for political gain. Any President—Democrat or Republican—should be able to make their necessary appointments.

This change finally returns the Senate to the majority rule standard that is required by the Constitution when it comes to executive branch and judicial nominees. With this change, if those nominees are qualified, they get an up-or-down vote in the Senate. If a majority is opposed, they can reject a nominee. But a minority should not be able to delay them indefinitely. That is how our democracy is intended to work.

New Mexicans—all Americans—are tired of the gridlock in Washington. The recent filibuster of three DC Circuit nominees over the last 4 weeks was not the beginning of this obstruction. It was the final straw in a long history of blocking the President's nominees. Doing nothing was no longer an option. It was time to rein in the unprecedented abuse of the filibuster, and I am relieved the Senate took action today.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014—Continued

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding cloture having been invoked on the Millett nomination, the Senate resume legislative session and consideration of S. 1197; that the time until 4 p.m. be equally divided and controlled between Chairman LEVIN and Ranking Member INHOFE or their designees, with the chairman controlling the last half of the time; that at 4 p.m., the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on S. 1197, the Department of Defense authorization bill; that if cloture is invoked, notwithstanding cloture having been invoked, the Senate proceed to vote on S. Con. Res. 28; further, if cloture is invoked on S. 1197, the second-degree amendment filing deadline be 5 p.m. today; finally, that if cloture is not invoked on S. 1197, the Senate proceed to vote on adoption of S. Con. Res. 28.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1197) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reid (for Levin/Inhofe) Amendment No. 2123, to increase to $5,000,000,000 the ceiling on the general transfer authority of the Department of Defense.

Reid (for Levin/Inhofe) Amendment No. 2124 (to Amendment No. 2123), of a perfecting nature.

Reid motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Armed Services, with instructions, Reid Amendment No. 2305, to change the enactment date.

Reid Amendment No. 2306 (to (the instructions) Amendment No. 2305), of a perfecting nature.

Reid Amendment No. 2307 (to Amendment No. 2306), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, let me first repeat, as I have many times, I have never worked with a manager more closely than the chairman of the Armed Services Committee Senator LEVIN. We worked very hard through a lot of issues. On the few where we disagreed with each other, we have handled it in a very civil way. We both want a bill and we will have one.

The problem we have on the Republican side is we have not had a chance to have amendments. I don't have the charts in here, but earlier this morning I had charts here to show historically every time this comes up, we have a number of amendments that the minority has—whether the minority happens to be the Democrats or Republicans. All we want to do is to consider these amendments.

Yesterday I said I don't think we will be able to do it, but I am going to attempt to come today—or yesterday, I said tomorrow—with 25 amendments that all of the Republicans have said they would not object to and we would say these are the ones we would like to have considered. Of those, assuming the Democrats had 25 also, the most we would have up for consideration would be maybe 20, probably less than that, because historically that is the way it is.

I have given the majority the 25 amendments we would like to have considered, and I made the statement yesterday—and I want to repeat it today—that now that we have agreed on a list, if we can have these amendments considered on the floor, then I would be a very strong supporter of this bill.

However, after going through the work of coming down to these amendments—and that is not an easy thing to do—if we are rejected and we are not going to be able to have consideration of these 25 amendments, I would vote in opposition to cloture to go to the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, we will soon vote on whether to invoke cloture on S. 1197, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014. This bill was reported out of the Armed Services Committee with a strong bipartisan vote of 23 to 3. We have enacted a National Defense Authorization Act every year for more than 50 years, and it is critically important that we do so again this year.

We spent all day yesterday debating two amendments addressing sexual assault in the military, but we have not been allowed to vote on them. There was opposition on the other side to voting even on those two amendments which have now been fully debated. We were told that Senators wouldn't let us vote on the sexual assault amendments because they were afraid those would be the only votes. We offered to lock in additional amendments, six for Democrats, six for Republicans. That got an objection. Staff had built up a cleared amendment package of 39 additional amendments on a bipartisan basis, about half for each side, that were all agreed to on the merits. Again, we got thwarted.

So over and over, we had objections to considering amendments, based on the accusation that we were not considering enough amendments. But how on earth does blocking the consideration of amendments that we can all agree on advance the cause of considering amendments?

I am going to continue to work with my friend from Oklahoma—and we are good friends and we work together well. He is right. I am going to continue to work toward an agreement that will enable us to proceed with additional amendments on this bill.

This would not be the first time this kind of a problem has happened on a Defense authorization bill. In 2008, one Senator objected to cleared amendment packages and to bringing up amendments. As a result, we were able to have only two rollcall votes and adopted only 9 amendments—all of which were agreed to before the objection was raised. Then, as now, the objection did not result in more amendments being adopted but, rather, in almost no amendments being adopted at all. In 2008, we invoked cloture and proceeded with the bill with virtually no Senate amendments—a result which was less than ideal, but at least it enabled us to enact a National Defense Authorization Act that year.

We must pass a national defense authorization bill. If we fail to do so, we will be letting down our men and women in uniform and failing to perform one of Congress' most basic duties—providing for the national defense.

As is the case every year, if we fail to enact this bill, our troops will not get the full amount of compensation to which they are entitled. If we fail to act, the Department's authority to pay out combat pay, hardship duty pay, special pay for nuclear-qualified servicemembers, enlistment and reenlistment bonuses, incentive pay for critical specialties, assignment incentive pay, and accession and retention bonuses for critical specialties will expire on December 31.

After that date, we will have troops in combat who will not get combat pay. We will lose some of our most highly skilled men and women with specialties that we vitally need. Not only will we be shortchanging our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, but we will be denying our military services critical authorities they need to recruit and retain high-quality servicemembers, and to achieve their force-

shaping objectives as they draw down their end strengths.

That is not all. If we fail to enact this bill, school districts all over the United States that rely on supplemental impact aid to help them educate military children will no longer receive that money. If we fail to enact this bill, the Department of Defense will not be able to begin construction on any new military construction projects in the coming year. That means our troops won't get the barracks, ranges, hospitals, laboratories, and other support facilities they need to support operational requirements, conduct training, and maintain equipment. It means that military family housing will not receive needed upgrades.

If we fail to enact this bill, the existing military land withdrawals will expire at China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station and Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range. That means our military will have to cease operations on those vital test and training ranges, losing critical testing and training capabilities that they relied on for the last 25 years.

If we fail to enact this bill, the Department of Defense will run out of money for the construction of the first ship of the Navy's new class of aircraft carriers, the Gerald R. Ford. That means the Navy will have to issue a stop work order on the construction of the Ford, requiring them to lay off workers and requiring a break in production that will add hundreds of millions, if not billions, of dollars not only to the cost of the Ford, but also to the cost of follow-on aircraft carriers.

It goes on and on. If we fail to enact this bill, we will enact none of the far-reaching reforms we need to address on the problem of sexual assault in the military. Already we have been blocked in our effort to clear a package of manager's amendments, including Senator BOXER's amendment reforming the article 32 process.

Now, we are not only going to lose important reforms, but there are two dozen measures that are in the bill which address the problem of sexual assault. If we don't adopt this bill, we won't be providing a Special Victims' Counsel for victims of sexual assault. We won't make retaliation for reporting a sexual assault a crime under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. If we don't adopt this bill, we won't require commanders to immediately refer all allegations of sexual assault to professional criminal investigators. We won't restrict the authority of senior officers to modify the findings and sentence of court-martial convictions, and we won't require higher level review of any decision not to prosecute allegations of sexual assault.

We have already failed our men and women in uniform by failing to end sequestration. We should not fail them again by failing to enact the many critical measures included in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, the Gillibrand amendment would address an issue that is fundamental to who we are as Americans: ensuring justice for the men and women who serve in our military.

