

so that he can select his team and get to work addressing the range of issues that he will inherit. From the maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, to the need for greater balance in Federal land management, to life-and-death issues in remote Alaska communities, and from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to U.S.-affiliated islands, Representative ZINKE really has his work cut out for him, and he needs to be allowed to get started as soon as he can.

Again, I will repeat that I believe Representative ZINKE is a solid choice for this demanding and critical position. While we may not agree on every issue, I believe he will work with us in a thoughtful manner that is reflective of a true partnership. I believe he understands what the job requires, he has the experience necessary to succeed in it, and he will show that the Department of the Interior can still work with local stakeholders to achieve positive results.

I thank Representative ZINKE for his willingness to continue his service to our Nation and for his patience during this process. On behalf of Alaskans, I look forward to working with him after he is confirmed with bipartisan support, and I urge every Member of the Senate to support his nomination.

With that, I see the other Senator from the great State of Alaska is here with us today.

I yield the floor.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, like my colleague from the great State of Alaska, I also rise in support of the confirmation of Congressman RYAN ZINKE to be our Nation's next Secretary of the Interior.

There has been a lot of discussion about Congressman ZINKE, and he comes to this job with great qualifications. He is a patriotic and ethical man, from a patriotic and ethical part of America: the American West. He is a Navy SEAL who has dedicated decades of his life to protecting our great Nation. He is a lifelong sportsman. He is a trained geologist. He is a strong advocate for energy independence. He has a keen interest in protecting our environment, while not stymying much needed economic growth.

There is probably no position more important to the future of our great State of Alaska than the Secretary of the Interior, and I think it is great that we will have a new Secretary—in addition to the chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, my colleague Senator MURKOWSKI, from our great State. There are no more important positions than those positions. The Federal government owns more than 60 percent of Alaska, and we are a big State. I don't have to come here and talk about how big we are, but we are the biggest by far. Sorry, Texas.

In my State, as with many States in the West, our land is our lifeblood. It feeds us. It is what drives our economy and our culture. Congressman ZINKE understands this. He hails from Montana, which has a similar view of how

important the land is. He understands that responsible energy development goes hand in hand with robust environmental protections, and he understands the very important point that we as Americans can do both. We can responsibly develop our resources and protect the environment. No country has a better record of doing that than the United States of America.

Congressman ZINKE has committed to working with Alaska as a partner in opportunity, rather than acting as a roadblock to success. Why is this so important? This would be an enormously welcome change from the past administration. I served as Alaska's attorney general, as commissioner of natural resources in my great State, and now as a U.S. Senator, and I witnessed, unfortunately, how the former Obama administration tried to stop, stymie, and slow roll literally every economic project in Alaska—every one.

Alaska and so many States across our country have tremendous resources to be developed right now. America is undergoing an energy renaissance. We are once again the world's energy superpower, yet our Federal Government was not helpful in that renaissance at all. It can be now, and we are looking toward a bright future when we have a Federal Government that is going to be a partner in opportunity, not an obstacle. I am hopeful that we are going to see a new renaissance of economic growth and job creation in Alaska and across the country, buoyed by Federal agencies like the Department of the Interior under Congressman ZINKE's leadership that want to help us seize opportunities, not undermine them.

Like my colleague Senator MURKOWSKI, I encourage all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote for Congressman ZINKE to be our next Secretary of the Interior. He is a man of integrity, a man of patriotism, a man of experience, who in my view, is going to make a great Secretary of the Interior.

I yield the floor.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. 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.

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN AND JOANNE LEBER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to recognize my constituents, Brian and Joanne Leber, of Leber Jeweler Inc. in Chicago, IL. A third-generation, family-owned business first established in 1921, Brian and his wife, Joanne, are dedicated to socially conscious and eco-friendly fine jewelry. Leber Jeweler Inc. has been instrumental in not only serving as a model for responsible and ethical sourcing in the jewelry industry, but Brian and Joanne also have a deep history of activism and philanthropy, advocating for important policies that support human rights.

In 1999, Brian and Joanne developed and launched Earthwise Jewelry. Leber Jeweler Inc. was the first company in the United States to use conflict-free Canadian diamonds, and the landmark collection also utilizes fairly traded gemstones and recycled precious metals, all sourced, mined, designed, and produced with concerns for both the environment and fair-labor standards.

