

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S
DESKNATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC
ADMINISTRATION

PN846 NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION nominations (22) beginning DENISE J. GRUCCIO, and ending SARA A. SLAUGHTER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 31, 2009.

NOMINATION OF FRANCIS COLLINS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, few people have had as significant an impact on the scientific world over the past two decades as Dr. Francis Collins, President Obama's nominee to head the National Institutes of Health. As director of the National Human Genome Research Institute from 1993 to 2008, Dr. Collins has led the way in medical innovation.

As his most renowned accomplishment at NHGRI, Dr. Collins achieved unparalleled success leading the revolutionary Human Genome Project. Established in 1990, the Project's goal was to map out the thousands of genes that make up the human genome in order to better understand the genetic makeup of humans and to ultimately reveal the cures for our most challenging diseases. In 2003, the Human Genome Project, under the guidance of Dr. Collins, released its completed version of the entire human genome, an unprecedented achievement. Dr. Collins' work has led to some ground-breaking medical discoveries, including the identification of genetic variants associated with type 2 diabetes and the genes responsible for cystic fibrosis, neurofibromatosis, Huntington's disease and Hutchinson-Gilford progeria syndrome. To allow this data to be used as effectively as possible, Dr. Collins has ensured that all of the data obtained by the Human Genome Project be made available to the entire scientific community without restrictions on access or use.

Among other prestigious honors, Dr. Collins has been elected to the Institute of Medicine and the National Academy of Sciences, two of the most influential medical organizations in the world. In addition, on November 5, 2007, Collins received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civil award, for his remarkable contributions to the field of genetic research.

Not only has Dr. Collins proven himself to be a brilliant and revolutionary scientist, but he is also a remarkably effective leader. Perhaps the greatest evidence of this quality is displayed by his ability to finish the human genome sequence both ahead of schedule and under budget. It is clear why President Obama selected him to lead this important agency.

Last week, I met with Dr. Collins to discuss his vision for the future of NIH. He is my constituent, as are many of the scientists who work at the Rockville campus, and the academic institutions and businesses that thrive due in no small part to NIH grants and other

extramural programs. I am extremely proud to represent all of them.

During our meeting, I raised serious concerns about recent actions of NIH leadership with regard to two grant programs, the Small Business Innovation Research program and the Small Technology Transfer Program. Federal law requires departments that award more than \$100 million in extramural grants annually to devote a total of 2.8 percent to small businesses to foster innovation. These programs are catalysts for job creation and job growth, and a recent study found that 25 percent of all new product innovations were brought to market by SBIR grantees. But a provision—encouraged by NIH—was inserted during conference into the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, with no notice to the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee, where I serve, although we have jurisdiction over these programs. That provision excluded the NIH funds in ARRA from the SBIR and STTR requirements, effectively denying small businesses \$230 million in research grant opportunities. Its origins are still unknown.

The effect on small businesses has been devastating, leading some biotechnology firms in my State to lay off employees or close due to lack of funding. In June, I chaired a field hearing about this issue in Rockville, and although the hearing location was minutes away from the NIH campus, the agency did not send a witness. NIH staff promised to submit testimony, but it was faxed to us 2 hours after the hearing had ended. In addition, during the hearing, we received testimony citing a history of perceived bias among NIH review panels against SBIR applications. I raised these concerns with Dr. Collins, and we had a frank and open discussion. Dr. Collins spoke of his high regard for the SBIR program and noted that he could not have completed the Human Genome Project in such a timely and cost-efficient manner absent the involvement of small biotechnology companies. He has promised to work with me and other members of the Committee to ensure that NIH participation in SBIR and STTR proceeds according to congressional intent. I am encouraged by his support for these programs, and I believe that the Small Business Committee, will have a much improved working relationship with NIH going forward. I left that meeting with confidence in Dr. Collins' ability to lead this essential agency very effectively.

Going forward, Dr. Collins faces numerous challenges, implementing the new policy on federally funded stem cell research, moving forward on promising cancer research, and developing strategies to combat the global AIDS epidemic, among others. These challenges require a visionary leader with the level of expertise and management experience that Dr. Collins possesses.

I am pleased to express my support for the nomination of Dr. Francis Col-

lins to be the next Director of the National Institutes of Health, and I look forward to working with him in the years to come.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have the attached letter of support from the March of Dimes for the nomination of Francis Collins to be Director of the National Institutes of Health be printed in the RECORD.

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

MARCH OF DIMES FOUNDATION,
OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, August 5, 2009.

Hon. EDWARD KENNEDY,
Chairman, Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN KENNEDY: On behalf of the 3 million volunteers and 1,400 staff at the March of Dimes Foundation I am writing to highlight Francis Collins's, MD PhD exceptional contributions to biomedical research and to acquaint Congress with Dr. Collins' long standing relationship with the Foundation. This letter is submitted for inclusion in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

The Foundation's investments in biomedical research are a cornerstone of the March of Dimes mission. March of Dimes programs fund several different types of research, all aimed at preventing birth defects and infant mortality and securing reproductive health. These programs and projects include basic research into life processes, such as genetics and development; clinical research applied to prevention and treatment of specific birth defects and prematurity; the study of environmental hazards; and research in social and behavioral sciences relevant to our mission. In 1985, the March of Dimes recognized Dr. Collins's promising talent, naming him a Basil O'Connor Research Scholar and awarding him a grant the Foundation reserves for young investigators at the start of their independent careers. This award marked the beginning of a long and productive relationship with Dr. Collins.

Throughout his career, Dr. Collins has focused on advancing scientific knowledge that has laid the foundation for identifying and treating genetic disorders. For example, Dr. Collins was instrumental in the discovery of the gene responsible for cystic fibrosis, thereby providing the opportunity to design interventions for managing this complex birth defect and accelerating the search for its amelioration and potential cure. As Director of the National Human Genome Research Institute, Dr. Collins oversaw the sequencing and mapping of the human genome, a major contribution to scientific research and one that has already led to the development of strategies for preventing and treating various birth defects and hereditary diseases.

The March of Dimes continues to invest in intellectually gifted young investigators because it is they who hold the greatest promise for progress in research and science. All of us at the Foundation look forward to the forthcoming confirmation and to working with you and Dr. Collins to improve the health of women and children here and around the world.

Sincerely,
DR. JENNIFER L. HOWSE,
President.

NOMINATION OF JON HUNTSMAN, JR.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today to support the nomination of the Honorable Jon Huntsman, Jr., to be the U.S. Ambassador to China.

I think it goes without saying that Governor Huntsman is a man of integrity whose service to the State of Utah has been of great worth. Indeed, what Utah stands to lose from this nomination is exactly what the United States and China stand to gain: a seasoned diplomat, an excellent manager, a qualified politician, and a man who wants the very best for the country he loves and has served for more than 20 years.

It takes great courage for a Republican Governor of one of the reddest, most conservative States in the Nation to accept an invitation to serve under a Democratic President; yet this is the same courage Governor Huntsman has displayed throughout his career. From his time as a staff assistant in the Reagan administration to his work in the trenches at the Commerce Department, Jon Huntsman, Jr., has proved to be an innovative leader, a progressive thinker, and someone who comes to this position at a time when the United States needs an Ambassador to China who will strive to forge the kind of relationships we need to move forward in the globally connected world of the 21st century.

As the Ambassador to China, the challenges before Governor Huntsman will neither be easy nor few. Our relations with other nations are the foundation of peace and stability on the planet. And when Richard Nixon reached out and brought China back into the international system in 1972, a huge structural imbalance in the global system was redressed.

The United States and China are very different countries with vastly different experiences and, based on our very different government structures, very different values. Yet, as we know, our countries have developed complex and mutually beneficial relations. We also know that our nations have great potential for beneficial relations, but, as anyone who studies history and geopolitics knows, we have the potential to clash as China grows and expands its influence. That is why it is important for us today to continue what Richard Nixon started: a world where our countries can exist in peace.

In my years in the Senate, I have seen a huge change in our country's relationship with China. When I came here, President Carter was just finalizing the Nixon initiative, and I led the move to pass the Taiwan Relations Act, which allowed for the United States to continue a supportive relationship with Taiwan even though we had withdrawn our diplomatic recognition. I have seen China evolve from a Maoist totalitarian system to a communist police state that has allowed many personal freedoms and a historic transformation of the economy using capitalist principles. This is a relationship that must be handled by experienced China hands and professionals.

That is why I find it gratifying that President Obama has chosen to go with someone of great experience and abil-

ity—Governor Huntsman. I also find it noteworthy that the Governor has been here twice before—first when he was unanimously confirmed by the Senate as a U.S. Ambassador to the Chinese nation of Singapore under President George H.W. Bush, and then as a Deputy U.S. Trade Representative under President George W. Bush. Now, in his third appearance before the Senate as a nominee, he has answered the President's call to serve as Ambassador to China and leaves his post in Utah where, I might add, he was reelected to a second term as Governor with more than 70 percent of the vote. This speaks volumes about Governor Huntsman's ability to cross bridges, conquer divides, and put aside partisan politics when doing what he believes to be best for his family, our State, and our country.

It is no secret that under Governor Huntsman's stewardship, Utah has been named the best-managed State by the Pew Research Center. Building on the excellent work of our State legislature, the Governor has helped lead our State in economic development initiatives and incentive programs that have shaped Utah into one of the most dynamic States in the Nation.

In short, I cannot think of a more qualified nominee for Ambassador to China than Governor Huntsman. He is fluent in Mandarin Chinese, a skill that is vitally important in this day and age. Indeed, the Governor has been to China on numerous occasions and even learned Chinese while serving a mission in Taiwan for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is in that light that I have no doubt the Chinese will have to respect his affection for Taiwan as much as they respect his linguistic ability.

Moreover, while the Governor will not be making policy, he will be known to the Chinese as a Republican. They will see him as an independent thinker, while always being loyal to the administration he serves.

Finally, China is a country that admires the businessman and the trader, and they are a country that knows that business and trade with the United States is the key for their sustained success. These are values and experience the Governor knows, understands and has practiced during his varied and impressive career in public service and private business. His years in international business have exposed him to the universe of China experts—people such as my good friend John Kamm, the preeminent advocate of human rights in China. It is my hope that he will keep the Embassy door open to these experts from around the world, and I am sure that he will.

Again, I commend President Obama for selecting Governor Huntsman for this important post, even though Utah will lose a great leader as a result. However, Governor Huntsman has left the State in good hands and we all look forward to working with Lt. Gov. Gary Herbert in his new role as Governor of the great State of Utah.

In closing, I believe I speak for all Utahns when I say Governor Huntsman will be missed, but we all know he is the appropriate person for this job. Moreover, his selection could not come at a more appropriate time. Indeed, this is a time when a man like Governor Huntsman is needed on the world stage.

I congratulate Governor Huntsman on his nomination. I applaud his beautiful wife Mary Kaye and her decision to continue to share his time and talents with the world. And I know his wonderful family will be blessed by his contribution to our country in this position.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask now that we proceed to Calendar Nos. 217, 218, 219, 259, 260, 310, 311, 313 and that the nominations be confirmed en bloc, and the motions to reconsider be laid on the table en bloc, and no further motions be in order and any statements relating to these matters be printed in the RECORD as if read and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Tristram J. Coffin, of Vermont, to be United States Attorney for the District of Vermont for the term of four years.

Joyce White Vance, of Alabama, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Alabama for the term of four years.

Preet Bharara, of New York, to be United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York for the term of four years.

B. Todd Jones, of Minnesota, to be United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota for the term of four years.

John P. Kacavas, of New Hampshire, to be United States Attorney for the District of New Hampshire for the term of four years.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

A. Thomas McLellan, of Pennsylvania, to be Deputy Director of National Drug Control Policy.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Alejandro N. Mayorkas, of California, to be Director of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Cranston J. Mitchell, of Virginia, to be a Commissioner of the United States Parole Commission for a term of six years. (Reappointment)

NOMINATION OF ALEJANDRO MAYORKAS

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I want to take a few minutes today to speak about Mr. Mayorkas' record and what I believe he will bring to the Department of Homeland Security as Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. I have known Mr. Mayorkas for many years and am proud to have recommended him to President Clinton for the position of U.S. attorney for the Central District of California.

As U.S. attorney, Mr. Mayorkas developed an innovative program to address violent crime by targeting criminals' possession of firearms, prosecuting street gangs, and at the same