

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Michael W. Hager, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN1017 AIR FORCE nomination of Michael V. Siebert, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 1, 2007.

PN1018 AIR FORCE nominations (3) beginning BRIAN D. ONEIL, and ending FRANK R. VIDAL, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 1, 2007.

IN THE ARMY

PN1019 ARMY nomination of Anthony Barber, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 1, 2007.

PN1020 ARMY nomination of Tim C. Lawson, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 1, 2007.

PN1021 ARMY nomination of Richard D. Fox II, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 1, 2007.

PN1022 ARMY nomination of John G. Goulet, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 1, 2007.

PN1023 ARMY nomination of David L. Paten, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 1, 2007.

PN1024 ARMY nominations (51) beginning MARK J. BENEDICT, and ending GUSTAV D. WATERHOUSE, of which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 1, 2007.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

PN1025 MARINE CORPS nomination of Melvin L. Chattman, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 1, 2007.

PN1026 MARINE CORPS nominations (7) beginning DANA R. BROWN, and ending MARK R. REID, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 1, 2007.

IN THE NAVY

PN1027 NAVY nominations (60) beginning JULIAN D. ARELLANO, and ending JARED W. WYRICK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 1, 2007.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

PN983 PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE nominations (118) beginning Harry J. Brown, and ending Elaine C. Wolff, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 16, 2007.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased that we can take a break from the tired, partisan sniping from the other side of the aisle. With the consideration of this nomination the Senate continues making progress confirming judicial nominations. The complaints we hear more and more loudly as we approach an election year ring hollow.

The Judiciary Committee has now reached a milestone by agreeing to report 40 nominations for lifetime appointments to the Federal bench this year. That exceeds the totals reported in each of the previous 2 years, when a Republican-led Judiciary Committee was considering this President's nominees.

Today we consider one of the nominations reported this week. Reed Charles O'Connor has been nominated to fill a vacancy in the Northern District of Texas. Reed is well known to many of us on the Judiciary Committee as he has been on detail for the last two years to serve as Senator Cornyn's counsel on the committee and before that with the Republican staff of the committee. Before that, Reed spent a year on detail with the general counsel's office of the Executive Office of United States Attorneys. With his confirmation, Reed will return home to Texas, where he previously served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Texas and before that as an Assistant District Attorney in Tarrant County District Attorney's Office in Fort Worth. Born in Houston, Reed graduated from the University of Houston in 1986 and the South Texas College of Law in 1989.

I thank Senator CORNYN and Senator HUTCHISON for their consideration of this nomination and Senator WHITEHOUSE for chairing his confirmation hearing.

When we confirm the nomination we consider today, the Senate will have confirmed 36 nominations for lifetime appointments to the Federal bench this session alone. That is more than the total number of judicial nominations that a Republican-led Senate confirmed in all of 1997, 1999, 2004, 2005 or 2006. It is 19 more confirmations than were achieved during the entire 1996 session, more than double that session's total of 17, when Republicans stalled consideration of President Clinton's nominations.

When this nomination is confirmed, the Senate will have confirmed 136 total Federal judicial nominees in my tenure as Judiciary chairman. During the Bush Presidency, more circuit judges, more district judges—more total judges—were confirmed in the first 24 months that I served as Judiciary chairman than during the 2-year tenures of either of the two Republican chairmen working with Republican Senate majorities.

The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts will list 46 judicial vacancies and 14 circuit court vacancies after today's confirmation. Compare that to the numbers at the end of the 109th Congress, when the total vacancies under a Republican controlled Judiciary Committee were 51 judicial vacancies and 15 circuit court vacancies. That means that despite the additional vacancies that arose at the beginning of the 110th Congress and throughout the year, the current vacancy totals under my chairmanship of the Judiciary Committee are below where they were under a Republican led-Judiciary Committee. They are about half what they were at the end of President Clinton's term, when Republican pocket filibusters allowed judicial vacancies to rise to top 100 before being left at 80, 26 of them for circuit courts.

This week, while the White House was complaining about nominations, I

was sending a letter to the President urging him to work with me, Senator SPECTER, and home State Senators to send us more well-qualified, consensus nominations. Now is the time for him to send us more nominations that could be considered and confirmed as his presidency approaches its last year, before the Thurmond Rule kicks in.

As I noted in that letter, I have been concerned that several recent nominations seem to be part of an effort to pick political fights rather than judges to fill vacancies. For example, President Bush nominated Duncan Getchell to one of Virginia's Fourth Circuit vacancies over the objections of Senator WEBB, a Democrat, and Senator WARNER, a Republican. They had submitted a list of five recommended nominations, and specifically warned the White House not to nominate Mr. Getchell.

When the President consults and sends well-qualified, consensus nominations, we can work together and continue to make progress as we are today.

I congratulate Reed and his family on his confirmation today.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now return to legislative session.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO REPORT

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that during the recess or adjournment of the Senate, the Senate committees may file committee-reported legislative and Executive Calendar business on Tuesday, November 27, 2007, during the hours of 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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

APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the recess or adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore of the Senate, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences, or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent act of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate.

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

MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUNDS REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2007

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 322, H.R. 50.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 50) to reauthorize the African Elephant Conservation Act and the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read the third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD, without further intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (H.R. 50) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

ASIAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2007

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 323, H.R. 465.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will state the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 465) to reauthorize the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read the third time, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD, without further intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (H.R. 465) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

THE CALENDAR

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed, en bloc, to the consideration of the following Calendar items: Nos. 491, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, and 506.

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

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bills be read the third time, passed, and that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc; that consideration of these items be printed separately in the RECORD, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

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

LARRY S. PIERCE POST OFFICE

The bill (S. 2110) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 427 North Street in Taft, California, as the "Larry S. Pierce

Post Office," was considered, ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, read the third time, and passed; as follows:

S. 2110

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. LARRY S. PIERCE POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 427 North Street in Taft, California, shall be known and designated as the "Larry S. Pierce Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Larry S. Pierce Post Office".

PAUL E. GILLMOR POST OFFICE BUILDING

The bill (S. 2174) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 175 South Monroe Street in Tiffin, Ohio, as the "Paul E. Gillmor Post Office Building," was considered, ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, read the third time, and passed; as follows:

S. 2174

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PAUL E. GILLMOR POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 175 South Monroe Street in Tiffin, Ohio, shall be known and designated as the "Paul E. Gillmor Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Paul E. Gillmor Post Office Building".

BEATRICE E. WATSON POST OFFICE BUILDING

The bill (S. 2290) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 16731 Santa Ana Avenue in Fontana, California, as the "Beatrice E. Watson Post Office Building," was considered, ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, read the third time, and passed; as follows:

S. 2290

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. BEATRICE E. WATSON POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 16731 Santa Ana Avenue in Fontana, California, shall be known and designated as the "Beatrice E. Watson Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Beatrice E. Watson Post Office Building".

LOUISIANA ARMED SERVICES VETERANS POST OFFICE

The bill (H.R. 2089) to designate the facility of the United States Postal

Service located at 701 Loyola Avenue in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the "Louisiana Armed Services Veterans Post Office," was considered, ordered to a third reading, read the third time, and passed.

CORPORAL CHRISTOPHER E. ESCKELSON POST OFFICE BUILDING

The bill (H.R. 2276) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 203 North Main Street in Vassar, Michigan, as the "Corporal Christopher E. Esckelson Post Office Building," was considered, ordered to a third reading, read the third time, and passed.

NATE DETAMPLE POST OFFICE BUILDING

The bill (H.R. 3297) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 950 West Trenton Avenue in Morrisville, Pennsylvania, as the "Nate DeTample Post Office Building," was considered, ordered to a third reading, read the third time, and passed.

DENNIS P. COLLINS POST OFFICE BUILDING

The bill (H.R. 3307) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 570 Broadway in Bayonne, New Jersey, as the "Dennis P. Collins Post Office Building," was considered, ordered to a third reading, read the third time, and passed.

CHARLES H. HENDRIX POST OFFICE BUILDING

The bill (H.R. 3518) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1430 South Highway 29 in Cantonment, Florida, as the "Charles H. Hendrix Post Office Building," was considered, ordered to a third reading, read the third time, and passed.

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER AARON WEAVER POST OFFICE BUILDING

The bill (H.R. 3530) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1400 Highway 41 North in Inverness, Florida, as the "Chief Warrant Officer Aaron Weaver Post Office Building," was considered, ordered to a third reading, read the third time, and passed.

LANCE CORPORAL DAVID K. FRIBLEY POST OFFICE

The bill (H.R. 3308) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 216 East Main Street in Atwood, Indiana, as the "Lance Corporal David K. Fribley Post Office," was considered, ordered to a third reading, read the third time, and passed.