When brave young men and women enlist in the armed services, they do so to defend our country and our values. Yet those values are being undermined by the problem of sexual assault in the military.

Over the past decades, our military has expanded equality. I am proud that all of our services recognize that women have a vital role to play in the military, including in combat. I wholeheartedly endorse, after years of debate, the recognition that being openly gay or lesbian has no bearing on one's ability to serve.

These advances in equality in our military are vitally important—they make our military stronger and all of us safer—but they are an empty promise without access to justice. And when men and women are the victims of sexual assault in the military, they are often deprived of justice.

We all know the shameful numbers. An estimated 26,000 cases of unwanted sexual contact and sexual assaults occurred in 2012—a 37 percent increase from 2011. But the statistics that trouble me most are that 50 percent of female victims did not report the crime because they believed that nothing would be done. And 62 percent of victims who did report a sexual assault perceived some form of professional, social, or administrative retaliation as a result.

And the tragedy is—they're right. The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services spoke to this same problem and found: ''Unfortunately, recent events have shown these fears to be justified, and may also have communicated to perpetrators that they need not fear being held accountable for their actions.''

No wonder then, that the advisory committee voted in favor of removing the decision whether to prosecute sexual assaults and other serious crimes from the chain of command.

The United States was founded on twin ideals: equality and justice. And much of our history has involved the struggle to expand equal treatment under the law and access to justice. When we expand equality, we also provide access to justice.

I think of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which made it unlawful for employers to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, or national origin and created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to enforce the law. Congress recognized that there is no equality without justice. I think back to the days when white male juries were the rule in virtually every courthouse in this country. Yet finally, the Supreme Court in Norris v. Alabama and Taylor v. Louisiana said that no one could be assured of a fair trial unless women and African Americans served on their juries.

Equality and Justice—they are two sides of the same coin. They walk hand in hand.

In the United States, one of the fundamental precepts of our criminal justice system is an independent prosecutor. The authority to charge someone with a crime is an awesome power. Exercised improperly, an innocent person can be forced to endure a trial or a criminal can go unpunished, free to harm their next victim. Under the Code of Military Justice, that critical prosecutorial decision is made by a commanding officer—someone often in both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's chain of command—and, typically, not someone trained in the law. If——and statistically in sexual assault cases it is rare—if the commanding officer determines to try a charge by court-martial, the same commander also picks the jurors who will decide the case. I have no doubt that most commanders try their best to evaluate charges of sexual assault but they are inherently conflicted and compromised when we force them to make the call. We do these commanders a disservice by requiring them to solve this inexorable conflict.

As an impressive group of law professors, many of whom are veterans, and all of whom are experts in military justice wrote:

> Commanders play a decisive role in military operations and must likewise play a central role in reducing sexual assault and maintaining good order and discipline generally. That role, however, need not extend to the relatively narrow and thoroughly legal arena of criminal prosecution. Contemporary norms of procedural justice require that attorneys, not commanding officers, make decisions to prosecute. As a result, we recommend that the decision to prosecute a member of the armed forces for criminal conduct . . . be made by an independent prosecutor outside the chain of command.

And, they added, personnel who serve as court-martial jurors should be chosen by a court-martial administrator rather than a commander, ''to avoid concerns about jury-stacking and unlawful command influence.''

That is precisely what the Gillibrand amendment does. It vests the authority to prosecute serious criminal charges with experienced judge advocate general officers who can evaluate the evidence with a clear, cold eye and determine whether charges should be tried. That independence is the only way we can assure both the victim and the alleged perpetrator of justice—equal justice under the law. That's what this country is all about. That's why so many young men and women volunteer to serve. And we owe them nothing less.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, today I rise in support of the fiscal year 2014 National Defense Authorization Act and to address significant challenges facing the Department of Defense.

The bill approved by the Armed Services Committee includes necessary provisions to take care of our troops, such

as a 1-percent pay raise and the maintenance of affordable health care fees to avoid a detrimental effect on military retirees and their families.

I thank Chairman LEVIN and Ranking Member INHOFE for increasing authorizations for the shipbuilding budget, including an additional $100 million to support the procurement of a tenth DDG–51 destroyer under the current multiyear procurement contract. I am pleased that the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee on which I serve has also included this critical $100 million.

This ship is needed in the fleet to maintain the robust forward presence our Nation requires to protect trade routes, keep the peace, and assist when tragedy strikes.

When tensions flared in Syria, it was Navy destroyers that were positioned off the coast. Following the devastation of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, two U.S. Navy destroyers were among the first ships on station.

Taking advantage of the opportunity to procure this ship will lock additional savings on a multiyear procurement that has already saved taxpayers $1.5 billion compared to procuring the ships individually.

I am also pleased the Armed Services Committee incorporated many provisions I support to combat sexual assault, which is one of the greatest challenges faced by the Department of Defense for a decade.

I first raised my concern about sexual assaults in the military with General George Casey in 2004. To say his response was disappointing would be an understatement. I am convinced that if the military had heeded the concern I raised then, this terrible problem would have been addressed much sooner, saving many individuals the trauma, pain, and injustice they endured.

While I will address this issue at greater length during consideration of this bill, I want to highlight three of the most important changes included in the bill.

First, the bill limits the authority of a convening authority to overturn or modify the findings of a court-martial in sexual assault cases. Second, the bill requires the military to provide an attorney dedicated to the interests of survivors of sexual assaults to provide legal advice and assistance when survivors need such assistance the most. Third, a servicemember convicted of sexual assault would be discharged from the military.

I also support the provisions in the bill to maintain the readiness of our military services by authorizing $1.8 billion to address readiness problems caused by fiscal year 2013 sequestration. This bill also directs the Pentagon to rein in unnecessary or wasteful spending while rejecting proposals that purport to save money but that actually cause more harm than good.

Two important provisions require DOD to develop a plan to reduce the number of General and Flag officer billets and to streamline management headquarters in an effort to save $100 billion over 10 years. Reducing unnecessary overhead is something we must insist upon in these fiscally constrained times.

Increasing the authorization for the Department of Defense Inspector General by $36 million will allow the office to perform additional oversight and help identify waste, fraud, and abuse in DOD programs. Historically, DOD IG reviews have resulted in a return on investment of nearly $11 dollars for every $1 appropriated.

The bill wisely rejects the President's proposal to authorize a new Base Realignment and Closure round in 2015 and prohibits the authorization of another BRAC round at least until the Department submits a review of excess overseas military facilities.

This is the right way to proceed because the GAO has found that the previous BRAC round has never produced the amount of savings that were promised when it was originally sold to Congress.

While this is an excellent bill, I hope to offer several amendments to make this important bill even stronger in addressing the national security challenges facing our country.

The first amendment I intend to offer, with my colleague Senator KING, has been requested by the Navy to support the final settlement of the A–12 case. The Navy has reached an agreement with Boeing and General Dynamics to settle a decades-old lawsuit concerning the cancellation of the A–12 aircraft.

Our amendment would allow the Navy to accept $400 million in in-kind payments from industry to satisfy outstanding Navy claims related to the A–12 legal dispute between the Navy and two contractors, Boeing and General Dynamics. All parties—the Navy, the Department of Justice, Boeing, and General Dynamics—support the settlement.

If this amendment is adopted, the Navy will receive $400 million worth of needed military hardware effectively for free at a time when it is facing incredible fiscal challenges from sequestration.

In addition, taxpayers benefit because there is no guarantee the government will ultimately prevail in the ongoing litigation. If the government does not prevail, taxpayers may not get anything.

The second amendment I intend to file would require athletic footwear purchased for new military recruits to be domestically manufactured. Currently, DOD is circumventing the intent of the law known as the Berry Amendment through the use of cash allowances that provide no preference for domestically manufactured footwear. This amendment, which is also cosponsored by Senator KING, would align the procurement policy for athletic footwear with other footwear and clothing provided to servicemembers.

