

the White House would concentrate on current vacancies. Nevertheless, we simply cannot confirm nominees who do not exist.

I have a few remarks regarding the nomination we are voting on today—Arenda Laurretta Wright Allen, who is nominated to be U.S. district judge for the Eastern District of Virginia. Mrs. Allen received her B.A. from Kutztown State College in 1982 and her juris doctorate from North Carolina Central University School of Law in 1985. Following law school, she was commissioned into the U.S. Navy as an ensign. She served there as legal intern in the Naval Legal Service, Office of Judge Advocate General's Corps. In the same year, she was promoted to lieutenant and became a defense attorney for the Navy. In 1988, the nominee became the staff judge advocate at the Naval Air and Engineering Center, where she was the sole legal advisor to the commanding officer.

Leaving the Navy in 1990, Mrs. Allen joined the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Virginia as an assistant U.S. attorney. In 1991, she moved to the Eastern District of Virginia, where she remained for the next 15 years as an assistant U.S. attorney. In 2005, the nominee left the U.S. Attorney's Office to become an assistant Federal public defender with the Federal Public Defender's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia. The American Bar Association Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary has given her the rating of majority "qualified", minority "well qualified."

I congratulate the nominee and her achievement and public service. I urge my colleagues to support this nomination. Hopefully, it will be supported unanimously.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

Ms. STABENOW. I understand we are in the time of our Republican colleagues, so I would just indicate that if we have a Republican who comes to the floor during that time, I will certainly be glad to stop and yield to them.

GAS PRICES—PAYING TWICE

Mr. President, I wish to speak about something that is incredibly important to the families and businesses of Michigan—I am sure it is true in Pennsylvania as well—and that is the great concern about what is happening in terms of gas prices going through the roof right now. We have families that are paying as much for gasoline at the

pump as they are paying for their health care and almost as much as they are paying for groceries right now to put food on the table for their families.

What adds insult to injury is that we are seeing an industry, the top five companies with the highest profits ever, also receiving taxpayer subsidies. So we pay twice. We pay at the pump in outrageous prices, and we pay again when we are paying as taxpayers to support an industry that clearly does not need to be subsidized.

We are involved in a major debate right now about what to do about a very large deficit. I was here when we balanced the budget in 1997, when I was in the House, and I was proud to do that. I was here when we had the largest surplus in the history of the country. In 2001, a number of things happened, including policy decisions that put us back into a deficit. So we have to dig out again, and it is very serious.

So the question is, What are our priorities? Our Republican colleagues in the House have said their priority is to eliminate Medicare as we know it—eliminate Medicare and balance the budget on the backs of tens of millions of seniors in our country. In the Senate we are saying: Wait a minute. Let's start with taxpayer subsidies, some of which have gone on for 70 or 80 years that are now being given to an industry that is the most profitable in our country and probably the world and that clearly do not need taxpayer subsidies. Why don't we start there. By the way, let's make sure we are sending a clear message that we don't appreciate paying twice. We don't appreciate paying at the pump and at the same time paying through our taxpayer dollars.

When we look at the numbers, just in the first quarter of this year, it is staggering. We certainly don't begrudge industry profits, although with the gas prices going up, what we are talking about now are consumers getting gouged in the face of these numbers. But we are talking about \$35.8 billion in total profits in just 3 months for the top five oil companies in America. These folks are asking us to subsidize them on top of that. So our message, and what we will be voting on next week, is a message that says: That check for \$4 billion a year, we are going to void it. We are done with that—no more taxpayer subsidies for an industry that clearly does not need it.

What we need to be doing are a couple things. First of all, we need to create real competition at the pump. We need to create competition that maybe doesn't require a pump or at least not very often. In my great State of Michigan, we are making new, terrific, award-winning automobiles that are electric vehicles—the Chevy Volt, the Ford Focus, other hybrids—that are winning awards, top-quality vehicles that are going 100 miles or 200 miles on a gallon of gas. Real competition is what we need, investing in alternative vehicles, alternative fuel vehicles for

the future, including jobs. I am very excited about the announcements being made now—in fact, on Friday by General Motors about expanding their operations—and to see what Chrysler and Ford are doing is very exciting. It is jobs for us, and it is real competition for the oil companies that know right now the only choice we have is to pay whatever price they put up at the pump.

We have begun to create some other choices, and we need to continue to support those. I find it so interesting that we are going to be debating shortly whether to support ethanol and EA5 and the ability to create some alternative to gasoline at the pump. There will be those who will argue: Well, we have supported them for a few years now. They are a maturing industry. They no longer need support; that is, maybe 5 years, 6 years, 8 years, 10 years. We are talking 70 or 80 years, a subsidy that is now going to the largest, most profitable companies in our country and probably the world. Yet because of sheer politics and nothing else, we have not been able to get these subsidies stopped.

Taxpayers in our country are saying we need to make better choices to balance the budget. We need to decide what is important, what is not important, and we need to cut the things that are not important. Clearly, subsidizing the top five big oil companies in this country is not a priority when they are making huge profits. We should be investing in what will, first of all, bring down the debt because we are taking away this \$4 billion and using it to pay down the debt. We should then make choices about how we do create jobs and create alternatives in clean energy manufacturing, alternative fuel vehicles, whether it is advanced biofuels, natural gas, clean diesel, electric vehicles. We have a lot of choices we need to present to consumers so they can get off the price-gouging efforts that are going on at the pump.

