

U.S. attorneys. That is nearly a quarter of all districts. Yet the White House has nominated only 3 people for these 19 spots. Of course, some of these could have been filled a year ago had the White House worked with the Senate.

I have urged the President to fill the remaining executive vacancies with nominees who will restore the independence of Federal law enforcement. Last month, the White House announced with great fanfare its intent to make nominations for key positions at the Department of Justice. It was only weeks later that several of these nominations were sent to the Senate. The delays in sending U.S. attorney nominees and others to the Senate follow the many months of delay where the White House failed to send nominees to fill vacancies that have been open since the summer, or before.

In the course of the committee's investigation into the unprecedented mass firing of U.S. attorneys by the President who appointed them, we uncovered an effort by officials at the White House and the Justice Department to exploit an obscure provision enacted during the PATRIOT Act reauthorization to do an end-run around the Senate's constitutional to confirm U.S. attorneys. The result was the firing of well-performing U.S. attorneys for not bending to the political will of political operatives at the White House.

I have repeatedly emphasized that when it comes to the Justice Department and to the U.S. attorneys in our home States, Senators have a say and a stake in ensuring fairness and independence in order to insulate Federal law enforcement function from untoward political influence. That is why the law and the practice has always been that these appointments require Senate confirmation. The advice and consent check on the appointment power for U.S. attorneys is a critical function of the Senate.

I had hoped when the Senate voted overwhelmingly to close the loophole created by the PATRIOT Act when we passed S.214, the Preserving United States Attorneys Independence Act of 2007, by a vote of 97 to 0, it would send a clear message to the administration to make nominations that could receive Senate support and begin to restore an important check on the partisan influence in law enforcement. Yet, even as we closed one loophole, the administration has been exploiting others to continue to avoid coming to the Senate. Under the guidance of an erroneous opinion of the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel, the administration has been, employing the Vacancies Act authority to use acting U.S. attorneys and the power to appoint interim U.S. attorneys sequentially. They have used this misguided approach to put somebody in place for 330 days without the advice and consent of the Senate. This approach runs afoul of congressional intent and the law.

By not providing us with the nominations to the highest ranking vacancies within the Justice Department and not providing the basic background materials needed to review such nominations before the Thanksgiving recess, the administration has once again foreclosed the opportunity to have these nominees considered by the Senate and in place this year. Those nominations will now necessarily carryover into the next session. That is unfortunate and was unnecessary.

We will continue to make progress when we can, and I will urge the White House to work with the Senate to fill these vacancies.

NOMINATION OF JON WELLINGHOFF AND JOE KELLIHER

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I will support the Senate moving forward on the confirmation of Jon Wellingshoff and Joe Kelliher to be members of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. While I am pleased that FERC has been using its expanded authority granted by Congress in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to pursue manipulation in the electricity and natural gas markets, I think it is critically important to remind FERC of its statutory duty to oversee the energy markets and protect consumers.

In light of evidence of market manipulation in the Western electricity crisis in 2001, I fought hard to ban market manipulation in electricity and natural gas markets. My amendment, adopted by Congress as part of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, provided FERC new authority under the Federal Power Act and Natural Gas Act to investigate and punish market manipulation in electricity and natural gas markets.

I am pleased to see that FERC has used this expanded authority to conduct 64 investigations. According to FERC, 13 of these investigations have resulted in settlements involving the payment of civil penalties or other monetary remedies totaling over \$40 million. Two investigations have resulted in FERC bringing enforcement actions for alleged market manipulation against Amaranth Advisors LLC for \$291 million in civil penalties and Energy Trading Partners for \$167 million in civil penalties. Amaranth's shenanigans cost consumers upwards of \$9 billion dollars during the summer of 2006.

However, I want to remind FERC of its responsibilities relating to protecting consumers under the Federal Power Act's statutory "just and reasonable" standard. In section 1290 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, which I authored, Congress directed FERC to exercise its Federal Power Act authority to enforce "just and reasonable" rates when it reviewed the validity of termination payment claims made by Enron during the Western energy crisis of 2000-2001.

After entering into power contracts in a market that Enron manipulated, several utilities, including the Snohomish Public Utility District in my

State, the Nevada Power Company and Sierra Pacific Power Company in Nevada, terminated their contracts with Enron or watched as Enron terminated them when the company's web of fraudulent accounting was revealed in late 2001. As a result, Enron tried to squeeze hundreds of millions of dollars of termination fee payments from the electricity consumers of these utilities. In my opinion, these payments demanded by Enron were certainly neither just nor reasonable.

After enactment of the Cantwell amendment, the Snohomish Public Utility District in my State and several other entities including the Nevada Power Company, asked FERC to exercise its Federal Power Act authority, which includes enforcing "just and reasonable" rates, and deny Enron the ability to charge the fraudulent termination payments.

Using the force of the Cantwell amendment, these Washington State and Nevada utilities were able to avoid protracted litigation and settle Enron's absurd termination fee claims, saving these utilities from paying hundreds of millions in unjust payments on contracts that Enron fraudulently induced. This has helped save electricity consumers of Washington and Nevada hundreds of millions of dollars.

This spring, the U.S. Supreme Court will review a decision of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit which declared that FERC failed to use its authority under the Federal Power Act to enforce "just and reasonable" rates. In a brief to the Supreme Court in this matter, FERC recently took the position that it was free to approve long-term contracts arising out of the 2000-2001 Western power crisis notwithstanding evidence that, in the words of Stanford University energy economist Dr. Frank Wolak, suppliers to the Western markets during this period were "able to exercise market power at unprecedented levels" resulting in "prices vastly in excess of competitive levels."

As the Ninth Circuit's opinion makes clear, if FERC adopts market-based rates, it has an obligation to ensure that the markets operate properly and it cannot simply assume that a contract is just and reasonable even if the contract is the product of a manipulated market, such as the experienced in the West during 2000-2001.

It is troublesome that FERC continues to argue that it is free to ignore evidence of market manipulation and market power abuse when reviewing contracts affected by that abuse. Moreover, this position is inconsistent with its recent emphasis on enforcement of market standards. FERC's position in the Supreme Court essentially could allow market abusers to protect their ill-gotten gains by locking them up in contracts, undermining any incentive they might otherwise have to obey market rules and report abuses by other market participants.

While I am pleased that Commissioner Wellingshoff's response to my

questions indicates that he does not agree with FERC's brief in this matter, I will continue to watch FERC very closely as this case moves forward. FERC is the sole forum to bring complaints of market power abuse and manipulation in electricity and natural gas, markets, and I fully expect FERC to not abrogate its Federal Power Act responsibilities to protect consumers and enforce "just and reasonable" rates.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will now return to legislative session.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair, on behalf of the minority leader, and after consultation with the ranking members of the Senate Committee on Armed Services and the Senate Committee on Finance, pursuant to Public Law 106-398, as amended by Public Law 108-7, appoints the following individual as a member of the United States—China Economic Security Review Commission: Daniel A. Blumenthal of the District of Columbia, for a term expiring December 31, 2009.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in recess until 9:30 a.m., Friday, December 21, and that on Friday, the Senate meet in pro forma session only, with no business conducted; that at the close of Friday's session, the Senate then meet in pro forma session, with no business conducted, on the following days and following times and recess after each session: Sunday, December 23, at 11 a.m.; Wednesday, December 26, at 9:30 a.m.; Friday, December 28, at 10 a.m.; Monday, December 31, at 10 a.m., and that at the close of the pro forma session on December 31, the Senate stand adjourned sine die, pursuant to S. Con. Res. 61, as amended, until 12 noon, Thursday, January 3, 2008, for a pro forma session only, and the Senate then recess until Monday, January 7, at 9 a.m., to meet in pro forma session, as provided previously, and meet on the following days and recess over each period: Wednesday, January 9, 11 a.m.; Friday, January 11 at 9:30 a.m.; Tues-

day, January 15, at 11 a.m.; and Friday, January 18, at 10 a.m.; that at the close of that session, the Senate then reconvene on Tuesday, January 22, at 10 a.m.; that the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and then there be a period for the transaction of morning business for 60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, and the time be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final portion, and that the Senate then proceed to S. 1200, as previously provided.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS UNTIL 9:30 A.M., FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2007

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 9:22 p.m., recessed until Friday, December 21, 2007, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

DEANNA TANNER OKUN, OF IDAHO, TO BE A DEPUTY UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR, VICE KARAN K. BHATIA.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RICHARD A. BOUCHER, OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, FOR THE PERSONAL RANK OF CAREER AMBASSADOR IN RECOGNITION OF ESPECIALLY DISTINGUISHED SERVICE OVER A SUSTAINED PERIOD.

WILLIAM J. BURNS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, FOR THE PERSONAL RANK OF CAREER AMBASSADOR IN RECOGNITION OF ESPECIALLY DISTINGUISHED SERVICE OVER A SUSTAINED PERIOD.

ANNE WOODS PATTERSON, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, FOR THE PERSONAL RANK OF CAREER AMBASSADOR IN RECOGNITION OF ESPECIALLY DISTINGUISHED SERVICE OVER A SUSTAINED PERIOD.

C. DAVID WELCH, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, FOR THE PERSONAL RANK OF CAREER AMBASSADOR IN RECOGNITION OF ESPECIALLY DISTINGUISHED SERVICE OVER A SUSTAINED PERIOD.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

ROBERT D. JAMISON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ROBERT G. MCSWAIN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE CHARLES W. GRIM, RESIGNED.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

JAMSHEED K. CHOKSY, OF INDIANA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2014, VICE LAWRENCE OKAMURA, TERM EXPIRING.

DAWN HO DELBANCO, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2014, VICE DARIO FERNANDEZ-MORERA, TERM EXPIRING.

GARY D. GLENN, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2014, VICE STEPHAN THERNSTROM, TERM EXPIRING.

DAVID HERTZ, OF INDIANA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2014, VICE JEWEL SPEARS BROOKER, TERM EXPIRING.

MARVIN BAILEY SCOTT, OF INDIANA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2010, VICE THOMAS K. LINDSAY, RESIGNED.

CAROL M. SWAIN, OF TENNESSEE, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2014, VICE SIDNEY MCPHEE, RESIGNED.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUALS FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADES INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY DENTAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

MANUEL POZOALONSO, 0000

To be major

RACHELLE A. RETOMA, 0000

NOMINATIONS RETURNED TO THE PRESIDENT

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

The following nominations transmitted by the President of the United States to the Senate during the first session of the 110th Congress, and upon which no action was had at the time of the December recess of the Senate, failed of confirmation under the provisions of Rule XXXI, paragraph 6, of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

ANITA K. BLAIR, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

STEVEN G. BRADBURY, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL.

IN THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF COL. MARK W. TILLMAN, 0000, TO BE BRIGADIER GENERAL.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH COL. LARRY L. ARNETT AND ENDING WITH COL. GILBERTO S. PENA, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2007.

ARMY NOMINATION OF COL. MARC L. WARREN, 0000, TO BE BRIGADIER GENERAL.

DISCHARGED NOMINATIONS

The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations was discharged from further consideration of the following nominations and the nominations were confirmed:

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CEDRA DANIELLE EATON AND ENDING WITH DANNY J. SHEESLEY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON SEPTEMBER 6, 2007.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JULIA A. STEWART AND ENDING WITH DEBORAH WINTERS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON SEPTEMBER 20, 2007.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ANNE H. AARNES AND ENDING WITH MELISSA ANN WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON OCTOBER 23, 2007.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH PAMELA E. BRIDGEWATER AND ENDING WITH FRONTIS B. WIGGINS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON OCTOBER 23, 2007.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JEFFERY A. LIFUR AND ENDING WITH MARWA ZEINI, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 1, 2007.

MARY ANN GLENDON, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE HOLY SEE.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH S. NAJLAA ABDUS-SAMAD AND ENDING WITH LONNIE J. PRICE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 7, 2007.

CHARLES W. LARSON, JR., OF IOWA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA.

The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs was