at least half-time students at a post-secondary school, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 3181. A bill to authorize assistance to support activities relating to the clearance of landmines, unexploded ordnance, and other explosive remnants of war in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, to recognize the refugee and immigrant communities that supported and defended the United States Armed Forces during the conflict in Southeast Asia in the 1960s and 1970s, including Hmong, Cham, Cambodian, Iu Mien, Khmu, Vietnamese American, Laotian American, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. RICKETTS):

S. 3182. A bill to prohibit actions recognizing the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. CASSEY, Mr. BUDDE, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, and Ms. LUMMIS):

S. 3183. A bill to consider, for purposes of the Immigration and Nationality Act, that officers, representatives, spokespeople, and members of Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, Al-Qaeda, and ISIS, and individuals who endorse or espouse terrorist activities conducted by such organizations are engaged in terrorist activity; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 3183. A bill to require institutions of higher education to include reporting regarding campus anti-Semitism in the annual security report required under the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, to ensure that institutions of higher education do not support, sustain, or tolerate terrorist organizations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HEINRICH:

S. 3183. A bill to establish the Tribal Cultural Areas System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. HEINRICH:

S. 3186. A bill to protect Native cultural sites located on Federal land, to bring parity to Indian Tribes, to bring parity to Indian Tribes with regard to Federal public land management laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. COTTON, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. WINGET, Mr. HAYES, Mr. LANDERS, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. BUDDE, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. DAINES, Mr. LEE, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. HAYVEN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. HAWLEY, Mrs. BRITT, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 3187. A bill to require the Department of Homeland Security to publish various publications and reports regarding the number of aliens apprehended along the southern border of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. McCUDDEN, and Mr. PADILLA):

S. 3188. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to extend eligibility for...
At the request of Mr. Booker, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. Collins) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1024, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants to eligible entities to develop and implement a comprehensive program to promote student access to defibrillation in public elementary schools and secondary schools.

At the request of Ms. Cortez Masto, the name of the Senator from California (Mr. Schacht) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1144, a bill to establish a grant program to provide assistance to local law enforcement agencies, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Daines, the names of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. Fischer) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. Kinz) were added as cosponsors of S. 1006, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the deduction for qualified business income.

At the request of Mr. Braun, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. Vance), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. Schmitt) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. Graham) were added as cosponsors of S. 1006, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to establish a temporary provisional approval pathway, subject to specific obligations, for certain drugs and biological products, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Sanders, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. Smith) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1054, a bill to improve the provision of health care furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs for veterans diagnosed with diabetes and heart disease, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Moran, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. Tuberville) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2158, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for disciplinary procedures for supervisors and managers at the Department of Veterans Affairs and to modify the procedures of personnel actions against employees of the Department, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mrs. Murray, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. Gillibrand) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2176, a bill to prohibit commercial sexual orientation conversion therapy, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Wicker, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. Tuberville) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2238, a bill to direct the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to develop a National Strategy to Close the Digital Divide, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Grassley, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. Schmitt) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2372, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to streamline enrollment under the Medicaid program of certain providers across State lines, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Warren, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. Kelly) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. Braun) were added as cosponsors of S. 2377, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve coverage of audiology services under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Thune, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. Daines) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2477, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide pharmacy payment of certain services.

At the request of Mr. Blumenthal, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. Peters) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2555, a bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to expand and improve the enforcement capabilities of the Attorney General, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Casey, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2713, a bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and the Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983 to make commodities available for the Emergency Food Assistance Program, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Merkley, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. Sanders), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. Schatz) and the Senator from California (Mr. Padilla) were added as cosponsors of S. 2860, a bill to create protections for financial institutions that provide financial services to State-sanctioned marijuana businesses and service providers for such businesses, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Brown, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2998, a bill to amend the Food and Agriculture Act of 1977 and the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 to modify provisions relating to matching funds requirements for research and extension activities at eligible institutions and related reporting requirements.

At the request of Ms. Smith, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. Baldwin) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3008, a bill to provide back pay to Federal contractors, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Braun, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. Kennedy) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. Hickenlooper) were added as cosponsors of S. 3068, a bill to require each enterprise to include on the Uniform Residential Loan Application a disclaimer to increase awareness of the direct and guaranteed home loan programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Hagerty, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. Braun) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3083, a bill to reallocate funding originally appropriated for Gaza to grants for Israel for the Iron Dome short-range rocket defense system.

At the request of Mrs. Blackburn, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. Schmitt) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3275, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Justice relating to “Office of the Attorney General; Home Confinement Under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act”.

At the request of Mr. Murphy, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. Markey) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 109, a resolution requesting information on Saudi Arabia’s human rights practices pursuant to section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

At the request of Mr. Durbin, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. Cardin) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 333, a resolution designating 2024 as the Year of Democracy as a time to reflect on the contributions of the system of Government of the United States to a more free and stable world.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. Collins (for herself and Mr. Reed):

S. 3180. A bill to establish a working waterfronts grant program; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Ms. Collins. Madam President, I rise today to introduce the Working Waterfront Preservation Act. Legislation to help preserve access by our Nation’s fishermen and maritime workers to the waterfronts in coastal communities. I would like to thank my friend Senator Jack Reed from Rhode Island, who joins me in introducing this legislation.

According to the most recent data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, commercial and recreational fisheries are responsible for more than 1.7 million jobs in the
United States, $253 billion in sales, and $117 billion in value-added impacts. In Maine, our fisheries are one of our State's most important resources and are vital to our economy. A report of Maine's seafood sector as a whole, which economists and economists, found that in 2019, the sector contributed more than $3.2 billion to Maine's economy. Although the fishing industry is a significant economic contributor both nationwide and in Maine, it is losing access to the working waterfronts that are vital to the industry's survival.

A working waterfront is defined as land that is used for or that supports commercial fishing, aquaculture, boating, or the for-hire recreational fishing industries. That may be a technical definition, but these areas represent much more to coastal communities. A recent study conducted by the Maine Coast Fishermen's Association sums it up perfectly: "Working waterfronts are more than just a place of business for commercial fishermen; they are a hub of information, a collection of salty characters, a safe haven, a meeting room, a space for support, and they are well-deserving of both a place in Maine's history and its future." The importance of these areas cannot be overstated.

In Maine our fishermen and women are losing access to waterfront property up and down the coast. In some coastal Maine communities, once thriving working waterfronts no longer exist. Recent interviews conducted by the Island Institute in Maine uncover that "for all practical purposes, working waterfront access [in these towns] is essentially gone." The reasons for this are complex. In some cases, burdensome fishing regulations have led to a decrease in landings, hindering the profitability of shorelines infrastructure. In other cases, soaring land values and rising taxes have made the current use of commercial land unprofitable. Property is being sold and quickly converted into private spaces, which means that they are no longer available to support our fisheries.

While this trend has been happening for decades—in 2006, Maine's working waterfront only took up 20 miles of Maine's nearly 3,500 miles of coastline—the recent demand for coastal properties has intensified this problem in Maine. Many of these areas are turning into private homes, hotels, and real estate properties. In other cases, soaring land values and rising taxes have made the current use of commercial land unprofitable. Property is being sold and quickly converted into private spaces, which means that they are no longer available to support our fisheries.

The Federal Government's workforce is central to protecting our national security and delivering critical services to hundreds of millions of Americans. As such, it is essential that the Federal Government protect and retain an effective workforce and, once their service is complete, ensure that retirees receive the dignified retirement that they deserve.

Unfortunately, in 1986, Congress created a two-tiered system that now prevents nearly 800,000 retired Federal employees from receiving a full cost-of-living adjustment when consumer prices increase more than 2 percent from year to year.

In January, some Federal retirees will receive a 2.2-percent COLA. However, other retirees will receive only a 2.2-percent increase due to this policy, which fails to protect retired employees living on a fixed income. That is why I am proud to reintroduce this legislation to fix this unfair cost-of-living adjustment and ensure that all retired Federal employees receive full retirement benefits that keep up with the cost of living.

I hope my colleagues will join me in support of this bill to ensure that retired Federal employees no longer pay the price of a misguided law and that their benefits fully keep pace with the cost of living.

By Mr. Kaine (for himself and Mr. Warner):
S. 3195. A bill to designate the General George C. Marshall House, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, as an affiliated area of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. Kaine, Madam President, today, I am introducing legislation to designate the General George C. Marshall House, also known as the Dodona Manor, in Leesburg, VA as an affiliated area under the National Park Service. This legislation is the next step in the year-long effort to recognize the Dodona Manor as a unit of the National Park System. It will also promote the public appreciation of the significant historic contributions made by U.S. military leader and statesman George C. Marshall.

George C. Marshall was an American hero, playing a significant role in the Allied victory in World War II and serving as an architect of one of the most significant foreign policy initiatives in our country’s history. He led a lifetime of public service, serving as Chief of Staff to the Army during America’s entry into World War II, as Secretary of State, where he orchestrated the historic Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe following the war and provided counsel to Presidents Roos- evelt and Truman, and as Secretary of Defense after the onset of the Korean war. He acquired Dodona Manor while serving as the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army in 1941 and lived there until his death in 1959.

Today, the George C. Marshall House is dedicated to preserving and advancing General Marshall’s life’s work and legacy by hosting international exchanges, historical exhibits, and community events, and supporting educational programming based on General Marshall’s desire to inspire future leaders. The legislation would bring greater resources, including technical assistance, accessibility improvements, and new programming, to this historical site and enable the Marshall House to improve and expand its work.

I am hopeful that this designation will provide new resources to preserve, honor, and celebrate General Marshall’s legacy at this historic site, and I am pleased that companion legislation is also being introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by my colleague, Representative Jennifer Wexton, who has led this effort for years.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. Reed, Madam President, I have seven requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

By Mr. Kaine (for himself and Mr. Warner):
S. 3195. A bill to designate the General George C. Marshall House, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, as an affiliated area of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

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I am hopeful that this designation will provide new resources to preserve, honor, and celebrate General Marshall’s legacy at this historic site, and I am pleased that companion legislation is also being introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by my colleague, Representative Jennifer Wexton, who has led this effort for years.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. Kaine, Madam President, I have seven requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.
Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a classified briefing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION
The Committee on Rules and Administration is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS’ AFFAIRS
The Committee on Veterans’ Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR
Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Caroline Newsom, a valued intern from my office, be granted floor privileges until November 17 of this year.

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

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, I request unanimous consent that the following interns in my office be granted privileges of the floor until December 15, 2023: Seamus Creighton-Kirk and Adam Weiss.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW
The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:42 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, November 2, 2023, at 10 a.m.
The following named officers for appointment to the grade indicated in the United States Space Force under Title 10, U.S.C., Section 624: To be colonel

- JARED MICHAEL JACOBS
- JABED BRANDEN P. JARMON
- DANIEL J. JENKINSON
- BRITT T. KASSISKE
- KYLE P. KREITZER
- BARI E. KNOCKBOX
- BRANDON A. LEVINSOHN
- KEITH C. MARSHALL
- GINELLE M. MARTINEZ
- MICHAEL E. MCCORMICK
- JOSEPH MCGOVERN
- JOSHUA L. MONTENYAT
- MARK D. NATALE
- DUSTIN J. O'BRIEN
- RAYMOND MARIANO J. PANTHER
- MARGHERITA J. FRASS
- CHLOE A. FREEZ
- BRIAN A. PETERSON
- JOSHUA B. POLGE
- WILLIAM P. POLLARD
- JESSICA H. PRATT
- JULIE N. RAY
- LIU G. SANTANGIO
- SEAN W. SCARLLEFF
- MARK A. SCOTT
- DANE PAUL SKOUSSEN
- RUSSELL C. SMITH
- JAMES A. ST. TAYLOR
- CRASH W. THORNTON
- CHRISTOPHER Y. TOVAR
- BRAND 0. URBANO
- MATTHEW VALLELAND
- FRANCISCO VAZQUEZ
- AARON M. WAREN
- WILLIAM H. WESTCOTT, JR.
- JOSH L. WILLIAMS
- SHAWN WOODALL, JR.

The following named officers for appointment to the grade indicated in the United States Space Force under Title 10, U.S.C., Section 624: To be major

