

Jeffrey Rosen, to be Deputy Secretary of the Department of Transportation. Mr. Rosen has extensive experience serving at both the Office of Management and Budget and at the Department of Transportation. When he last came before the Senate to be the Chief Legal Officer of the Department of Transportation, he was confirmed by voice vote. It is disappointing that we had to file cloture on this bipartisan choice this time around.

Mr. Rosen's work in both the private and public sectors has given him a unique insight into the budgetary and regulatory challenges that infrastructure projects face. I look forward to the Senate advancing his nomination later this afternoon.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Rosen nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Jeffrey A. Rosen, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 55, Terry Branstad to be Ambassador to the People's Republic of China.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill 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 Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China.

Mitch McConnell, Jeff Flake, Bob Corker, Roger F. Wicker, Cory Gardner, Marco Rubio, John Boozman, Pat Roberts, Joni Ernst, Mike Rounds, Todd Young, Rob Portman, John Thune, Chuck Grassley, Richard Burr, James M. Inhofe, John Cornyn.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion be waived.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume consideration of the Rosen nomination.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first let me thank my friend and colleague from Iowa for letting me go forward. The two Charles in the Senate work together whenever we can.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

First, Mr. President, I want to thank our Capitol Police, the New York police, and police around the country for the outstanding work they do. Much like our troops overseas, our law enforcement officers risk their lives for our safety.

As we welcome many police officers to the Capitol this week, I would like to express, on behalf of the Senate, our gratitude for their service, their sacrifice, and their countless daily acts of courage. Particularly, I want to say that in New York City, where we are so proud that crime is the lowest of the 25 largest cities in the country, we thank our New York City Police Department for a job well done. I would also like to thank the many police departments, sheriffs' offices, and so many others of our law enforcement in the State of New York. I have gotten to know them, respect them, and admire them as human beings and for the job they do.

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Getting back to a less happy subject, Mr. President, the events of last week tested some of the fundamental precepts of our democratic system, including the rule of law and the independence of our law enforcement agencies that were designed to be a check on any abuse of power.

The President of the United States fired the FBI Director, who was conducting an active investigation of the President's campaign and its ties to Russia. The Attorney General, who had recused himself from that investigation, played a role in that dismissal and continues to be involved in the selection of the new FBI Director. The White House gave pretextual reasons for the firing, which were contradicted by the President himself a few days later when he admitted that he had planned to fire Director Comey for weeks and that he was thinking about Russia when he did it. The President then suggested there were tapes of conversations between himself and Director Comey, threatening to release them if Mr. Comey spoke to the press.

These are not the actions of an administration that respects the rule of law or treasures fidelity to the truth. These are not the actions of an administration that is eager for and even open to an independent investigation into a very serious matter—the interference of our elections by a foreign adversary.

The Founding Fathers, in their infinite wisdom—the more I am around, the more I am impressed with them, and I was impressed to begin with—designed three coequal branches of government with appropriate powers to check and balance the others. The Founding Fathers explicitly worried about foreign powers trying to influence our elections and government. They actually wrote into the Constitution protections against that very threat. Their concerns, expressed over 240 years ago, gain new prominence and meaning today, perhaps more than at any time in the past.

We in Congress—both parties—need to exercise the powers afforded to us by the Constitution to check and balance. We need to see that we get all the facts. We need to see that the Russia investigation is allowed to proceed as independently and as impartially as possible. We need to hold this administration accountable for any abuse of their powers.

So first of all, if there are “tapes” as the President has suggested, he should turn them over immediately to Congress and the investigators. To destroy them would be a violation of law. If there are no tapes, he should apologize to James Comey and to the American people for misleading them.

Second, the fact that the President has said that he may have taped Mr. Comey makes the need for a special prosecutor all the more important. If it is true, if there are tapes, a special prosecutor would have the ability to

obtain these tapes undeterred, and then he would examine them to see what wrongdoing, if any, has occurred.

The reasons for a special prosecutor are compelling. A special prosecutor is not subject to day-to-day supervision by the Attorney General or anyone else at the Justice Department. He or she would have greater latitude in whom they can subpoena, which questions to ask, and how to conduct the investigation. He or she would have purview to investigate, not only the subject but also anyone who attempts to interfere with the investigation. There is built-in congressional oversight, and Congress is notified whenever a special prosecutor is appointed, removed, or finished with the investigation. He or she can only be removed for cause, not to quash an investigation.

With the events of the past week—and given that we have different stories coming out of this administration from different people—the need to have someone who is independent and far away from any of the actors, to get to the bottom of this, is so important. Firing the FBI Director is extremely rare and deeply troubling. We need the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Third, we in the Congress need to hear testimony from Director Comey, as well as be briefed by Attorney General Sessions and Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein. I understand that Director Comey declined an invitation to testify tomorrow, but I have no reason to believe he won't be willing to come before the Senate in the future. I hope that he will sooner rather than later and that those appearances are in a public setting. This week, on Thursday, Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein will brief the full Senate on the events of the last week. Again, I thank the majority leader for joining me in that request. Again, I hope we can make as much of that information public as possible. The American people deserve to know the truth just as much, if not more, than the Senate does.

My caucus still believes that Attorney General Sessions must be made available to the Senate in a similar capacity, given his reported role in firing Director Comey and in helping select his replacement. Considering his recusal from the Russia investigation, his close involvement in these events warrants the Senate's questioning as well. To repeat, we need the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The Russian meddling is so serious, and it is no place for partisan fighting.

Frankly, we need our Republican colleagues to help to get to the bottom of what happened in the 2016 elections and to hold this or any administration accountable when they don't tell the truth. If only one party is doing the talking, the issue will seem too partisan to the American people. A subject as important as this one—the tampering of our elections by a foreign power, a matter the Founders fretted

about at the dawning of the Republic—shouldn't be colored by partisan politics.

It is time to put country before party. We need our Republican friends to help us call upon the White House to get an independent investigation on Russia. We need them to speak out when the White House misleads the public. No less than the integrity of our system of government and the rule of law is at stake.

TRUMP CARE

Mr. President, a word on healthcare. As the Senate Republican caucus debates what to do on healthcare, they should take a hard look at the consequences of the House Republican bill on individual Americans. Last week, Senate Democrats met with four Americans who shared their stories and explained how they would be hurt by TrumpCare. Because of the furor over Director Comey's firing, their voices may have been drowned out. So I wanted to repeat a few of their stories.

We heard from Cindi Johnson from Bloomington, IN, whose daughter was born with Down syndrome, a pre-existing condition. Ms. Johnson was approaching the lifetime coverage limit on her plan when healthcare reform was passed, which eliminated the limit. That policy change, as well as Medicaid, helped Ms. Johnson and her family climb out from under a mountain of medical debt and get the care they needed for their daughter. Every parent so much wants to help a child who is sick. That might be taken away from the Cindi Johnsons of the world if the House bill is passed. Under TrumpCare, States are no longer required to prohibit lifetime limits, and Medicaid is cut by \$880 billion. Let's think of the Ms. JOHNSONS and their daughters and sons.

We also heard from Michael Dunkley from Alexandria, VA. Mr. Dunkley is a 64-year-old fulltime caregiver for his wife, who has advanced MS. In 2013, shortly after being laid off, Mr. Dunkley was diagnosed with an aggressive stage IV non-Hodgkin lymphoma, but his insurance coverage through COBRA was set to expire at the end of the year. Mr. Dunkley was able to sign up for insurance on Virginia's marketplace that provided coverage despite his preexisting condition. Under TrumpCare, Mr. Dunkley could be charged five times or more by the insurance companies because he is older. He could also be priced out of insurance because of his preexisting condition.

President Trump and the Republicans promised better and cheaper healthcare for everyone, but these Americans and many more like them—perhaps millions, pretty certainly millions—would be devastated by TrumpCare. It is another colossal promise to folks like Mr. Dunkley, Ms. Johnson, and her daughter.

So my Republican friends in the Senate, I hope you will listen to these stories and the stories of your constitu-

ents saying so many of the same things. To take away healthcare from the Johnsons and the Dunkleys to give a tax break to the very wealthiest of Americans—hundreds of thousands of dollars for people who make tens of millions of dollars—no American would be for that, but that is what is in the bill in the House, and that is where the Republican Senate bill, despite all the talk back and forth, is aiming to go.

My Republican friends here in the Senate, please, listen to these stories. Drop repeal. Drop TrumpCare. Work with Democrats on ways to improve our healthcare system and bring costs down. We can move forward together, or Republicans can move backward on their own.

WORLDWIDE CYBER ATTACK

Lastly, Mr. President, I want to make a note about the worldwide cyber attack. So far, according to the New York Times, the attack has afflicted at least 200,000 computers in more than 150 countries. It is a sobering reminder that cyber attacks are one of the century's greatest challenges. They continue to get larger in scale, broader in scope, and more malicious in intent. It is time we stopped talking about the threat of cyber attacks and actually started doing something about it.

A few years ago, the Senate tried to pass a bill to protect our critical infrastructure from cyber attacks, but some of our friends on the other side of the aisle blocked it to defend a business community that didn't want to share information necessary to fight these challenges. I hope this global cyber attack serves as a wakeup call and renews bipartisan interest in protecting the United States, the country we love, and in protecting our hospitals, our universities, our businesses, our intellectual property, our credit files, election systems, and critical infrastructures from cyber attacks.

I yield the floor for my friend from Iowa.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

REPEALING AND REPLACING OBAMACARE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, let me assure the Senator from New York that I am willing to listen to his stories about how people might be affected by the health care debate that is going on in the Congress right now if he will listen to some of the stories I have to tell. By the middle of June, people in 94 of the 99 counties in Iowa may not be able to buy insurance through the Obamacare exchanges.

Senator SCHUMER talked about the tough consequences of the House bill on healthcare. I am coming to the Senate floor today to talk about the tough consequences of Obamacare.

I rise today to speak some more about the Affordable Care Act. The law is collapsing before our eyes. After 7 years of ObamaCare, it continues to overreach, overpromise, and overstay its welcome for the American people. I want to tell you the history about a bridge that relates very much to what is happening to ObamaCare today.