

on both sides of the aisle is able to do that.

I don't believe the President can count on all Democrats, just because he is a Democrat, falling in line. If that were the case, we wouldn't have had Senator MARKEY of Massachusetts, DICK BLUMENTHAL, and I voting against Robert Califf, who was the President's nominee.

So we are going to have to find that right person. But if we never get the chance to evaluate the person, I don't know how we can do that. Again, it truly gets down to the fact that this is the job we are supposed to do. We talk about orderly business. We are getting things done. I have heard people say: Oh, yes, we are getting things done now that the Republicans are in the majority. The Chair has been here long enough to understand that the majority might set the agenda, but it is the minority that drives the train as to whether we get on something or not. So we have to work together.

We have proved the old game plan didn't work. The new game plan is fine. Let's have an open amendment process, let's go through it and debate it, and then let it go up or down on its merits. That is what we are asking for on this. Let it go to committee. When the nomination comes, let it go to the committee and look at the nomination. I mean dissect it in every way, shape, or form, whoever that person may be—he or she. I am willing to live with whatever the committee comes out with, and I am going to do my own research. When it comes to the floor, there is no guarantee that I am going to vote for that person—absolutely not. And I have already proved that. All of us have proved that we haven't just blindly followed party lines, nor should we. We aren't expected to. Our constituents don't expect us to do that. They do not want us to do it, that is for sure.

Again, the Constitution states that the President “shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint. . . .” He can appoint only if we have the advice and consent of the Senate. There is no other way this President or any other President can make that decision. We make the final decision.

Again, we are to the point now where the rhetoric is back and forth and it gets a little harsher and everybody gets ingrained, entrenched: By golly, we are not going to take anybody up; we don't care who that person will be. And I just hate to see that. We are all friends. We all know each other, and we all truly, I believe, are here for the right reasons and want to do the best job we can. But we are still expected to do our job.

At the end of the day, did you do your job? Yes, we looked; the President gave us somebody; we didn't think that person was qualified; we didn't think they were centrist enough; they didn't have the background or a record that we could extract what we felt their performance would be in the future; and

for those reasons, we voted against that person. Or the President gave us somebody who basically we found did not have political ties to either side, who basically ruled on the law—the best interpretation of the law—and with the Constitution always at the forefront. That is the person he gave us, and that is the person we would support. But if we never get a chance to look at whoever is given to us, there is no way we can move forward.

When I was Governor of my great State of West Virginia, I had to do the job 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every minute of every day, every day of every week, every week of every month, every month of every year. It was expected. That was my job, and I tried to do the best I could. There were some times when I had to make some tough decisions. There were times I drew people together and times when there was so much division that we had to basically let it cool off and then move forward. But we always kept trying to do a better job for the people of West Virginia.

I think the American people expect us to do a better job. I really do. I don't care who gets credit for it—Republicans, Democrats. Basically, it should be all of us because the way this body works, it takes 60 votes to get on something, if we want to make that the criteria.

With that being said, I can assure you there will not be a person the President of the United States gives us—whether it is this President or the next administration and the next President—who will be the perfect jurist. We are not going to find that perfect jurist. We are not going to find someone slanted too far to the left or too far to the right so that we can't get 60 votes. We are going to have to find somebody who has shown some common sense and has some civility about them, basically using the Constitution as the basis and framework for the decisions they made as a jurist, and show that is how they are going to govern in the highest Court in the land and be a model for the rest of the world, reflecting that we are still a government of rules. We are a body where the rule of law means everything. It is hard for us to do that if we can't find someone who we feel is qualified to do the job.

So, Mr. President, I urge all my colleagues—all of my colleagues in this great body and all of my dear Republican friends—to look and think about this. If the right person is not there, don't vote for them. As a matter of fact, I would probably vote against them too. I have before. I think I am the most centrist Member of this body, and I am going to vote for what I think is good for my country and for the State of West Virginia. I think the people of West Virginia expect me to do that, and they expect me to do my job too.

With that, I hope we have another opportunity to think this over. The President probably will be giving us

somebody in very short order. I would hope we are able to move to where the Judiciary Committee is able to look at that person, give us their findings on that person, and either tell us why we should not advise the President we are going to consent or find a person we can all agree upon and move forward.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEVADA PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to honor the 75th anniversary of the Nevada Parent Teacher Association. The Nevada PTA will formally celebrate 75 years of advocacy and work for and on behalf of the children of Nevada, at various events in the State during the last week of April.

Since 1941, the Nevada PTA has been part of the Nation's largest volunteer child advocacy association. The organization promotes education, health, safety, and the arts to the children of Nevada and has been instrumental in fostering the growth of countless students. The Nevada PTA takes pride in ensuring that schools are a central part of the communities in which they reside. The organization has led efforts to curb childhood obesity, foster connections between children and the important men in their lives, and promote volunteering in innovative ways.

Since its inception, they have also been a strong supporter of art programs that allow children to grow as students and people. Working with the national association, the Nevada PTA has participated in art programs that allow children to create original works of art in categories such as photography, film, and music composition. These programs not only encourage students to be creative, but also allow connections with fellow classmates that share common interests.

Nevada PTA exemplifies the broader objective of the National PTA, advocacy for all children. Multiple schools in Nevada have been recognized by the National PTA for the School of Excellence Awards which are granted to institutions that promote diversity, demonstrate clarity in academic standards,

and establish meaningful connections with their local parent teacher association.

I applaud President David Flatt and his team for his strong leadership in one of the most important organizations for children in the State of Nevada. I am pleased that, through yours and other's selfless efforts, incalculable numbers of students, teachers, and parents have been positively affected by the Nevada PTA. This organization is an invaluable part of communities throughout the State, and I would like to extend my best wishes for continued success.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, due to a prior commitment, I regret I was not present to vote on the nomination of Dr. John B. King to be Secretary of the Department of Education. Had I been present, I would have voted in support of his confirmation. I look forward to working closely with him as the Department of Education continues implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CASEY FAMILY PROGRAMS

• Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, today I congratulate Casey Family Programs for 50 years of public service to help vulnerable children and families in the child welfare system. Founded in 1966 by Jim Casey, the founder of United Parcel Service, UPS, this private operating foundation has been working quietly and effectively on behalf of our most vulnerable children and families.

At the beginning, Casey Family Programs started with a specific focus on providing quality foster care. After gaining considerable experience in providing direct services, Casey Family Programs recognized that it could help more families and children by working to support long-lasting improvements across entire child welfare systems. Today the foundation provides strategic consultation, technical assistance, data analysis, and independent research and evaluation at no cost to all 50 states. It also serves county and tribal child welfare jurisdictions across the Nation, including my State of Colorado.

Casey Family Programs seeks a unique partnership with the States by asking what jurisdictions hope to achieve as it relates to the foundation's mission.

In my State of Colorado, this means helping State leaders implement Colorado's Federal waiver program. It means developing initiatives to reduce reliance on congregate care, if other options may be more appropriate for the child and family. It means working with our Denver courts with a judicial engagement team to enhance collabora-

tion among the courts, agencies, and families. Casey Family Programs also has a specific team based in Denver dedicated to Indian Child Welfare.

At the Federal level, Casey Family Programs offers its experience, research, and data to help policymakers understand and address the complicated issues of child welfare and foster care. Over the years I have been proud to work with Casey Family Programs, and I appreciate their dedication and commitment to the original vision of their founder, Jim Casey.

I believe we all share this vision of helping children find a safe and stable home, but achieving it is more challenging than it seems. I congratulate Casey Family Programs on 50 years of public service, and I look forward to continue working with the foundation in Colorado and in Congress for years to come.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, 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 messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:59 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, without amendment:

S. 2426. An act to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1268. An act to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to promote energy efficiency via information and computing technologies, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2080. An act to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam.

H.R. 2984. An act to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review.

H.R. 4411. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

H.R. 4412. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project.

H.R. 4427. An act to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act.

H.R. 4721. An act to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 75. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria include war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

H. Con. Res. 121. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, and asking the President to direct his Ambassador at the United Nations to promote the establishment of a war crimes tribunal where these crimes could be addressed.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) announced that on today, March 15, 2016, he has signed the following enrolled bills, which were previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

S. 1172. An act to improve the process of presidential transition.

S. 1580. An act to allow additional appointing authorities to select individuals from competitive service certificates.

S. 1826. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James "Maggie" Megellas Post Office.

H.R. 1755. An act to amend title 36, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the congressional charter of the Disabled American Veterans.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1268. An act to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to promote energy efficiency via information and computing technologies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 2984. An act to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4411. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4412. An act to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 4427. An act to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The following concurrent resolutions were read, and referred as indicated: