

The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. LOTT. I announce that the Senator from Texas [Mr. GRAMM] is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber who desire to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 82, nays 16, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 605 Leg.]

YEAS—82

Abraham	Exon	Lugar
Akaka	Faircloth	Mack
Ashcroft	Feingold	McCain
Baucus	Feinstein	McConnell
Bennett	Ford	Mikulski
Bingaman	Frist	Murkowski
Bond	Glenn	Nickles
Boxer	Gorton	Nunn
Bradley	Graham	Pell
Breaux	Grams	Pressler
Brown	Grassley	Pryor
Bryan	Gregg	Robb
Burns	Hatch	Rockefeller
Byrd	Hatfield	Roth
Campbell	Hefflin	Santorum
Chafee	Helms	Shelby
Coats	Hollings	Simpson
Cochran	Hutchison	Smith
Cohen	Inhofe	Snowe
Conrad	Inouye	Specter
Coverdell	Jeffords	Stevens
Craig	Kassebaum	Thomas
D'Amato	Kempthorne	Thompson
Daschle	Kerrey	Thurmond
DeWine	Kerry	Warner
Dole	Kohl	Wellstone
Domenici	Kyl	
Dorgan	Lott	

NAYS—16

Biden	Lautenberg	Murray
Bumpers	Leahy	Reid
Dodd	Levin	Sarbanes
Harkin	Lieberman	Simon
Johnston	Moseley-Braun	
Kennedy	Moynihan	

NOT VOTING—1

Gramm

So the bill (H.R. 1561), as amended, was agreed to.

(The text of the bill will be printed in a future edition of the RECORD.)

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. LEVIN. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, S. 908 is indefinitely postponed.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I do not see the distinguished Senator from Maine [Ms. SNOWE] in the Chamber, but I wish to thank her for her unwavering commitment to seeing this reorganization bill through to this point.

In fact, all of the Republican members of the Foreign Relations Committee have stood in unison throughout, from the very beginning, in support of this bill.

I wish to pay my respects to Admiral Nance, the chief of staff of the Foreign Relations Committee; Steve Berry and Elizabeth Lambird, Chris Walker, and Kristin Peck and, as always, the able floor staff for their help, Elizabeth Greene and the rest.

I thank Senator KERRY for his cooperation in these difficult times the

past few weeks, and I especially thank his staff person, Nancy Stetson, for her continued work on this bill.

I thank the Chair.

Mr. KERRY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, the other day when we completed the unanimous-consent agreements, I took the time to thank each of the staff. I would simply thank the distinguished chairman for his comments right now and for his expression of gratitude to my staff, and he knows I have reciprocated, joined with him in thanking all of them for a job well done.

I thank the Chair.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to executive session to consider en bloc the nominations listed in the order of December 7, 1995; that the nominations be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and that the Senate return to legislative session.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

A. Peter Burleigh, of California, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Maldives.

Sandra J. Kristoff, of Virginia, for the rank of Ambassador during her tenure of service as U.S. Coordinator for Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

John Raymond Malott, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Malaysia.

Kenneth Michael Quinn, of Iowa, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Cambodia.

William H. Itoh, of New Mexico, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Thailand.

Frances D. Cook, of Florida, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Sultanate of Oman.

J. Stapleton Roy, of Pennsylvania, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Indonesia.

Thomas W. Simons, Jr., of the District of Columbia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to

be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Richard Henry Jones, of Nebraska, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Lebanon.

James Franklin Collins, of Illinois, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador at Large and Special Advisor to the Secretary of State for the New Independent States.

Charles H. Twining, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Cameroon.

Charles H. Twining, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

James A. Joseph, of Virginia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of South Africa.

Don Lee Gevirtz, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Fiji, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Nauru, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Tonga, and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Tuvalu.

Joan M. Plaisted, of California, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Kiribati.

Jim Sasser, of Tennessee, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China.

David P. Rawson, of Michigan, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Mali.

Gerald Wesley Scott, of Oklahoma, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of The Gambia.

Robert E. Gribbin III, of Alabama, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Rwanda.