There is another issue as well. We have heard from the companies that they need to be able to drill more. Yet at the same time, we know there are 60 million acres under lease by the oil companies. They hold on to 60 million acres right now that are oil and gas leases where they are not drilling. They hold on to them, maybe because they don't want their competitors to get them, but they are not drilling. So I strongly support, and I am pleased to cosponsor, Senator MENENDEZ's legislation that simply says use it or lose it—use the leases you have for domestic drilling in America or lose it.

I also held hearings, as chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, to focus on and investigate how much market manipulators are driving up prices and to explore ways to strengthen Americanmade biofuels industries and other alternatives to foreign oil because our farmers are very much a part of the solution for the future.

So there is much we can do to create real consumer choice, get off of foreign oil. But part of our deficit reduction effort should start by eliminating the outrageous subsidies that are going to the top five oil companies in America. We should stamp this check “null and void.”

Mr. President, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Arenda L. Wright Allen, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia?

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. KYL. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 69 Ex.]

YEAS—96

Akaka	Franken	Menendez
Alexander	Gillibrand	Merkley
Ayotte	Graham	Mikulski
Barrasso	Grassley	Moran
Baucus	Hagan	Murray
Begich	Harkin	Nelson (NE)
Bennet	Hatch	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Heller	Paul
Blumenthal	Hoeven	Portman
Blunt	Hutchison	Pryor
Boozman	Inhofe	Reed
Boxer	Inouye	Reid
Brown (MA)	Isakson	Risch
Brown (OH)	Johanns	Roberts
Burr	Johnson (SD)	Rubio
Cantwell	Johnson (WI)	Sanders
Cardin	Kerry	Schumer
Carper	Kirk	Sessions
Casey	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Chambliss	Kohl	Shelby
Coats	Kyl	Snowe
Coburn	Landrieu	Stabenow
Collins	Lautenberg	Tester
Conrad	Leahy	Thune
Coons	Lee	Toomey
Corker	Levin	Udall (CO)
Cornyn	Lieberman	Udall (NM)
Crapo	Lugar	Warner
DeMint	Manchin	Webb
Durbin	McCain	Whitehouse
Enzi	McCaskill	Wicker
Feinstein	McConnell	Wyden

NOT VOTING—4

Cochran	Rockefeller
Murkowski	Vitter

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WOMAN'S CLUB OF BETHESDA

• Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I invite my colleagues to join me in celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Woman's Club of Bethesda, MD. The club, a nonprofit organization, was organized on May 27, 1911. It was founded by seven women for the purpose of promoting civic activities and welfare in the neighborhood. Those activities included assistance and fundraising for schools, churches, and hospitals. Club members selected the American Beauty Rose as their flower; “An Earnest Club for Earnest Women” as their motto; and American Beauty Red and green as their colors. Before a clubhouse was built, meetings were held at various members' homes, limiting membership to 35 and allowing only a cup of tea and a cracker to be served.

During World War I, from 1914 to 1916, the members sold over \$10,000 worth of Liberty Bonds, raised funds for French orphans, worked with local merchants to beautify the roads into the Nation's Capital, and worked to secure a new fire truck for the community that was capable of fighting chemical fires.

In 1925, club members raised \$1,500 to purchase three lots at the corner of Sonoma Road and Old Georgetown Road for construction of a clubhouse. On May 27, 1927, the club laid the cornerstone for the clubhouse, which is still in use today. In 1948, the mortgage was burned—quite a feat for women who began the club without the right to vote.

During World War II, the clubhouse was used to host USO entertainment. Today, the club continues its philanthropic efforts by raising money for local charitable organizations—Friends of the Maryland Library; Mobile Medical Care, Inc., Montgomery; Crisis Center of Montgomery County; Bethesda Cares; and Manna Food Banks—and by supporting national and international efforts to curb homelessness and domestic violence, and promote access to health care and clean water.

There is no doubt that the Woman's Club of Bethesda has made significant contributions to the betterment of the surrounding community and is a valuable asset to the people of Montgomery County and the State of Maryland. I would ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the past and present members of the Woman's Club of Bethesda on their century of service.●

TRIBUTE TO LARRY KELLY

• Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, today I congratulate and honor Larry Kelly, who is retiring from his position as ex-

ecutive director for Tri-County Community Action Program, CAP, which serves New Hampshire's North Country.

Larry's career has been one of admirable service to New Hampshire and his community. Through various roles, including positions at the Community Services Administration in Boston, Federal Regional Council of New England, and other CAP agencies, Larry's career has been dedicated to helping others and serving the less fortunate.

In 1984, Larry joined Tri-County CAP. Larry's dedication to the greater Berlin community and the entire State of New Hampshire, coupled with his decades of volunteer service, is a testimony to his character. His kind and gentle disposition is complemented by a passion and drive to make his community a better place in which to live and work. Always putting the community's interests above his own, Larry has been a champion for the neediest among us, advocating on behalf of those without a voice and without hope. He has been rightly recognized as a leader among his peers throughout his professional life, receiving national awards such as the Community Action Foundation's Executive Director of the Year Award.

On a personal note, I am very grateful to Larry for his support and counsel during my years in public office. Whether it was a CAP-related matter or not, Larry was always ready and willing to assist in whatever capacity he could. I consider Larry a friend, and I know his contribution to the North Country will be missed. Please join me in congratulating Mr. Larry Kelly of Berlin, NH, on his retirement.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:16 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1016. An act to measure the progress of relief, recovery, reconstruction, and development efforts in Haiti following the earthquake of January 12, 2010, and for other purposes.