- ELIZABETH A. AGNEW
- GREGORY A. ALLIN
- JOEL J. EUGENE AKINTET
- SKYLAR J. AWSITS
- TERRY R. BARBABA
- JOSEPH J. BARTHKEY
- MARCO J. BARRAL
- TYLER D. BARTS
- BRINDA M. BICKER
- CARL H. BLACK
- BEBROCA E. BOWSPORTH
- PATRICK E. BOWLE
- MICHAEL DEAN BROOKS
- ERIK NICOLE JADE BROWN
- TYLER J. BROWN
- SAMANTHA A. BURROS, S. B. BURNS
- JOSCHA M. BUTTERWORTH
- JOSH A. BYRES
- JONATHAN W. CAMPBELL
- JAMES P. CAREY
- RANIELL Y. CAVITT
- BRINTT S. CLARK
- KASEY L. CRONIN
- KASEY S. CRUMPION
- JORDON W. CRUZ
- JUSTIN W. CURTIS
- LANCE R. DAVIS
- RICHARD M. DAVIS III
- IAN J. DAY
- TREVIN J. JACK
- STEVEN JAMES DILLMAN
- JACKSON C. DIXON GALEBURTH
- MARK ANTHONY G. DIXON
- MICHAEL SCOTT DREDD
- LEVI ROBERT DUNCAN
- MELISSA A. DUNDEL
- MIKAI A. FARMER
- BRIAN MING FONG
- GEOFFREY M. FORBES
- VICTORIA GARCIA
- BRANDON ALLEN GILLILAND
- MAX H. GLEASON-BACHNITZ
- DILLON H. HAGERTY
- JOSHUA LAVON RANELIN
- WILLIAM ROBERT HASHMAN
- SHELLBY N. HENRY
- JONATHAN P. HEMINGWAY
- DAMOIL D. HENDERSON
- KENJAN A. HIGGINSON
- KRISTEN L. HILL
- STEPHEN A. RINDMAN
- RYAN E. ROBURG
- SAMUEL M. RODGERS
- SAMUEL D. JOLLY
- MAGGIOR J. JONES
- STEVEN FIEDLER JONES, JR.
- JEREHO H. KARIS
- SIMONE Y. KIETTE
- LEH RICH KOGOKAS
- EMILY A. LAGABILE
- LAUREN ONELL LEHARDIND
- LANCO L. LEWIS
- HAYDEN LAWRENCE LOPEZ
- CAMERON S. LOVE
- KEVIN D. MACLAUGHLIN
- RONALD JOHN MILLER
- JULIE LEANN MINDSICK
- RAINII JS MOON
- STEVE ANTHONY MUBU
- JOHN S. NEWELL

To the grade indicated in the United States Space Force under Title 10, U.S.C., Section 624: To be major

- ANNA ELIZABETH NOCK
- SEAN W. NUTTALL
- BRENNER A. OLIVER
- NATHAN R. PAIDOCK
- ALEXANDER K. PINACE
- GABRIEL G. PENTIKOWSKI
- CARL J. PESSEL
- KARL M. FREEMAN
- STEVEN J. RAMOS
- ALMUSUMAMU J. RATHOD
- IAN MACLEAN GRIFITTHE REDDIG
- THOMAS E. REYER
- DANIEL REYES
- ILIAD A. RIVET
- MATTHEW JON ROSENFELDT
- JAMES FALOON ROSS
- ANNA CHRISTINE ROWE
- NICHOLAS J. RUIG
- JONATHAN A. RULLI
- JONATHAN MINNOW SAMPSON
- LYTHEZ. L. SCOTT
- JAMES MICHAEL SKELI
- AUSTIN J. SKELLER
- JULIA N. SHLESSON
- JOSHUA PAUL SKEFFER
- SEAN P. SHEERICK
- PETER L. SIMON
- STEVE MICHAEL ST. JOHN
- KATHRYN J. THOMASON
- KEVIN J. TORMAI
- MARSH M. TQUIRE
- JUAN TRASCUN TRUJILLO
- ERIC M. TUCKER
- CHRISTOPHER SCOTT WADJ
- RONALD E. WILLIAMSON
- BRINTTHOMAS WALLAC
- SAM M. WILLIAMS
- COIN D. WOLFF
- LUKE D. WUNDERLICH

The following named officers for appointment to the grade indicated in the United States Space Force under Title 10, U.S.C., Section 624: To be major

- ALEXANDER B. ALLARD
- GREGORY STEPHEN ANDERSON
- JOEL SAMAR ATHIRINIA
- DANIEL R. BARNES
- DAVID B. BEALE
- ESTEBAN BORRODA LNARNENDIA
- ZACHARY J. BENSON
- CHARLES A. BOLIN
- ERIC J. BONICK
- KELSEY M. BOURDON
- CAMERON C. BRUCABR
- MICHAEL DEAN CABLE
- MICHAEL MARK COURY, JR.
- SAMUEL C. CROUCH
- TARA E. CROUCH
- WILLIAM R. DALLMAN
- RAIN FOREST DART
- CHRISTOPHER JAMES DAUGHERTY
- BRIAN J. DAVIDSON
- FOSTER ELLIOTT DAVIS
- BLET R. DUMSTHORP
- ANDREW L. DUNLIN
- KRISTIN M. DUESY
- PATRICK N. DUNEL
- KARA I. DAVIS
- KAI HOANG DUONG
- JEREMY SCOTT DAVIS
- BRIAN A. ERICKSON
- ERIC J. FONKEN
- SHANE C. GERDINER
- JOSHUA D. GASAB
- MATTHEW ALFONSO GAVILANES
- LINDSEY G. GORARI
- JENNIFER L. GUDN
- CONNOR D. GUSELBY
- DALE AUSTIN HARTLEY
- DRIE R. HARTSTADT
- CLARA S. HEPFRENNEN
- AVESHA W. HILL
- MATTHEW W. HELVE
- BEBBIE R. HULL
- TERRAINA DENISE JOHNSON
- DANIEL L. JANG
- DAVID M. KIM
- FETER C. LAFLEIGE
- YOUNG G. LEE
- DAX ALEXANDER LINDVILL
- JONATHAN LONSDON
- CURT W. LUIZTO
- MICHAEL MALOUKE MAKARDIKI
- KYLE DANIEL MCCLAIRY
- EVAN J. MCDOWELL
- TROY THOMAS MICHEUGRA
- RYAN B. MUAY
- PAUL C. MORDEN
- BREY S. MOLINA
- DAVID J. MUIRUR
- NOEL P. NICCUM
- KATHERY ELISIUS
- RACHEL OLIVI
- RAYMOND PEREIRA, JR.
- MICHAEL ROBISON
- KARL A. ROSS
- STEPHEN R. ROYER
- MATTHEW R. SCHRAM
- JOSHUA R. SCROGGINS
- JONATHAN J. SHIFLET
- ROBERT T. SIMPSON
- ADAM R. SLEMAWICZ
- DANIEL J. SLIGHT

November 1, 2023
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE S5319
IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADES INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14 U.S.C., SECTION 2121(E):

To be captain

JENNIFER J. ANDREW
MATTHEW S. AUSTIN
MICHAEL W. BABIS
PATRICIA M. BENNETT
TODD R. BLESER
BRIAN M. BITZ
MICHAEL B. BRIMBLECOM
MADDY D. BROOKS
KEVIN A. KUKOS
BRADLEY B. BRUNAUER
KENNETH J. BURGESS
JASON A. BUSHNELL
JOEL R. CARR
AARON J. CARAVANT
ERIC W. CHANG
BRADLEY J. CHU
JEREMY A. COURTARD
ALLAN W. COX
JONATHAN W. COX
SYNNON A. CREIDER
MICHAEL R. DARAH
JESSICA S. DAVILA
ARTHUR M. WALKER
PHILLIP A. DELBLER
JARRELL W. DERTZ
JENNIFER R. DOHERTY
PATRICK A. DRAKE
LAUREN F. DUPRENE
STANLEY P. FIELDS
JASON B. FRANZ
MATTHEW A. GANS
LISA L. GARCEZ
CHRISTJAN C. GAUDIO
NICHOLAS J. GILBERT
JONATHAN C. GODWIN
RICHARD G. GOERING
ANDREW JOHN GOREN
ROBERT M. GREGG
JONATHAN L. GUNDERSON
ERICK A. HAMMEL
JASON D. HAGEN
JUAN M. HERNANDEZ
MICHAEL J. HUNT
RICHARD J. JENKINS–HARRIS
MARGARET D. KENNEDY
COBRY M. KENNS
MATHWELL O. KENNEDY
RICHARD K. KUZAK
AMANDA M. LEE
CLAY D. MCDONALD
JENSEN H. MILLARD
DAVID W. MILLS
SAMUEL R. NASSAB
ERIK G. PARA
CHRISTOPHER R. PARLEE
LUKE R. PEARCE
JEFFREY B. PLATT
JASON T. PLUMLEY
BRAD G. POWELL
RANDY L. PRESTON
KENT S. RHEINHOLD
KENNETH H. RINELAND
RICHARD J. ROEDEL
ELENA J. ROSCHEZ
JENNIFR IN. RUSON
STACEY J. RUTHER
RENNET T. SCHMIDT
JONATHAN J. SCHMUTZE
DANIELLE M. SHEPHERD
LUKAS M. SLOUKIN
BENJAMIN J. SMTHE
ROBERT E. STILES
STEVEN D. STOWERS
KEITH O. THOMAS


IAN JOSEPH MCCARY, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE: TO BE A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER, A CONSULAR OFFICER, AND A SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

RICHARD JOHN AMEROSO, OF OHIO
ALYSSIA S. BECKER, OF VIRGINIA
SARAH ALLISON BREDENBAUGH, OF VIRGINIA
BENJAMIN JAMES BREEK, OF NORTH CAROLINA
ROBERT JAMES BRENCHER, OF VIRGINIA
LINDSEY K. BOWMAN, OF NORTH CAROLINA
MONITA R. BRAY, OF VIRGINIA
JOCELYN ANN BROWN, OF VIRGINIA
KIC C. BULOCK, OF VIRGINIA
MI KYONG CANALE, OF VIRGINIA
CINDY CARDOSO–DEE, OF VIRGINIA
CHARLES W. WILSON
TATHAROK CHAIMONGKUL, OF VIRGINIA
THOMAS EDWARD CIBIC, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ANDREW JOHN CREZIE, OF VIRGINIA
JONATHAN G. CREST, OF TEXAS
ANN KARI CLARE, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
GRACE BERNADETTE CLEG, OF VIRGINIA
NICHOLAS M. COLAMETA, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PEERING THOMAS COREY, OF NEW YORK
BRYAN A. COX, OF TEXAS
KYLE A. CROSS, OF VIRGINIA
LINDSAY L. DANA, OF SOUTH DAKOTA
JENSEN LEDDY DAVIES, OF WASHINGTON
EMILY S. DEL MORONE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CHRISTOPHER JAMES DOGEE, OF WISCONSIN
JOHN W. DROLLETTE, OF OREGON
RACHEL MARIA FALK, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID T. FEIN, OF VIRGINIA
JAMIES WILSON FISHER, OF NEW YORK
GABRIEL O. Fuentes, OF VIRGINIA
RACHEL LEE GILSON, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTIAN DAVID GILSON, OF VIRGINIA
DARREN DAE GLENN, OF GEORGIA
ZACHARY C. GRIFFIN, OF VIRGINIA
SANDHYA GUPTA
SANDHYA GUPTA–GAUDER, OF OHIO
ZACHARY C. GRAHAM, OF VIRGINIA
DARRYN BAE GLENN, OF GEORGIA
RACHEL COTE GILSON, OF VIRGINIA
GABRIEL O. FUENTES
JASON R. FRANZ
CAITLIN L. FREDERICK
LAURIE A. FUREY
KHALIL W. FURQAN
SHAJAHAN FURQAN
JOSHUA T. FURTH
MARTIN W. FURTH
MORGAN A. GILBERT

THE FOLLOWING–NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE: TO BE A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER, A CONSULAR OFFICER, AND A SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

REED DAVID GEORGE LANGERUD, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WHITNEY BRYCE KINCAID, OF FLORIDA
BRIAN CHRISTOPHER KATO, OF WASHINGTON
BROOKE H. KANTOR, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ELIJAH JATOVSKY, OF CALIFORNIA
ERIC MATTHEW HOLDER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ALYSON G. HIRATA, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEBRA ASHLEY HAJIAN, OF VIRGINIA
SANDHYA GUPTA
ZACHARY C. GRAHAM
DARRYN BAE GLENN
RACHEL COTE GILSON
GABRIEL O. FUENTES
JASON R. FRANZ
CAITLIN L. FREDERICK
LAURIE A. FUREY
KHALIL W. FURQAN
SHAJAHAN FURQAN
JOSHUA T. FURTH
MARTIN W. FURTH
MORGAN A. GILBERT

EXECUTIVE NOMINATION CONFIRMED BY THE SENATE NOVEMBER 1, 2023:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
HERRO MUSTAPA GARA, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT:

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on November 1, 2023 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

LAURA DANIEL–DAVIS, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR, VICE JOSEPH BALSAN, RESIGNED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 21, 2023.