Brian and Joanne also have been notable advocates for laws related to the responsible sourcing of precious stones and metals, including of rubies and jadeite from Burma and gold and tungsten from the Democratic Republic of Congo. In 2007, Brian testified before Congress in support of the Tom Lantos Block Burmese JADE Act, and in 2009, he advocated for the suspension of Zimbabwe from the Kimberley Process for its human rights abuses in the Marange diamond fields. Then, in 2010, Brian supported efforts to pass bipartisan legislation that would create a mechanism to enhance transparency in the sourcing of conflict minerals and help American consumers and investors make informed decisions.

I have had the privilege of traveling to the Democratic Republic of Congo twice, in 2005 and 2010. It is a nation of breathtaking natural beauty, but like too many others, it has suffered from the paradox of the resource curse. Despite being rich in natural resources that should seemingly promote growth and development, the Democratic Republic of Congo has faced decades of weak governance, poverty, and incomprehensible violence. And fueling much of the violence, at least in part, has been the contest for control of these resources and their trading routes. Sadly, this violence had coined a dubious distinction for eastern Congo, known as the Rape Capital of the World.

I have seen firsthand the efforts of people like Dr. Jo Lusi and Dr. Denis Mukwege, who founded the HEAL Africa Hospital and the Panzi Hospital, respectively, restoring health and dignity to the survivors of sexual violence. When I chaired the first-ever hearing in the U.S. Senate about the uses of rape as a weapon of war in 2008, Dr. Mukwege stressed the importance of not just treating the consequences of sexual violence in the Congo, but addressing the root causes.

Most people probably don't realize that the products we use and wear every day, from automobiles to our cell phones and even our wedding rings, may use one of these minerals and that there is a very real possibility it was mined using forced labor from an area of great violence. In 2009, I joined with then-Senators Brownback and Feingold—a Republican and a Democrat—along with then-Congressman Jim McDermott, to pass bipartisan legislation that would help stem the flow of proceeds from illegally mined minerals to those perpetuating such violence. For the first time, companies registered in the United States were required to report in U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, SEC, disclosures any usage in their products of a small list of key minerals from the Congo or neighboring countries. Companies also had to include information showing steps taken, if any, to ensure the minerals are legitimately mined and sourced and that, by responsibly sourcing these minerals, they are not contributing to the region's violence. It wasn't a ban, but a transparency measure aimed at giving consumers choice and fostering a cleaner supply chain.

It took time for the SEC to thoughtfully craft the rule for this simple and reasonable law, and disappointingly, as is increasingly too often the case with the rulemaking process, some tried to gut the law in court, but its core provisions have been repeatedly upheld.

A look since then at the filings submitted to the SEC indicates that some companies had already been leaders on this for years—Apple Inc., Intel Corporation, Motorola, Inc., KEMET Corporation, just to name a few. Leber Jeweler Inc. has been a trailblazer in its own right from the start as well.

It has been 7 years since passage, and we are seeing this law make a difference. According to the nongovernmental organization the Enough Project, an expert on the issue, more than 70 percent of the world's smelters and refiners for tin, tungsten, tantalum, or gold have now passed third-party conflict-free audits. In addition, the International Peace Information Service found that, as of 2016, more than three-quarters of tin, tantalum, and tungsten miners in eastern Congo are working in mines where no armed group involvement has been reported.

There is new concern today that the President may sign an Executive order suspending this simple reporting requirement; and yet many companies have come out in support of its continuation, including Brian and Joanne of Leber Jeweler Inc.

I am grateful to Brian and Joanne, for their support and advocacy on this important cause. They and others like them in the industry have been stalwart advocates for the responsible sourcing of minerals, and I look forward to continuing to work with them on ways to stem the horrific violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence's Rules of Procedure be printed in the RECORD.

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

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

RULE 1. CONVENING OF MEETINGS

1.1. The regular meeting day of the Select Committee on Intelligence for the transaction of Committee business shall be every Tuesday of each month that the Senate is in session, unless otherwise directed by the Chairman.

1.2. The Chairman shall have authority, upon notice, to call such additional meetings of the Committee as the Chairman may deem necessary and may delegate such authority to any other member of the Committee.

1.3. A special meeting of the Committee may be called at any time upon the written request of five or more members of the Committee filed with the Clerk of the Committee.

1.4. In the case of any meeting of the Committee, other than a regularly scheduled meeting, the Clerk of the Committee shall notify every member of the Committee of the time and place of the meeting and shall give reasonable notice which, except in extraordinary circumstances, shall be at least 24 hours in advance of any meeting held in Washington, D.C. and at least 48 hours in the case of any meeting held outside Washington, D.C.

1.5. If five members of the Committee have made a request in writing to the Chairman to call a meeting of the Committee, and the Chairman fails to call such a meeting within seven calendar days thereafter, including the day on which the written notice is submitted, these members may call a meeting by filing a written notice with the Clerk of the Committee who shall promptly notify each member of the Committee in writing of the date and time of the meeting.

RULE 2. MEETING PROCEDURES

2.1. Meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public except as provided in paragraph 5(b) of Rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

2.2. It shall be the duty of the Staff Director to keep or cause to be kept a record of all Committee proceedings.

2.3. The Chairman of the Committee, or if the Chairman is not present the Vice Chairman, shall preside over all meetings of the Committee. In the absence of the Chairman and the Vice Chairman at any meeting, the ranking majority member, or if no majority member is present, the ranking minority member present, shall preside.

2.4. Except as otherwise provided in these Rules, decisions of the Committee shall be by a majority vote of the members present and voting. A quorum for the transaction of Committee business, including the conduct of executive sessions, shall consist of no less than one third of the Committee members, except that for the purpose of hearing witnesses, taking sworn testimony, and receiving evidence under oath, a quorum may consist of one Senator.

2.5. A vote by any member of the Committee with respect to any measure or matter being considered by the Committee may be cast by proxy if the proxy authorization

(1) is in writing; (2) designates the member of the Committee who is to exercise the proxy; and (3) is limited to a specific measure or matter and any amendments pertaining thereto. Proxies shall not be considered for the establishment of a quorum.

2.6. Whenever the Committee by roll call vote reports any measure or matter, the report of the Committee upon such measure or matter shall include a tabulation of the votes cast in favor of and the votes cast in opposition to such measure or matter by each member of the Committee.

RULE 3. SUBCOMMITTEES

Creation of subcommittees shall be by majority vote of the Committee. Subcommittees shall deal with such legislation and oversight of programs and policies as the Committee may direct. The subcommittees shall be governed by the Rules of the Committee and by such other rules they may adopt which are consistent with the Rules of the Committee. Each subcommittee created shall have a chairman and a vice chairman who are selected by the Chairman and Vice Chairman, respectively.

RULE 4. REPORTING OF MEASURES OR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. No measures or recommendations shall be reported, favorably or unfavorably, from the Committee unless a majority of the Committee is actually present and a majority concur.

4.2. In any case in which the Committee is unable to reach a unanimous decision, separate views or reports may be presented by any member or members of the Committee.

4.3. A member of the Committee who gives notice of intention to file supplemental, minority, or additional views at the time of final Committee approval of a measure or matter, shall be entitled to not less than three working days in which to file such views, in writing with the Clerk of the Committee. Such views shall then be included in the Committee report and printed in the same volume, as a part thereof, and their inclusion shall be noted on the cover of the report.

4.4. Routine, non-legislative actions required of the Committee may be taken in accordance with procedures that have been approved by the Committee pursuant to these Committee Rules.

RULE 5. NOMINATIONS

5.1. Unless otherwise ordered by the Committee, nominations referred to the Committee shall be held for at least 14 days before being voted on by the Committee.

5.2. Each member of the Committee shall be promptly furnished a copy of all nominations referred to the Committee.

5.3. Nominees who are invited to appear before the Committee shall be heard in public session, except as provided in Rule 2.1.

5.4. No confirmation hearing shall be held sooner than seven days after receipt of the background and financial disclosure statement unless the time limit is waived by a majority vote of the Committee.

5.5. The Committee vote on the confirmation shall not be sooner than 48 hours after the Committee has received transcripts of the confirmation hearing unless the time limit is waived by unanimous consent of the Committee.

5.6. No nomination shall be reported to the Senate unless the nominee has filed a response to the Committee's background questionnaire and financial disclosure statement with the Committee.

RULE 6. INVESTIGATIONS

No investigation shall be initiated by the Committee unless at least five members of the Committee have specifically requested the Chairman or the Vice Chairman to authorize such an investigation. Authorized investigations may be conducted by members