

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT

MR. CORNYN. Madam President, last week our colleagues in the House made a first necessary step to delivering on our promise to repeal and replace ObamaCare and to restore individual choice for a health insurance product that people choose that fits their actual needs, rather than one mandated by Washington, DC. They passed the American Health Care Act, a bill that provides relief to Americans all across the country. With the passage of the AHCA in the House, we have a way forward to do away with government mandating one-size-fits-all healthcare.

Now that the House has passed this legislation, it is up to the Senate to do our job and to keep our promises. To be specific, the promise President Obama made when the Affordable Care Act was passed—actually, he made many promises multiple times—proved not to be true. So in many ways, when President Obama promised that if you like what you have, you can keep it; that if you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor; that if you like your plan, you can keep your plan—none of that was true, we have now learned.

I don't think it is an exaggeration to say that ObamaCare—the Affordable Care Act—was sold under false pretenses. So it is up to us to restore individual choice for healthcare products that people want that fit their needs, not one they buy because the government is holding a gun to their heads or threatens to penalize them unless they observe the government mandate to buy that healthcare.

You know, one of the biggest reasons for passing ObamaCare given at the time, back in 2010, was the number of uninsured in the country. Well, the fact is, there are still 30 million people uninsured under ObamaCare even though it has been the law of the land for the last 7 years.

I believe we can and we must do better to deliver affordable care that people choose, that meets their individual needs, and not healthcare they buy simply because the government is coercing them into doing so. We will work together with all of our colleagues who are willing to work with us. If that means Republicans are going to be working with 52 Republicans to get this bill passed, we will get it done and we will get it passed. Ideally, though, it would be better if our Democratic colleagues work with us. But so far, they have steadfastly refused to work with us even though they know that ObamaCare is in shambles and that people are finding they can't find an insurance company where they live because insurance companies are pulling out of those individual markets because they are simply losing too much money or people who can buy ObamaCare policies in the individual markets are finding that their premiums are going through the roof and that the deductibles are unaffordable,

thus effectively leaving them without effective coverage.

Even though our Democratic colleagues know that ObamaCare is melting down and is not serving the public the way they promised it would or, in fact, is a positive harm to them because of unaffordable premiums and deductibles, still, so far they are standing on the sidelines and unwilling to participate in this process. I hope that changes at some point in the near future in the interests of the people we represent all across the country.

IMMIGRATION LAW

Madam President, I want to spend the rest of my time discussing a specific problem that Texans are all too familiar with; that is, people breaking our immigration laws, and not just breaking our immigration laws but then coming into our local communities and committing additional crimes—assault, murder, rape, you name it—in those communities even after they have entered the country illegally.

This is a difficult issue and one that I don't raise lightly, but it is important that when we talk about sanctuary cities and criminal aliens—these are people who have not just violated the immigration laws, these are people who have doubled down and have no respect for our laws, and, frankly, they have no respect for the communities in which they live. They primarily target the minority community in which they live and work.

We do need to be clear-eyed about this, and we need to treat it seriously. We need to remember that our inaction has some real-life consequences. I have been glad to see the new administration focus on enforcing the law and restoring respect for the rule of law generally and taking quick action to help victims of this type of crime in particular.

I want to take a couple of minutes to tell a story about one particular victim who was really an American hero, one of my constituents who lost his life at the hands of a violent illegal immigrant. That would be Houston police officer Rodney Johnson.

By all accounts, Rodney Johnson was larger than life, standing about 6 feet 5 inches tall, with a smile just as big. He was a dedicated family man, a husband to fellow Houston Police Department officer Joslyn Johnson. They had three daughters and two sons. His wife even called Rodney “the glue that held the family together.”

Rodney was a hero not only to his family but to the local community as well. He was a hero for our country, too, because he was a veteran of the U.S. military police, the U.S. Army. Of course he was a hero for the State of Texas as a former corrections officer with the Texas Department of Public Safety.

A few years ago, Rodney ran into the flames of a burning building and saved the lives of several children. For that act of courage, he was awarded one of

the highest honors a law enforcement officer in Texas can receive, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement's Medal of Valor.

Sadly, all of that changed in the fall of 2006. At about 5:30 p.m. on September 21, Officer Johnson pulled over a driver for speeding near Houston Hobby Airport. By all accounts, it appeared to be a routine traffic stop, but when the driver, Juan Quintero, could not provide Officer Johnson with a driver's license, he decided to take him into custody. What Officer Johnson did not know is that Mr. Quintero was a hardened criminal illegal immigrant with an extensive record of offenses, as well as deportations and repeated illegal entries into the United States. Even more tragically, Officer Johnson did not know that this career thug was concealing a 9mm handgun in the waistband of his clothing.

Officer Johnson followed protocol. He handcuffed the criminal suspect, placed him in the back of his squad car, and began writing a police report. But just then, Quintero managed to move his cuffed hands in front of him, reached for his concealed weapon, and opened fire in a cowardly surprise attack, literally killing Rodney Johnson by shooting him in the back.

Quintero was a dangerous career criminal who had no respect for our laws. He had no place in our country and had been deported numerous times by the Federal Government. But somehow he was free and on the streets alongside of our families and heroes like Officer Rodney Johnson. That should be an embarrassment to everyone who believes in the rule of law and believes that it is government's responsibility at the local, State, and Federal level to keep our communities safe.

This issue is not going to go away, as much as some of our colleagues would like to ignore it. There are countless other stories across the country of victims and their families who have suffered from some of the worst tragedies imaginable because of criminal illegal immigrants.

I am not talking just about people who have entered the country in violation of our immigration laws; I am talking about hardened criminals who target people in their communities for profit or for other reasons. I have spoken about a number of them from the floor before.

In addition to Officer Rodney Johnson, I could tell you the story of Javier Vega, a Border Patrol officer killed by two criminal illegal immigrants while fishing with his family. These criminals had been deported numerous times and committed multiple crimes.

I could tell you about Kevin Will, a Houston police officer killed by a drunk driver who had entered and was living in the United States illegally and who had been deported twice before.

I could tell you more about Josh Wilkerson, a teenager brutally killed by a criminal illegal immigrant in 2010,

somebody who had been arrested numerous times before.

I could tell you about Kara Willingham, who was beaten to death by a criminal illegal immigrant; Gustavo Burr or Andres Reyes, kidnapped and held at gunpoint in South Texas; and Neri Garcia, killed by an illegal alien who caused a drunk-driving accident in the Dallas area.

I could tell you story after story after story of the tragedies wrought by a Federal policy that did not enforce our borders or make sure that people, once deported, stayed deported because of the danger they posed to our communities. I believe this really is a matter of political will, and we finally, for the first time in the last 8 years, have an administration and a President who believe in securing our borders and keeping the public safe.

There are larger and other additional discussions we need to have about our flawed immigration system, but the first thing we need to do is regain the public's confidence by securing our borders and enforcing our laws. I am glad President Trump is well on his way to beginning that process under the leadership of GEN John Kelly at the Department of Homeland Security.

The entire point of this is to keep the first commitment that the government makes to American citizens: that we will protect you and keep you safe. That is the government's main job, and that includes protecting all Americans and everyone in the country, literally, from those career criminals who commit offenses and who thumb their noses at our immigration laws. As I said, the Trump administration is finally taking our security seriously, and I am grateful for that. By focusing on violent repeat offenders, we are protecting our citizens and making our communities safer places to live. I don't know how anyone could be against that.

I look forward to doing my part here in the Senate to continue working with this administration to make sure that our laws are enforced and not ignored, such as the one signed into law by Governor Abbott in Texas, making sure that sanctuary cities exist no more and that every local, State, and Federal law enforcement agency cooperates in enforcing the law and making our communities safe and regaining the public's confidence in their own government.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, today is a glorious day. It is a great day for this country because we and my colleagues, I believe, will confirm Heather Wilson to be Secretary of the Air Force.

There are many reasons why it is appropriate for Heather Wilson to be Secretary of the Air Force. She has Air Force in her DNA. Her father Doug was an Air Force veteran and commercial pilot. Her grandfather flew for Brit-

ain's Royal Flying Corps in World War I before coming to the United States and serving as a courier pilot during World War II.

Heather was to be no different. She was a junior in high school when the Air Force Academy started accepting women. She applied and was appointed there to be part of the Academy's third class with women. She also became the first woman to command basic training and the first woman vice wing commander.

After college she thought she was going to flight school, but those plans changed because she answered the call and was awarded the very prestigious Rhodes Scholarship. It was only the sixth year that women were permitted to apply for a Rhodes Scholarship, and she was a collegiate rower there and earned a master's degree and a doctorate in international relations.

Heather's assignments and accomplishments are many. During her service she was a negotiator and political adviser to the U.S. Air Force in England and a planning officer for NATO in Belgium, where she worked on arms control negotiations.

Heather left the Air Force because she heeded another call to serve as the Director of European Defense Policy and Arms Control on the staff of the National Security Council. I know she worked very closely with former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice during the Presidency of George H.W. Bush, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the collapse of the Warsaw Pact.

Heather has always been on an upward trajectory. She left government and started her own company advising defense and scientific corporations, but public service has always called Heather back. In 1995 she was asked to be the cabinet secretary of the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department, where she oversaw foster care, adoption, early childhood education, children's mental health, and the juvenile justice system. From there, again, public service kept calling her, and she was elected to the House of Representatives in 1998, becoming the first woman to represent New Mexico since the 1940s and the first female veteran elected to a full term in the U.S. Congress.

I met Heather Wilson in the House of Representatives. Her time on the Hill included service on the U.S. House Committee on Armed Services and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. I was lucky enough to serve with Heather, to learn from her and from her incredible depth of knowledge, her certainty—Heather is so certain—and her ability to cut through the politics to do what is right for the country. I heard Heather give many speeches on the House floor, and they were always through the frame of what is in the best interests of the United States.

So after she left Congress she founded another company before she was selected as president of the South Da-

kota School of Mines and Technology, and she is there now serving as the school's first female President. My condolences go to the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology because duty is calling Heather Wilson back to Washington to be our Secretary of the Air Force.

There are a lot of firsts in Heather's life. Senator Pete Domenici, to whom Heather felt very close, once called Heather "the most brilliantly qualified House candidate anywhere in the country."

I say Heather is a brilliantly qualified designee to be Secretary of the Air Force. She has always been not only an incredible intellectual and a strong leader, but she is also a very warm, welcoming, and kind person. We became good friends and remain so to this day. She is a leader. She is a spouse. She is a mother of two wonderful children, a pilot, and a veteran. So I am excited about the prospect of Heather's returning to Washington to become our Secretary of the Air Force.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, Heather Wilson was one of the first women to graduate from the U.S. Air Force Academy and the third generation of her family to serve in the Air Force. She was one of the pioneers of gender integration of the modern Air Force. Even so, her track record in public service and the private sector after her Air Force career raises concerns.

While serving as the Representative from New Mexico's First District, Ms. Wilson admitted to telephoning the U.S. Attorney in Albuquerque to pressure him on an ongoing corruption investigation of State Democrats, in violation of House ethics rules.

Ms. Wilson was paid \$450,000 between 2009 and 2013 through a Lockheed Martin subsidiary for consulting work for Sandia National Laboratory. The Government Accountability Office criticized the lab for not having adequate documentation of the work that she performed, and Lockheed Martin ultimately paid \$4.7 million to settle charges that it had paid a lobbyist with taxpayer funds. Ethics laws prohibited Ms. Wilson from lobbying within a year of serving in Congress. Ms. Wilson failed to list her business relationship with Sandia Labs in her financial disclosure filings. In spite of this, she claims that she did nothing wrong.

During her unsuccessful run for the Senate, Ms. Wilson claimed that legislation intended to reduce bullying of LGBTQ children was a violation of religious freedom. She argued that the correct response was not to punish bullies, but to "strengthen our children to be more comfortable with themselves." She has steadfastly refused to support Federal nondiscrimination protections for the LGBTQ community.

The core values of the Air Force are, integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do. In spite of her career as an Air Force officer, Ms. Wilson has not demonstrated the unflinching commitment to integrity that we

demand of our men and women in uniform. She has compromised ethics rules in Congress, accepted pay for questionable work that was ill-defined and can't be fully documented, and failed to show that she is willing to stand up for all serving in uniform, regardless of their sexual orientation.

For these reasons, I cannot support Ms. Wilson's nomination to be 24th Secretary of the Air Force.

Mrs. CAPITO. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. REED. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to use 10 minutes of the Republicans' allotted time because my side has used all of our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the nomination of Dr. Heather Wilson to be Secretary of the Air Force.

The Secretary of the Air Force is an important and influential position within our national security structure. As the head of the military Department, the Secretary of the Air Force oversees recruiting, organizing, training, and equipping of the force. The next Air Force Secretary will oversee the Defense Department's most complex and costly acquisition programs in history. The Secretary will also lead 495,000 Active-Duty, Guard, and Reserve members through the challenges of rebuilding long-term sustainable readiness, while contending with ongoing operational demands around the globe.

Dr. Wilson has the knowledge and expertise to serve in that role. She is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and a Rhodes scholar. She served in the House of Representatives and on the House Armed Services Committee and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Currently, Dr. Wilson is president of the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology.

Without question, Dr. Wilson has notable credentials, but I have significant concerns about certain of her past actions. First, Heather Wilson & Company, LLC, founded by Dr. Wilson following her tenure in Congress, had contracts with four National Nuclear Security Administration, or NNSA, laboratories—Sandia National Laboratories, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and Nevada National Security Site. From January 2009 through part of 2011, Dr. Wilson's company received \$464,000 in payments from these laboratories for consulting services.

However, due to claims of contracting irregularities involving the

company, the Department of Energy inspector general conducted two investigations into this matter. As a result, the contractors that operated the laboratories on behalf of the government paid back at least \$442,877 to the Department of Energy with respect to payments made to Dr. Wilson's company. The rationale for the repayments was the absence of any appreciable evidence of work product. Furthermore, Lockheed Martin, which operated Sandia National Laboratories, agreed to an overall settlement of \$4.7 million for their management failures.

Let me be clear. Dr. Wilson was not found culpable of wrongdoing. Nevertheless, the allegations that were levied are serious and directly involved her company. As such, during her confirmation hearing, I asked Dr. Wilson about these contracts and the allegations of impropriety. Unfortunately, I did not receive a satisfactory response. Dr. Wilson deflected any suggestions that she bore any responsibility for these contracting irregularities.

As concerning as these allegations are, there was another incident that I found even more problematic as we reviewed Dr. Wilson's qualifications to serve as Secretary of the Air Force. In October of 2006, while serving as a Member of the House of Representatives, Dr. Wilson contacted a sitting U.S. attorney, David C. Iglesias, who was appointed by President George W. Bush, regarding the status of Federal corruption cases in New Mexico. This action was highly unusual and contrary to guidance in effect at the time from the House Ethics Committee. In fact, the House Ethics Manual provided that a request for background information or a status report from a U.S. attorney "may in effect be an indirect or subtle effort to influence the substantive outcome of the proceedings." The guidance provided by the manual stated that the best way to communicate any inquiry or question was in writing, in order to make it part of the proceedings.

As a former Member of the House myself, I have deep concerns about this action in terms of House ethics rules and the possibility that a Federal prosecutor may have felt pressured by Congress in an ongoing investigation.

In September of 2008, a joint report by the Department of Justice inspector general and the Department of Justice Office of Professional Responsibility, which investigated the removal of nine U.S. attorneys, including Mr. Iglesias, concluded that "the evidence we have developed so far shows that Wilson . . . in fact called Iglesias before the election, and that the substance of the call led Iglesias to believe he was being pressured to indict the courthouse case before the upcoming election."

During her nomination hearing, Dr. Wilson testified that she called Mr. Iglesias because, in her words, "an individual or constituent with knowledge of ongoing investigations told me that the U.S. Attorney was intentionally

delaying corruption prosecutions, and I felt as though I had to address that allegation in some appropriate way." However, as I previously mentioned, contacting a U.S. attorney in this manner was clearly contrary to the ethics rules that govern the conduct of Members of the House of Representatives.

Perhaps Dr. Wilson, though, does deserve the benefit of the doubt. Maybe her intention, when she called Mr. Iglesias, was not to pressure him. However, when I asked Dr. Wilson the name of the individual who made the allegation about Mr. Iglesias's intentionally delaying corruption prosecutions, she refused to provide the person's name. Dr. Wilson argued that she had an obligation not to reveal who it was who made a highly politicized and unusual charge against Mr. Iglesias.

I think providing the name of the person is important because it helps us to understand the purpose of Dr. Wilson's call to Mr. Iglesias. It is one thing if a concerned constituent with no ties or interests in corruption cases under investigation innocuously contacted Dr. Wilson. Perhaps her subsequent call to Mr. Iglesias could be excused. But because we do not have the name, we have no way to verify the motive. It remains very possible that the person who contacted Dr. Wilson wanted to pressure Mr. Iglesias to move forward with these pending corruption cases. If that is the case, it casts Dr. Wilson's call to Mr. Iglesias in a much different light. Unfortunately, without further information from Dr. Wilson, I will not be able to resolve my concerns about this incident.

The two issues I have just discussed have reluctantly led me to conclude that while Dr. Wilson has excellent academic and professional qualifications, I must vote against her nomination before the full Senate.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, a month ago, I spoke in strong support of Dr. Heather Wilson to be the 24th Secretary of the Air Force. I am pleased that it appears that her nomination will be confirmed today.

In the many years I have known Dr. Wilson, I have always been impressed by her intellect and especially by her leadership skills. Her qualifications and character are beyond dispute. Throughout her life, she has used her many talents not for personal gain or self-aggrandizement but for the public good.

Dr. Wilson was one of the first female graduates of the Air Force Academy,

which is a pretty impressive accomplishment unto itself, but she set an even higher standard when she earned a Rhodes scholarship to study at Oxford University.

Upon being awarded her Ph.D., she went to work for the National Security Council and then ran for Congress. I got to know Dr. Wilson through her insightful work on the House Intelligence and Armed Services Committees. Make no mistake—Dr. Wilson made a difference during her service in the House. As a well-respected member of the Intelligence Committee, she built a reputation as a no-nonsense legislator who was deeply committed to upholding our national security. In all things, she proved herself to be exceptionally competent, and I have to say that she proved herself to be worthy of the highest trust.

After her service in the House, Dr. Wilson became the president of the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. There, she again set a high bar by leading a school whose alumni, I have been informed, make a higher average starting salary than do Harvard graduates.

For over 20 years, our Nation's Air Force has been involved in conflicts all over the world. Now more than ever, the Air Force needs a proven leader who can modernize the service and lead us to victory. I believe Dr. Wilson will provide that leadership. I have every confidence that she will serve with honor and integrity and make a lasting difference as the next Secretary of the Air Force. I have known her for a long time. I have gone to her State and worked with her and campaigned with her. All I can say is that she is a very top-notch woman leader, one of the best I have seen in all of my time in the U.S. Senate, and I know she is going to do a terrific job. I am going to help her every step of the way, and I am sure everybody else here will.

I hope everybody on this floor will vote for Dr. Heather Wilson for this position. We cannot lose. We are all going to be ahead because she is willing to serve and serve more, and she is willing to leave what really is a very comfortable position in order to take one that is not so comfortable and is very demanding, and I respect her for that and think the world of her.

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

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

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, what is the parliamentary situation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is considering the nomination of Heather Wilson to be Secretary of the Air Force.

The time runs out in 37 minutes.

Mr. MCCAIN. What is the time of the vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time concludes at 6:03 p.m.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the nomination of Heather Wilson to be the next Secretary of the U.S. Air Force.

Dr. Wilson is a proven leader and a dedicated public servant. She is a distinguished graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and Oxford University, where she earned master's and doctorate degrees as a Rhodes Scholar. If confirmed, Dr. Wilson will be the first Air Force Academy graduate in history to serve as Secretary of the Air Force.

Dr. Wilson served 7 years as an Air Force officer. During the Cold War, she served in the United Kingdom and at the U.S. Mission to NATO in Brussels. As the Cold War came to an end, she served on the National Security Council staff under President George H.W. Bush, working on issues concerning NATO and arms control.

Dr. Wilson later moved west to marry her husband, Jay, who is also an Air Force veteran. After a few years in the private sector, Dr. Wilson once again answered the call to service, first as the head of the New Mexico Child Welfare Department and later as a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

In Congress, Dr. Wilson was the leading voice on national security. She took on the tough issues, from surveillance programs to sexual assault at the Air Force Academy, and she earned the deepest respect of her colleagues on Capitol Hill, including mine.

For the last 4 years, Dr. Wilson has been the president of the South Dakota School of Mines, enhancing its reputation as a premier engineering, science, and research institution.

Now America's Air Force needs her leadership.

The next Secretary will lead America's Air Force in confronting the most diverse and complex array of global crises since the end of World War II. The world is on fire, and now more than ever our Nation is counting on the global vigilance, global reach, and global power that are the hallmarks of the U.S. Air Force capabilities.

The next Secretary will also inherit the oldest, smallest, and least ready Air Force in its history. Twenty-five years of continuous deployments, troubled acquisition programs, and frequent aircraft divestments have aged and shrunk the Air Force's inventory. The combination of relentless operational tempo and the self-inflicted wounds of the Budget Control Act and sequestration have depleted readiness. Meanwhile, potential adversaries are rapidly shrinking America's technological advantage and holding our aircraft at greater risk over greater distances.

In short, we have asked a lot of our Air Force over the last 25 years, and the demands placed on the service continue to grow. Congress has only added

to the problems with the Budget Control Act and sequestration. We are placing an unnecessary and dangerous burden on the backs of our airmen, and we cannot change course soon enough.

We owe our airmen the resources, equipment, and training they need to succeed. We also owe them proven leadership. That is why the Senate should confirm Dr. Wilson to be the next Secretary of the Air Force. From the Air Force Academy to the Air Force, to the National Security Council, to the House of Representatives, Dr. Wilson has proven herself as a leader. She understands the missions of the Air Force and the capabilities it brings to the defense of our Nation. I am confident she will uphold the Air Force's core values: integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all the Air Force does.

Heather Wilson is the right person to lead the Air Force to a stronger future, and I urge my colleagues to support her nomination.

Mr. President, I yield back all time.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Wilson nomination?

Mr. MCCAIN. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 76, nays 22, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 122 Ex.]  
YEAS—76

Alexander	Flake	Paul
Baldwin	Gardner	Perdue
Barrasso	Graham	Peters
Bennet	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Hatch	Risch
Boozman	Heinrich	Roberts
Brown	Heitkamp	Rounds
Burr	Heller	Rubio
Capito	Hoeven	Sasse
Carper	Inhofe	Schatz
Casey	Johnson	Scott
Cassidy	Kaine	Shafeen
Cochran	Kennedy	Shelby
Collins	King	Stabenow
Coons	Klobuchar	Strange
Corker	Lankford	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lee	Tester
Cotton	Manchin	Thune
Crapo	McCain	Tillis
Cruz	McCaskill	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Udall
Donnelly	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Moran	Wicker
Enzi	Murkowski	Young
Ernst	Murphy	
Fischer	Nelson	

NAYS—22

Blumenthal	Cortez Masto	Gillibrand
Booker	Duckworth	Harris
Cantwell	Feinstein	Hassan
Cardin	Franken	Hirono

Leahy	Reed	Whitehouse	Hassan	Menendez	Stabenow
Markey	Schumer	Wyden	Heinrich	Merkley	Tester
Merkley			Hirono	Murphy	Udall
Murray	Warren		Kaine	Murray	Van Hollen

NOT VOTING—2

Isakson Sanders  
The nomination was confirmed.

Leahy	Reed	Whitehouse	Hassan	Menendez	Stabenow
Schumer			Heinrich	Merkley	Tester
Van Hollen			Hirono	Murphy	Udall
Warren			Kaine	Murray	Van Hollen

NOT VOTING—2

Isakson Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 57, the nays are 41. The motion is agreed to.

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Scott Gottlieb, of Connecticut, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

## CONFIRMATION OF HEATHER WILSON

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I am honored to speak tonight after casting my vote to confirm Dr. Heather Wilson as Secretary of the Air Force. I have known Heather for nearly 20 years and submit that President Trump could not have selected a more qualified candidate to lead the Air Force in these demanding times. I am pleased that the Senate was finally able to confirm her nomination, and I wish her great success.

As an Air Force veteran, former Member of Congress, and most recently the leader of one of the top science and engineering schools, the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, Dr. Wilson has repeatedly demonstrated leadership abilities that will serve her and the Air Force well in this next chapter.

Her commitment to duty links back to her time as a cadet at the Air Force Academy, where she was a distinguished graduate. In fact, she will be the Academy's first graduate in history to serve as a Secretary of the Air Force. Dr. Wilson went on to serve as an Air Force officer in Europe during the Cold War, where she was based in the United Kingdom and at the U.S. Mission to NATO in Brussels. Upon leaving the Air Force, she served on the National Security Council staff of President George H.W. Bush, working on NATO and conventional arms control.

At a time when America's partnerships are being challenged by threats around the world, I am confident that her experience will lend a steady hand to our military decisionmaking.

Dr. Wilson will also bring with her great experience honed in the Halls of Congress. At the start of her decades-long representation of New Mexico's First Congressional District, she quickly became one of the go-to Members on national security issues. Heather took on tough issues not unlike the ones she will surely face as Secretary of the Air Force. Whether on issues of strategic

objectives and readiness or personnel matters, such as military sexual assault, she is prepared to have frank discussions on the issues and will contribute insightful proposals on how to best tackle the many challenges facing the Air Force. She understands not only the Air Force's key capabilities but the perilous outcomes we may face as a nation if we do not properly train and fund our military. She knows that rising to meet the challenges of the day must be done with an eye to the future so we may also deter and defeat the threats of tomorrow.

At a time when national security is of foremost concern, Dr. Wilson understands the Air Force's tremendous responsibility in keeping Americans safe and will be guided by the core values of the Force: integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all that the Air Force does.

I could not be happier for my friend, Dr. Heather Wilson, and wish her and her husband Jay the best of luck. South Dakota and the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology are losing an asset, but I am confident that the new era of excellence Heather helped usher in leaves the school well-positioned to remain a foremost engineering, science, and research institution. We are proud of Heather's continued success and trust she will represent us well as the 24th Secretary of the Air Force.

I would like to thank my colleague, Chairman McCAIN, for his work to advance Dr. Wilson's nomination through the Senate Armed Services Committee and for granting me the opportunity to introduce Dr. Wilson at her confirmation hearing. It was my honor to endorse her before the committee and to cast my vote in support of her nomination this evening. I am glad the Senate has advanced another of President Trump's nominees and wish Dr. Wilson, our next Secretary of the Air Force, continued wisdom and success as she continues her outstanding leadership in service to our country.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

## 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 MICHAEL "MICKEY" GORAL

Mr. DURBIN. Today, Mr. President, I want to honor my friend Michael "Mickey" Goral. For nearly four decades, Mickey has held elected office in

Leahy	Reed	Whitehouse	Hassan	Menendez	Stabenow
Markey	Schumer	Wyden	Heinrich	Merkley	Tester
Merkley			Hirono	Murphy	Udall
Murray	Warren		Kaine	Murray	Van Hollen

NOT VOTING—2

Isakson Sanders  
The nomination was confirmed.

## CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The 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, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Scott Gottlieb, of Connecticut, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Tom Cotton, Dan Sullivan, Shelley Moore Capito, John Barrasso, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Rounds, Orrin G. Hatch, Bill Cassidy, Pat Roberts, Mike Crapo, Lamar Alexander, Richard Burr, John Thune, Jerry Moran, James E. Risch.

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 the nomination of Scott Gottlieb, of Connecticut, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 57, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 123 Ex.]

## YEAS—57

Alexander	Ernst	Murkowski
Barrasso	Fischer	Nelson
Bennet	Flake	Paul
Blunt	Gardner	Perdue
Boozman	Graham	Portman
Burr	Grassley	Risch
Capito	Hatch	Roberts
Carper	Heitkamp	Rounds
Cassidy	Heller	Rubio
Cochran	Hoeven	Sasse
Collins	Inhofe	Scott
Coons	Johnson	Shelby
Corker	Kennedy	Strange
Cornyn	King	Sullivan
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Cruz	McCain	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	Young

## NAYS—41

Baldwin	Cardin	Durbin
Blumenthal	Casey	Feinstein
Booker	Cortez Masto	Franken
Brown	Donnelly	Gillibrand
Cantwell	Duckworth	Harris