In the last year, the Defense Logistics Agency has awarded more than $36 million in contracts for combat boots and dress shoes made in America. In contrast, the military services have provided cash vouchers totaling more than $15 million per year to new recruits to purchase athletic footwear, without any preference for domestically manufactured products. Why should DOD single out athletic footwear to be treated differently from dress shoes or combat boots?

Another amendment with Senator BLUMENTHAL would require the Attorney General to jointly prescribe regulations to implement prescription drug take-back programs with the Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs.

We know prescription drug abuse is a major factor in military and veteran suicides, which are occurring at an alarming rate. Unfortunately, 349 servicemembers died from suicide in 2012—more than the number of servicemembers who lost their lives in combat in Afghanistan last year. According to the VA, 22 veterans commit suicide each day based on data collected from more than 21 States.

Last year, the Senate adopted this amendment by unanimous consent. Regrettably, the provision was eliminated at the urging of the Drug Enforcement Agency with assurances that the agency was nearing completion of regulations that would address the concern.

One year later, we are still receiving written assurances from the DEA that they are ''almost ready'' to complete these regulations. In the meantime, prescription drug abuse continues to afflict our service men and women and our veterans. We cannot sit idly by for another year waiting for the bureaucracy to address this matter of life and death.

Finally, Senator KING and I will offer an amendment to allow businesses that are located on a closed military base to draw employees from the local community to meet the 35-percent requirement for the purposes of qualifying as a HUBZone.

Congress previously passed a law to assist communities affected by previous BRAC rounds by allowing former bases to be eligible for HUBZone status, which provides preferences for certain Federal contracting opportunities.

Unfortunately, the law limits the geographic boundaries of a BRAC-related HUBZone to be the same as the boundaries of the base that was closed, which makes it difficult or impossible for businesses to qualify for the HUBZone program.

Our amendment would allow employees that live in nearby census tracts to count toward the 35 percent requirement and extend the period of eligibility from 5 years to 10 years so Congress' original intent can be fulfilled.

In addition to these amendments, I intend to cosponsor several others to further improve the bill.

Once again, I will support Senator FEINSTEIN'S amendment to make clear that a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident arrested in the U.S. cannot be

detained indefinitely without charge or trial.

I am also cosponsoring an amendment with Senator PRYOR to make sure that our dual status National Guard technicians are treated on an equal footing as our Active-Duty personnel. If our Active-Duty personnel are exempted from sequestration, then the National Guard dual status technicians—who are effectively the equivalent of Active-Duty military in the National Guard—should be exempt as well.

Let me close by thanking Chairman LEVIN and Ranking Member INHOFE for their hard work in putting together a bipartisan bill that addresses the needs of our military and our national security.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I strongly oppose efforts to close down debate on the National Defense Authorization Act.

It is a shame that despite being on this bill for four days, we have only had two rollcall votes for amendments. Over 400 amendments have been filed and we only found time to vote twice.

This is unacceptable. While I voted against this legislation in committee because it clearly and significantly ignored the budget caps put in place by sequestration, there are significant provisions worthy of support.

The Senate worked in a bipartisan manner with leadership from the junior Senator from New York to consider an amendment to reform and modernize our military justice system. This amendment was carefully crafted in anticipation that it would receive a roll call vote on the Senate floor and I proudly cosponsored and supported this amendment.

The junior Senator from Indiana had an amendment to help military reservists and the National Guard be recognized for their service and qualify for veterans' preference in hiring for federal jobs. His amendment deserves consideration and a vote.

Democrats and Republicans in the Armed Services Committee adopted several of my amendments to this bill to protect the religious liberty of our troops serving here in the United States and overseas. The Armed Services Committee also accepted my proposals to prohibit a base realignment and closure commission until after the Department of Defense conducts an exhaustive review of our overseas bases, and to study how the entire United States should be protected against threats from a missile launch.

Also, I am seeking an up-or-down vote or an acceptance of an amendment I filed to authorize up to a $10 million reward for any information regarding the terrorist attacks against Americans in Benghazi, Libya. I have been very flexible in accepting edits and changes from the majority in order to speed this process along.

The same goes for my amendment to protect the Mount Soledad veterans' memorial in California. In fact, the senior Senator from California filed the exact same legislation. So this is not a political or partisan amendment but yet it is still being denied consideration.

For these reasons and for the obstruction by the Senate majority leader who accuses the minority of being obstructionist, I oppose ending debate on the National Defense Authorization Act.

Mr. INHOFE. Would the Chairman yield?

Mr. LEVIN. I would be happy to yield.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Mr. INHOFE. Parliamentary inquiry? We were to be given equal time for the last 10 minutes. I had 3 minutes. All I want to do is ask a question. Am I entitled to do that?

Mr. LEVIN. I ask unanimous consent that be allowed.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Everything my Chairman has said I agree with. He is making my speech for me. It is critical we get the bill. All I am saying is I made the statement yesterday that Republicans are entitled to some amendments. I am asking now—we were able to get it down to 25 amendments to be considered. Will the majority consider these 25 amendments which can be done in half a day? Would he consider that?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, there are no Democrat amendments on his list.

Mr. INHOFE. I said 25 amendments. This is our list. You come up with your list.

Mr. LEVIN. We cannot agree with a list of amendments, many of which are not agreed to on this side, many of which would be filibustered on this side, which would result in just making it impossible for us to get to a Defense authorization bill conclusion.

I ask unanimous consent that a unanimous consent request—which I was going to make but I will withhold—that lists 26 amendments, half Democratic, half Republican, that I was going to ask consent be adopted because they have been cleared—which I understand will be objected to so I will not make the unanimous consent request—be printed in the RECORD.

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

LEVIN AMENDMENTS ON DOD AUTH REQUEST

I ask unanimous consent that prior to the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on S. 1197, the motion to recommit be withdrawn; the pending Levin amendment #2123 be set aside for Senator Gillibrand, or designee, to offer amendment #2099 relative to sexual assault; that the amendment be subject to a relevant side-by-side amendment from Senators McCaskill and Ayotte, amendment #2170; that no second degree amendments be in order to either of the sexual assault amendments; that each of these amendments be subject to a 60 affirmative vote threshold; the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the Gillibrand amendment #2099; that upon disposition of the Gillibrand amendment, the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the McCaskill-Ayotte amendment #2170; that there be two minutes equally divided in between the votes; upon disposition of the McCaskill-Ayotte amendment and prior to the cloture vote, the following amendments be in order to the bill and called up, en bloc:

Inhofe #2031
Chambliss #2038
Graham #2062
Collins #2064
Thune #2093
Flake #2263
Kirk #2287
Johanns #2348
Moran #2365
McCain #2489
Lee #2453
Portman #2461
Cruz #2511
Gillibrand #2283
Warner #2415
Heinrich #2243
Durbin #2278
Kaine #2424
Boxer #2081
Hagan #2391
Wyden #2282
Blumenthal #2121
Manchin #2251
Coons #2442
McCaskill #2171; and
Levin #2204

That these amendments be agreed to, en bloc; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that upon disposition of these amendments, the Senate proceed to the cloture vote as provided under the previous order.

## CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 1197, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Carl Levin, Richard J. Durbin, Tim Kaine, Dianne Feinstein, Kay R. Hagan, Barbara A. Mikulski, Joe Donnelly, Mark Udall, Claire McCaskill, Christopher A. Coons, Jeanne Shaheen, Mark R. Warner, Jack Reed, Patty Murray, Bill Nelson, Angus S. King, Jr.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S. 1197, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, be brought to a close?