Foreign Service nominations beginning Robert S. Gelbard, and ending Sandra L. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of September 5, 1995.

Foreign Service nominations beginning Paula O. Goddard, and ending Michael Ranneberger, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of September 5, 1995.

Foreign Service nominations beginning Carol A. Peasely, and ending Sarah S. Olds, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of September 22, 1995.

Foreign Service nominations beginning Henry Lee Barrett and ending Harry L. Tyner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of October 31, 1995.

NOMINATION OF JAMES R. SASSER TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the confirmation of Senator James R. Sasser to be the next United States Ambassador to the People's Republic of China. In my opinion President Clinton could not have made a better choice.

During the last few months, relations between the United States and China have stumbled along a very rocky road. With increased tensions and frustrations between our two governments, we have sorely missed the presence of a U.S. Ambassador in Beijing to represent our policy and to facilitate much-needed communications. Unfortunately, the nominations process was held up here in our own Chambers. However, recent developments have encouraged me to believe that Senator Sasser will soon be able to take his post in Beijing.

I am anxious to reassure the Chinese Government that the delay here in the Senate is in no respect reflective of the sentiment of the Senate about the capabilities of Jim Sasser. In fact, I could not speak more highly of this nominee and his outstanding capacity to serve both of our countries well. The Chinese are very fortunate to receive a representative of the United States who is close to the President and can communicate directly with him on important issues. In addition to his valuable ties to the White House, Senator Sasser is a highly educated, articulate, and thoughtful man. He has approached this position with enthusiasm and a dedication to learning about his new host country. I have known Jim Sasser since I first arrived in this Senate body 15 years ago. Over the years, I have admired his outstanding commitment to public service and appreciate the efforts he has made to improve the lives of his constituents and the citizens of this country. I know that, in his new capacity as Ambassador to China, Jim Sasser will once again display this commitment with dignity and strength.

The Clinton administration has chosen wisely by nominating Senator Sasser to the important post of Ambassador to China. The People's Republic of China is an increasingly significant player in the international arena and in United States foreign policy. While our economic, political, and security ties with China have multiplied over the last decade, we are still facing many areas of disagreement. We should move quickly to install our Ambassador in Beijing, to demonstrate our good intentions to the Chinese. Swift Senate approval of Jim Sasser will offer new opportunities for communication and cooperation between our two countries.

Mr. BUMPERS. Mr. President, the Senate has just acquitted itself very

well by approving a list of ambassadors, particularly that of our former colleague, Jim Sasser.

Jim Sasser came to the U.S. Senate in 1978. He acquitted himself immediately with his colleagues in a most admirable manner. We all knew shortly that Jim Sasser had a very keen mind and quick wit. He ingratiated himself very well with his colleagues and almost instantly became one of the most popular Senators; by the time he left here, in my opinion, he was the very best Senator in the U.S. Senate.

His tenure as chairman of the Budget Committee was exemplary. Hour after hour after hour he sat there in the manager's chair, dealing with the most complex and difficult legislation of the year, and that was the budget.

It is a real travesty that the confirmation of a man of his talents has been held up for so very long, at a time when American-Chinese relations need a good, strong Ambassador more than ever. I promise my colleagues—and of course most of you know this—that Jim Sasser will represent this country with great distinction. He will do it with dignity and with integrity.

The Chinese will find very quickly what all of us found very quickly, that he is a quick learner. His integrity is absolutely unimpeachable.

This is a great day for him and his family. His lovely wife Mary and their beautiful daughter Elizabeth will be accompanying him to China. They have waited a long time. They have been hanging by their thumbs, wondering whether they would be able to go to Beijing, for almost a year now.

So this is a great day for the Sasser family. It is a great day for the Chinese. Above all, it is a great day for America, that we can appoint somebody of his talent and his skills.

Finally, I want to personally, and I know I speak for almost all of my colleagues, wish him Godspeed and much luck. I yield the floor.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I am very grateful to the Senator for yielding me this time, because a few moments ago the Senate voted to confirm 19 ambassadorial nominees. I am very pleased, as I know my colleagues are, that these nominations are finally moving forward. I am especially happy to note that my friend, and I should certainly say our friend and former colleague, Jim Sasser, will soon be allowed to take his post as United States Ambassador to the People's Republic of China.

As we enter a new century, it is my belief no other international relationship is filled with more potential, or fraught with more dangers than the United States relationship with China. In recent years, China has become one of the world's fastest-growing economic and military powers. China is already a major player in Asia, and in the coming years we will likely see it assert itself as a full-fledged international power.

The Clinton administration has rightly concluded that it is in Amer-

ica's best interest to stay actively engaged with the Chinese. Although our two countries often have sharp differences on both economic and human rights issues, it is very important to maintain a constant dialogue between Beijing and Washington. Put simply, the future stability and prosperity of the Pacific rim are largely dependent on a cooperative U.S. relationship.

Mr. President, this administration has also rightly concluded that the best person, the very best person, to represent America in China at this moment, the right person to guide our foreign policy in China during this critical time, is our good friend and former colleague, James R. Sasser of Tennessee.

I want to congratulate Jim Sasser today. I recognize how fortunate our country is that he has agreed to accept this enormous challenge.

I also want to commend President Clinton for choosing such an outstanding person to represent our interests in Beijing. Like many of my colleagues, I had the pleasure of working with him during a large portion of his 18 years of service to the people of Tennessee and America.

During his time in this body, Jim Sasser earned a reputation as one of the Senate's most thoughtful and skillful Members. As my colleagues know, the dynamics of the Senate require that Members often put partisanship aside in order to get things done. Jim Sasser was someone whom Senators on both sides of the aisle could count on to roll up his sleeves and do the job right.

Mr. President, a prominent example of Senator Sasser's skill and dedication can be found in his work as chairman of the Budget Committee. As my friend from New Mexico, Senator DOMENICI, will tell you, leadership of the Budget Committee can be one of the Senate's most thankless tasks. It is a difficult job, requiring an ability to balance the priorities of colleagues from both parties. I think all of my colleagues will agree that Senator Sasser's chairmanship was notable for its honesty, patience, and above all, fairness. It is the characteristic of that fairness that is the hallmark in Jim Sasser's life.

In the coming days, Senator Sasser will begin to put his considerable talents to work as Ambassador to China. As he no doubt realizes, there is much work to be done. During the past year, United States-Chinese relations have been strained by continuing trade disputes and the Taiwan issue. The United States needs someone who can improve the dialog with China while at the same time holding firm to American principles. Jim Sasser is more than up to this challenge.

Mr. President, I want to close by wishing our friend Jim Sasser and his family the best of luck as he continues to serve his Nation as Ambassador to China. I have every confidence that his tenure will be marked by distinction and success. I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I wanted to join both Senators from Arkansas in stating what an excellent choice Jim Sasser is for Ambassador to China.

I had the good fortune to be in Beijing this summer and to see firsthand the importance of that post which the President has chosen Senator Sasser to fill. I had the good fortune to serve here in the Senate for 12 years with Jim Sasser. I know of his great negotiating skills, his great leadership ability, and I believe his great advocacy skills, which will serve him well and serve this country well in this new position which he is about to take on.

So I think the Senate has acted very appropriately, the President has acted appropriately, and I look forward to the day when Jim Sasser is our representative, very soon, in Beijing. I again commend all Senators for voting for his nomination.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will return to legislative session.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES— H.R. 1561

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate insists on its amendment to H.R. 1561 and requests a conference with the House.

The Chair appointed Mr. HELMS, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. BROWN, Mr. COVERDELL, Mr. ASHCROFT, Mr. PELL, Mr. KERRY, Mr. SARBANES, and Mr. DODD conferees on the part of the Senate.

CUBAN LIBERTY AND DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY [LIBERTAD]

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Chair lays before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives on H.R. 927, Cuban Liberty and Solidarity Act:

Resolved, That the House disagree to the amendment of the Senate to the bill to seek international sanctions against the Castro government in Cuba, to plan for support of a transition government leading to a democratically elected government in Cuba, and for other purposes, and ask a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon.

Ordered, That Mr. Gilman, Mr. Burton of Indiana, Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, Mr. King, Mr. Diaz-Balart, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Gejdenson, Mr. Torricelli, and Mr. Menendez be the managers of the conference on the part of the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate insists on its amendment and agrees to the request by the House for a conference.

The Chair appointed Mr. HELMS, Mr. COVERDELL, Mr. THOMPSON, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. PELL, Mr. DODD, and Mr. ROBB conferees on the part of the Senate.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 2099, the VA-HUD appropriations bill, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2099) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses this report, signed by a majority of the conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of November 17, 1995.)

Mr. BOND addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I thank the Chair and my distinguished ranking member. We have before us the VA-HUD appropriations conference report. As I understand it, there is to be 30 minutes equally divided between the two managers, 10 minutes under the control of Senator BUMPERS, 10 minutes under the control of Senator BOXER, 10 minutes under the control of Senator HUTCHISON, 10 minutes under the control of Senator LAUTENBERG, and 10 minutes under the control of Senator MCCAIN.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, the Senate is not in order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct. The Senate will come to order. The Senator from Missouri has the floor.

Mr. BOND. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, it is with some pride, some relief, and some frustration, I now present to the Senate the conference report on the appropriations bill for the Departments of Veterans Affairs, and Housing and Urban Development, and independent agencies for fiscal year 1996. Consideration of this bill has been a long, difficult process. While we should have been able to complete our work long before now, I do believe we have wasted little of this time in producing the best possible measure for consideration by the Senate.

Work on this measure began over a year ago, beginning with analyses of budgetary trends and programmatic needs for activities under the subcommittee's jurisdiction. It was obvious at that time, that our Federal low-income housing programs were out of

budgetary control. Concerted policy reform was critical to avoid a disaster of unprecedented magnitude.

In January of this year, as the newly selected chairman of this subcommittee, I convened a series of special hearings on the budgetary and management crisis at HUD. We detailed the magnitude of our budgetary shortfall to maintain the existing multifamily subsidized housing inventory of the Department. We explored urgently needed reforms in the housing preservation program to reduce cost, avoid windfall payments, and reduce long-term rental subsidies. We also delineated policy changes in public housing to reduce bureaucratic overregulation and micromanagement, to increase local flexibility, decision-making, and efficiencies.

From these hearings we developed a strategy to begin these comprehensive changes in Federal housing programs. First, in the Disaster Supplemental and Rescission Act we initiated the first round of deregulation, and rescinded \$6.5 billion of previously appropriated HUD funds to turn-off the spigot of unsustainable housing subsidy commitments. At that time we noted the urgency of comprehensive housing authorization legislation to complete this reform effort during fiscal year 1996.

Unfortunately, this legislation has been delayed, although we remain hopeful that early next year the measures reported by both the House and Senate authorizing committees will pass the Congress. In the absence of such legislation, however, we have used the appropriations process to establish a strong foundation in beginning the major reform and overhaul of HUD. The measure before us today reflects almost all of the reform proposals which passed the Senate in September. They include public housing and assisted housing rent reforms, including a minimum rent, repeal for onerous Federal resident selection criteria, free-market decontrol of section 8 lease terms, and flexibility in resident income mix and funds utilization.

This measure maintains the Senate-passed public housing demonstration initiative which will allow up to 30 public housing authorities to combine public housing and section 8 subsidies into a locally determined low-income housing assistance block grant. In addition, the bill also includes the Senate proposed multifamily mark-to-market demonstration, which is discretionary authority for the Department, and willing apartment development owners, the opportunity to explore work-out strategies which reduce dependence on rental subsidies while preserving affordable housing. Coupled with the one-time, 1-year extension of expiring project-based subsidy contracts, the multifamily housing demonstration authority sets the stage for consideration and enactment of needed comprehensive reform legislation next year.

Mr. President, the measure before us also maintains the effort recommended