

Senator from Oregon for the work he has done on this bill. It couldn't have been done without him. A number of other people on his side have been very contributory and helpful.

We are not there yet, but we are going to work at it. I just have to say how much I have enjoyed working with him on the floor so far. I just hope everything will go smoothly so we can get this bill up and out and get the President what he needs to conclude these negotiations and also especially for our Trade Representative. Mr. Froman has done a very good job, as far as I can see. We will have to see what the TPP is like, but we will all have a chance to look at it for a considerable period of time before we have to vote on anything regarding that.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JILL N. PARRISH TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF UTAH

NOMINATION OF JOSE ROLANDO OLVERA, JR., TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

NOMINATION OF PATRICIA D. CAHILL TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

NOMINATION OF MARK SCARANO TO BE FEDERAL COCHAIRPERSON OF THE NORTHERN BORDER REGIONAL COMMISSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Jill N. Parrish, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah; Jose Rolando Olvera, Jr., of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas; Patricia D. Cahill, of Missouri, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2020; and Mark Scarano, of New Hampshire, to be Federal Cochairperson of the Northern Border Regional Commission.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, we are finally voting on the nomination of Jill Parrish to serve as a Federal district judge in the District of Utah and Jose Olvera to serve as a Federal district judge in the Southern District of Texas. Five and a half months into this new Congress, these are just the third and fourth judicial nominees that we will vote to confirm. That is simply unacceptable.

Both of these individuals were nominated last September—more than 8 months ago. After receiving a hearing in January, they were voted out of the Judiciary Committee unanimously by voice vote in February. Their nominations have now been on the Executive Calendar for nearly 3 months. There is no good reason why these nominees should have waited this long for a vote. The vacancy Jose Olvera will fill in the Southern District of Texas has been designated a judicial emergency. In fact, he will fill just one of six district court emergency vacancies in the State of Texas, which currently has a total of eight district court vacancies.

The Senate has a duty to fill judicial vacancies no matter which party holds the majority. When I was chairman of the Judiciary Committee during the Bush administration, I worked quickly to schedule confirmation hearings for judicial nominees and moved them through the confirmation process without unnecessary delay.

In the 17 months I chaired the Senate Judiciary Committee during President Bush's first 2 years in office, the Senate confirmed 100 Federal circuit and district court judges. I also served as chairman during the last 2 years of the Bush administration and continued to hold regular hearings on judges. We confirmed 68 district and circuit court judges in those last 2 years.

Now, this Republican majority has taken 3 months to schedule a confirmation vote for a single district court judge, and after today's votes only 4 district court judges will have been confirmed this year. In contrast, when the Democrats were in an equivalent position in 2007, the seventh year of the Bush administration, we had confirmed 18 circuit and district court judges after 5 months. That's 18 judges under a Democratic majority compared to 4 under the Republicans.

Nevertheless, the Republican majority continues to make excuses for their continued obstruction and delay on confirming judicial nominees. Their excuse is that the Democratic majority was only able to confirm those 18 judges in 2007 because those nominees were held over from the previous year. What the Republicans failed to note is that half or nine of the judges confirmed in the first 5 months of 2007, were not among those left pending on the Senate Executive Calendar at the end of 2006.

The justifications offered by the Republican majority also miss the bigger picture. The Republican majority is simply holding up judicial nominations

for no good reason. Since the beginning of 2015, the number of circuit and district court vacancies has jumped from 40 to 51 vacancies after today's confirmations. The number of judicial emergencies has doubled, from 12 to now 24 after today's confirmation of Judge Olvera. The Republican majority is failing to govern responsibly and to fill judicial vacancies where they are needed.

It is unfortunate that as we head into Memorial Day recess the Senate Republicans are allowing confirmations votes on only 2 of the 10 noncontroversial judicial nominees pending on the Senate Executive Calendar. There is nothing keeping the Senate from confirming all 10 nominees—nothing, except for the mindset of delay for delay's sake, which is unfortunately the hallmark of the majority's leadership on nominations.

There are nominees that remain pending on the calendar that will fill a vacancy on the Federal Circuit as well as a nominee to serve in the Western District of Missouri who were first nominated last year, had a hearing more than 2 months ago, and were reported favorably out of committee 1 month ago by voice vote.

In addition, there are five U.S. Court of Federal Claims nominees who were first nominated a year ago. These five CFC nominees had hearings 10 months ago, were favorably reported out of the Judiciary Committee unanimously by voice vote last Congress, and again earlier this year. We have heard no opposition to any of these nominees, yet they have been in limbo for months and months. The CFC is where our citizens go to seek redress against the Federal Government for monetary claims. The cases this court hears include claims of unlawful takings of private land by the U.S. Government without proper compensation under the 5th Amendment, claims of veterans seeking disability benefits for combat related injuries, and vaccine compensation claims.

We are debating trade policy in the Senate, yet the nomination to fill one of four current vacancies on the U.S. Court of International Trade has sat idle on the Senate Executive Calendar for months. Like the CFC nominees, the CIT nominee had a hearing last year, was favorably reported out of the Judiciary Committee unanimously by voice vote last Congress, and again earlier this year.

I urge the Republican leadership to clear the Executive Calendar of the many consensus executive and judicial nominations before we break for the Memorial Day recess. Let us show respect for our co-equal branches of government and put these nominees in place to get to work for the American people.

PARRISH NOMINATION

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, the Senate will soon be voting to confirm Justice Jill Parrish's nomination from the Utah Supreme Court to the U.S. District Court for the District of Utah.

Justice Parrish, who currently sits on the Utah Supreme Court, is extraordinarily well-prepared to fill this vacancy, and I hope and expect that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support her nomination.

Justice Parrish is a well-known and highly regarded leader in the Utah legal community, who has served with honor and distinction on the Supreme Court of Utah. Her sharp legal mind, breadth of experience, and impressive judicial temperament prepared her to serve on the Federal bench. I cannot think of a more qualified nominee to fill this vacancy at this time. I support Justice Parrish's nomination in the strongest possible terms, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

As a former chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I have long worked to secure confirmations for the most qualified judicial nominees. In fact, I have participated in the appointment of three-quarters of the judges who have ever served on the U.S. District Court for the District of Utah. That experience has given me a sense, both personally and professionally, of the kind of individual who will serve well on the Federal bench. That experience gives me every reason to strongly recommend Justice Parrish for this appointment.

Justice Parrish is a talented jurist with an impressive background. After graduating from Yale Law School, she distinguished herself in private practice before appointment to the Utah Supreme Court. During her 30-year service, she has established a record of excellence both before and behind the bench, in both State and Federal courts, in both the private and public sector, and in both trial and appellate courts.

The American Bar Association gave Justice Parrish a "well-qualified" rating—a distinction the organization only awards to experienced nominees with the most remarkable legal ability and the highest reputation for integrity. Federal nominees who receive the "well-qualified" rating are also known for their breadth of experience, their success in the legal community, and their capacity for judicial temperament.

Not only does Justice Parrish match the ABA's requirements, but in every respect, she exceeds them. The United States has the most respected judiciary in the world, and we expect our nominees to the Federal bench to have a record of accomplishment in their chosen area of legal expertise. Justice Parrish is remarkable in that she has not just one but multiple areas of expertise, bringing keen judgment to an appointment that requires a broad range of experiences.

I have every confidence that Justice Parrish will serve admirably as a district judge, just as she has served honorably on the Utah Supreme Court. I might say, in supporting her confirmation, I wish to thank Senator LEE, who is not only my colleague on the Judici-

ary Committee but also my partner in representing our great State and in recommending the best candidate for judicial appointment. We agree that Justice Parrish is a well-qualified nominee, and we strongly recommend her swift and unanimous confirmation. I call on my colleagues—Republicans and Democrats alike—to support her nomination.

I know this woman personally. I know her very, very well. All of the qualities I have been speaking about I have personally observed.

I think everybody here knows how seriously I take appointments to the Federal bench. In this particular case, I feel very, very good about this nomination. I ask my colleagues to vote for her.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, we will have the opportunity in a few moments to vote on a friend and colleague, Jill Parrish, who serves currently on the Utah Supreme Court. She has been nominated by President Obama to serve on the U.S. District Court for the District of Utah, replacing Federal Judge Dee Benson, with whom I have clerked.

I can think of no one better to replace Judge Benson than Justice Parrish. She is a friend, she is a respected jurist, and she is a dedicated citizen. She is a friend to all who know her.

I am honored to have the opportunity to vote for her today, and I urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Jill N. Parrish, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah?

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 100, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 184 Ex.]

YEAS—100

Alexander	Donnelly	Manchin
Ayotte	Durbin	Markey
Baldwin	Enzi	McCain
Barrasso	Ernst	McCaskill
Bennet	Feinstein	McConnell
Blumenthal	Fischer	Menendez
Blunt	Flake	Merkley
Booker	Franken	Mikulski
Boozman	Gardner	Moran
Boxer	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Brown	Graham	Murphy
Burr	Grassley	Murray
Cantwell	Hatch	Nelson
Capito	Heinrich	Paul
Cardin	Heitkamp	Perdue
Carper	Heller	Peters
Casey	Hirono	Portman
Cassidy	Hoeven	Reed
Coats	Inhofe	Reid
Cochran	Isakson	Risch
Collins	Johnson	Roberts
Coons	Kaine	Rounds
Corker	King	Rubio
Cornyn	Kirk	Sanders
Cotton	Klobuchar	Sasse
Crapo	Lankford	Schatz
Cruz	Leahy	Schumer
Daines	Lee	Scott

Sessions	Thune	Warren
Shaheen	Tillis	Whitehouse
Shelby	Toomey	Wicker
Stabenow	Udall	Wyden
Sullivan	Vitter	
Tester	Warner	

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON OLVERA NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Jose Rolando Olvera, Jr., of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas?

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 100, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 185 Ex.]

YEAS—100

Alexander	Flake	Nelson
Ayotte	Franken	Paul
Baldwin	Gardner	Perdue
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Peters
Bennet	Graham	Portman
Blumenthal	Grassley	Reed
Blunt	Hatch	Reid
Booker	Heinrich	Risch
Boozman	Heitkamp	Roberts
Boxer	Heller	Rounds
Brown	Hirono	Rubio
Burr	Hoeven	Sanders
Cantwell	Inhofe	Sasse
Capito	Isakson	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson	Schumer
Carper	Kaine	Scott
Casey	King	Sessions
Cassidy	Kirk	Shaheen
Coats	Klobuchar	Shelby
Cochran	Lankford	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Sullivan
Coons	Lee	Tester
Corker	Manchin	Thune
Cornyn	Markey	Tillis
Cotton	McCain	Toomey
Crapo	McCaskill	Udall
Cruz	McConnell	Vitter
Daines	Menendez	Warner
Donnelly	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Wyden
Feinstein	Murphy	
Fischer	Murray	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I am sure everybody is interested in the state of play. Chairman HATCH and Senator WYDEN are meeting off the floor to try to identify a path forward. We would like to get more amendments pending and set some votes for later this evening.

I hope we will have an update from the bill managers here shortly, but I want to remind everybody, we are going to finish this bill before we leave. We are going to deal with FISA and we are going to deal with highways. There is a path forward, if people want to take it, that could complete all of this work at a reasonable time—probably sometime tomorrow—or we could make it difficult, but the end won't change. So I would just encourage at least some level of cooperation here because