

PROVIDING FOR A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS TO RECEIVE A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H. Con. Res. 11, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 11) providing for a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 11) was agreed to.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 84 and S. Res. 85.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

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

The resolutions (S. Res. 84 and S. Res. 85) were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MORNING BUSINESS

CONFIRMATION OF HOWARD LUTNICK

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the nomination of Howard Lutnick to be Secretary of the Department of Commerce.

When I met with Mr. Lutnick, I stressed two related issues to him. The first was the importance of being responsive to Congress.

I view listening to whistleblowers and sending letters to Agencies as part of my oversight responsibility to bring transparency to the American people.

Agencies in turn have a responsibility to respond to congressional letters to remain accountable.

I also stressed the impacts that trade retaliation can have on domestic industries, something that Iowa farmers know well.

As international trade continues to heat up in the administration, I expect timely responses from Agencies like Mr. Lutnick's to provide transparency to the American people.

I look forward to working with Mr. Lutnick to foster more fair trade with America's trading partners while remaining transparent with the American people.

TRIBUTE TO RAYMOND LANG

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, for the past five decades, Americans have relied on Amtrak to travel our great Nation. From shuttling President Biden between Delaware and Washington during his early days as a Senator to giving people across the country a way of getting to work and special destinations, Amtrak is an invaluable service to our Nation. And Raymond Lang, who recently retired from Amtrak after 30 years of service, has been an invaluable part of Amtrak.

Ray's career at Amtrak started from humble beginnings, as an intern in Amtrak's government affairs office in 1994. From the start, he was hard-working, reliable, and he loved the work. So, when Amtrak created business units, Ray saw an opportunity to join the company full time, and in 1996, he was dispatched to the Chicago-based intercity business unit's government affairs office. His territory was broad and challenging to manage, with many relationships that required careful attention. At the time, Amtrak was experiencing significant financial challenges, resulting in reduced service. But Ray worked tirelessly—almost always traveling by train—to meet with local and State officials, bringing their perspective and experiences back to Amtrak leadership. In the end, Amtrak restored much of their service.

Ray carried this specialized knowledge with him for the rest of his career with Amtrak. Learning about the communities his company served helped them to become some of the strongest advocates for the future of rail. There were very few mayors, city managers, State legislators, or rail advocates in towns served by Amtrak who did not know Ray. He and his team were ambassadors for rail, mobilizing mayors to speak up on behalf of expanding and improving Amtrak service and making station revitalization a priority in their communities.

Over the years, Ray left his mark on Amtrak, resulting in promotions into positions with greater responsibility and authority. He was integral to keeping the legendary Southwest Chief—a long-distance route between Chicago and Los Angeles—on its current route, thereby keeping rail service in several Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico towns. He provided testimony to State legislatures and formed partnerships

with State departments of transportation staff and leadership. He helped inaugurate service on countless routes and was instrumental in helping Illinois double its service in the 2000s. And, by the early 2000s, he was running the Chicago government affairs office, later becoming responsible for all State and local government affairs and leading a staff based in New York, New Orleans, Seattle, and Oakland.

Ray was a visible, respected, and accessible leader. And he truly cared about Amtrak and all of the communities it served. He worked for eight CEOs, all of whom relied on Ray for guidance across the network. Ray, always sharply dressed, would escort them to meetings, hearings, and local communities. On one such trip, Ray was traveling to communities along the California Zephyr route with CEO David Gunn. Visiting a mayor in Mount Pleasant, IA, Gunn chose to wear a shirt and slacks while Ray wore a suit and tie. When the mayor welcomed them, he went straight to the man in the suit, shook Ray's hand first, and said: "It is a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Gunn."

In 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Amtrak promoted Ray to be vice president of State supported services. His vast experience and relationships with communities across the country made him the right person for the job, and he was a steadying hand through Amtrak's pandemic recovery. Highlights of his tenure in leadership include new service in Virginia, Wisconsin, and Minnesota.

Ray's career has been nothing short of exceptional. He has been a trusted partner to my office over the years, and Amtrak is better off because of Ray's leadership—as are the millions of Americans who depend on Amtrak. I wish Ray and his wife Brenda the best of luck in this next, well-deserved chapter of their lives.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATIONS

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is still available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications that have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such an annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows: