

more financially sound. The ease with which I have received my medical coverage has allowed me to focus on my recovery.

While it has been a challenging year and a half, knowing that I could trust my health insurance made it so much easier than I'd imagined it would be.

I am so relieved that now I can focus on my future instead of figuring out how to pay off insurmountable medical debt.

I am fully recovered from my surgeries and am working on moving my life and career forward. I look forward to paying taxes (I swear, I really do) to support programs like Medicaid so that I can do my part to assist other Americans in staying healthy. If you had told me when I signed up for Medicaid that I would make such extensive use of it, I wouldn't have believed it. At times, I have felt guilty for having to utilize Medicaid at a time in my life that has proven to be so medically and financially complicated.

Friends and family have been good enough to remind me that this is what Medicaid is about: ensuring that Americans can afford to take care of their health, regardless of their financial state, when an issue strikes. The Affordable Care Act has made this a reality for more people than ever before; I am so grateful to be one of them.

I am very scared for what the future will bring for those many individuals who have received insurance thanks to the ACA. I worry that if the [Affordable Care Act] is destroyed, my preexisting condition will make it financially impossible for me and many others to get health insurance.

I worry for people who couldn't get insurance through their work and were finally able to get it through the Exchange. I worry that those who suffer from ailments that constantly affect their health won't be able to afford the care they need. I worry about the millions of Americans who are about to lose so much.

I understand that the ACA is not perfect. It needs some work, especially for people on the exchange who are paying premiums that are way too high. But the replacement plan that is being proposed is going to make it incredibly difficult for all of us to get quality, affordable coverage.

There are no words to adequately express my gratitude to all those who worked so tirelessly to make the Affordable Care Act happen. I am so hopeful that instead of destroying the ACA, our leaders will work to make it stronger so that all Americans can get the healthcare that they deserve.

Those are the words Elena posted on her Facebook page, very, very moving words. Before her surgery, Elena had an 87-percent chance of developing breast cancer, and now it is less than 10 percent, less than that of the average woman.

I commit to Elena and to every New Mexican and American that I will work to make the ACA stronger so that all Americans will get the healthcare they rightly deserve. But the Senate Republicans cannot claim the same. Their bill, drafted in secret behind closed doors, hurts people like Elena who have preexisting conditions. It hurts people in her situation who have complicated healthcare needs with high medical costs and those who benefit from Medicaid, from the Medicaid expansion.

Americans support the Medicaid Program. They understand that even if they don't need Medicaid, neighbors, friends, family may need it. And they

understand that they may need it unexpectedly in the future, as Elena did.

Medicaid expansion has meant that over 265,000 New Mexicans have healthcare coverage that they didn't have before. It is a pretty remarkable thing. In 6 short years in New Mexico, after the passage of the Affordable Care Act, we had people who didn't have any healthcare, and now 265,000 have Medicaid coverage. They could be in a situation just like Elena's. Many of these are hard-working families—families living in rural New Mexico and Native American families living in New Mexico.

The Senate Republican bill, like the House Republican bill, will end Medicaid expansion in New Mexico for people like Elena.

I want everyone listening to hear: This bill cuts Medicaid overall more deeply—more deeply—than the House version. And when President Trump said that the House version was a mean bill, this is a meaner bill. They are not necessary; these cuts are meaner, and they are not necessary to repeal the Affordable Care Act. They will hurt millions of Americans.

They are also devastating to our State economies. New Mexico can't afford to pick up the tab for those cuts, so the State will be forced to cut services and reduce payments to doctors. Hospitals might close, and that would mean healthcare jobs will dry up.

Elena's story is one of millions. Every Senator has hundreds of thousands of constituents with these stories. We all need healthcare at some point in our lives.

I urge, I implore my fellow Senators across the aisle to reject the McConnell TrumpCare bill. Work with Democrats on a bipartisan basis to improve America's healthcare system so that every American has access to affordable healthcare.

Don't do this. Don't gut our healthcare system.

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. 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.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Executive Calendar Nos. 120 through 152 and all nominations placed on the Secretary's desk in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy, with the exception of COL Darius Gallegos in Calendar No. 140; that the nominations be confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in

order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army Medical Corps to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 624 and 3064:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Ronald J. Place

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. William C. Greene

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. William S. Dillon

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Karl O. Thomas

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Jay B. Silveria

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Samuel J. Paparo, Jr.

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Gregory N. Harris

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. John P. Lawlor, Jr.

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Dion B. Moten

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Bowlman T. Bowles, III

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Daniel J. MacDonnell

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Navy Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Daniel B. Hendrickson
Rear Adm. (lh) Thomas W. Marotta
Rear Adm. (lh) Matthew A. Zirkle

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Jacquelyn McClelland

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. James M. Butler

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Navy Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Eugene A. Burcher
Capt. Rodney P. Dewalt
Capt. Joey B. Dodgen
Capt. Andrew J. Mueller
Capt. Richard A. Rodriguez

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Keith M. Jones

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Bret C. Batchelder

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. DeAnna M. Burt

IN THE ARMY

The following named Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Stephen R. Hogan

The following named Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Janson D. Boyles

The following named officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grades indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Steven W. Ainsworth
Brig. Gen. Bruce E. Hackett
Brig. Gen. Michael C. O'Guinn
Brig. Gen. Miyako N. Schanely

To be brigadier general

Col. John W. Aarsen
Col. Kris A. Belanger
Col. Douglas A. Cherry
Col. Ellen S. Clark
Col. Robert S. Cooley, Jr.
Col. Dianne M. Del Rosso

Col. William B. Dyer, III
Col. Joseph A. Edwards, II
Col. Howard-Charles W. Geck
Col. Michael T. Harvey
Col. Martin F. Klein
Col. William S. Lynn
Col. Joseph A. Marsiglia
Col. Robert F. Pleczkowski
Col. Dustin A. Shultz
Col. Mark A. Towne
Col. Irene M. Zoppi

The following named Army National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Gregory L. Kennedy
Brig. Gen. Andrew P. Schafer, Jr.

The following named Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Christopher P. Callahan

The following named Army National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. James P. Begley, III
Brig. Gen. Sylvester Cannon
Brig. Gen. Thomas M. Carden, Jr.
Brig. Gen. Richard H. Dahlman
Brig. Gen. Wendul G. Hagler, II
Brig. Gen. Robert T. Herbert
Brig. Gen. Jon A. Jensen
Brig. Gen. John F. King
Brig. Gen. Dirk R. Kloss
Brig. Gen. Francis M. McGinn
Brig. Gen. Walter L. Mercer
Brig. Gen. Paul D. Rogers
Brig. Gen. Sean A. Ryan
Brig. Gen. Michael A. Stone
Brig. Gen. Michael C. Thompson
Brig. Gen. Giselle M. Wilz
Brig. Gen. Gary S. Yaple

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Ann M. Burkhardt

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Scott A. Howell

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. James C. Vechery

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Thomas A. Horlander

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade

indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Andrew L. Lewis

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Matthew J. Kohler

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Vice Adm. Kevin M. Donegan

IN THE MARINE CORPS

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Marine Corps to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Robert F. Hedelund

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be admiral

Vice Adm. James G. Foggo, III

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN496 AIR FORCE nomination of Jered N. Fry, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN497 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning CHRISTOPHER R. BONEY, and ending DANIEL D. REYES, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN498 AIR FORCE nominations of Jeffrey A. Garrett, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN499 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning ROGER A. LEE, and ending JEFFREY R. ROSENBERRY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN500 AIR FORCE nomination of Theodore L. Wilson, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN501 AIR FORCE nomination of Jason S. Cross, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN504 AIR FORCE nomination of Angela M. Mike, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN535 AIR FORCE nominations (4) beginning MATTHEW V. CHAUVIERE, and ending LAUREN A. MAY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN536 AIR FORCE nominations (3) beginning MICHAEL E. BRUHN, and ending VICTOR D. WEEDEN, JR., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN537 AIR FORCE nominations (31) beginning JEFFREY W. DRAKE, and ending JACK VILARDI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN539 AIR FORCE nominations (36) beginning MEGAN E. ANDERSON, and ending

RAJEEV S. WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN544 AIR FORCE nomination of Jose G. Bal, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

IN THE ARMY

PN159 ARMY nominations (81) beginning JENNIFER M. BAGER, and ending RAMEY L. WILSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 27, 2017.

PN160 ARMY nominations (12) beginning ALFRED C. ANDERSON, and ending KELLEY TOMSETT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 27, 2017.

PN483 ARMY nomination of William F. McClintock, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 18, 2017.

PN484 ARMY nominations (9) beginning DAVID S. ALLEN, and ending BARRY K. VINCENT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 18, 2017.

PN485 ARMY nomination of Jeffrey L. Washington, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 18, 2017.

PN545 ARMY nomination of Joseph B. Dore, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN546 ARMY nominations (2) beginning CHRISTOPHER M. CHUNG, and ending HEATH D. HOLT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN547 ARMY nominations (2) beginning DEVIN G. MCCANE, and ending SHARRI L. ORMSBEE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN548 ARMY nomination of Janna X. Gaddy, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN549 ARMY nominations (2) beginning BRADLEY H. STEPHENS, and ending AMILYN M. TAPLIN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN550 ARMY nomination of Terry Kim, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

PN551 ARMY nominations (16) beginning JEFF A. BURCHFIELD, and ending BRIAN D. WIECK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

PN488 MARINE CORPS nomination of Jason K. Fettig, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 18, 2017.

IN THE NAVY

PN395 NAVY nominations (6) beginning JUANITO F. BOYDON, JR., and ending SURESH K. THADHANI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN396 NAVY nominations (3) beginning ANTHONY L. BAYUNGAN, and ending MICHAEL A. LEACHMAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN397 NAVY nominations (17) beginning TODD M. BOLAND, and ending KAIL C. SWINDLE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN398 NAVY nominations (64) beginning JAMES G. ADAMS, and ending CHARLES C.

WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN399 NAVY nominations (2) beginning SHAWN G. DENIHAN, and ending CHAD A. RUNYON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN400 NAVY nominations (2) beginning KELVIN J. ASKEW, and ending ERIKA L. BERRY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN401 NAVY nominations (2) beginning KATHLEEN A. ALLEN, and ending CHRISTOPHER FRYE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 8, 2017.

PN419 NAVY nomination of Bruce E. Osborne, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN420 NAVY nominations (2) beginning COLETTE M. MURPHY, and ending JOHN A. ROBINSON, III, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN421 NAVY nominations (14) beginning NATHAN R. ANDERSON, and ending JODIE M.C. YIM, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN422 NAVY nomination of Adria R. Schneck, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN423 NAVY nominations (2) beginning MARY A. PONCE, and ending BRIAN K. REED, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN424 NAVY nominations (2) beginning RYAN K. MAHELONA, and ending PHILIP L. NOTZ, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN425 NAVY nominations (14) beginning JOSEPH T. BAILEY, and ending JONPAUL STEFANI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN426 NAVY nomination of David W. Shaieb, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN427 NAVY nominations (15) beginning LEE A. AXTELL, and ending MARK S. WINWARD, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN428 NAVY nominations (13) beginning THOMAS M. BESTAFKA, and ending FRANCIS J. STAVISH, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN429 NAVY nomination of Danny W. King, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN431 NAVY nominations (30) beginning BABAK A. BARAKAT, and ending STEPHEN M. WILSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN432 NAVY nominations (26) beginning MICHAEL J. ALLANSON, and ending GERARD J. WHITE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN433 NAVY nominations (16) beginning MATTHEW L. BERAN, and ending IAN S. WEXLER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN434 NAVY nominations (21) beginning GARLAND H. ANDREWS, and ending MEREDITH L. YEAGER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN435 NAVY nominations (50) beginning OLADAPO A. AKINTONDE, and ending SEAN R. WISE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN436 NAVY nominations (16) beginning JEFF A. BLEILE, and ending JEFFREY G. ZELLER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN438 NAVY nominations (5) beginning GRADY G. DUFFEY, JR., and ending DAVID A. VONDRAK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN439 NAVY nominations (4) beginning WILLIAM M. KAFKA, and ending WILLIAM R. URBAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN440 NAVY nominations (6) beginning DANIEL E. FILLION, and ending JASON D. WEDDLE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN441 NAVY nominations (5) beginning DAMON B. DIXON, and ending JONATHAN J. VORRATH, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN442 NAVY nominations (11) beginning JAMES W. ADKISSON, III, and ending SHERRI R. ZIMMERMAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN443 NAVY nominations (7) beginning CORY S. BRUMMETT, and ending DAVID J. WHITE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN444 NAVY nominations (18) beginning JULIE M. ALFIERI, and ending BRETT A. WISE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN445 NAVY nominations (9) beginning MATTHEW E. ARNOLD, and ending ANTHONY C. TARANTO, JR., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN446 NAVY nominations (11) beginning PETER A. ARROBIO, and ending KEVIN J. WATKINS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN447 NAVY nominations (18) beginning JOHN A. ANDERSON, and ending JAY A. YOUNG, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN448 NAVY nominations (3) beginning LAWRENCE H. KENNEDY, and ending TRACIE A. SEVERSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN449 NAVY nominations (5) beginning JOSE G. HERNANDEZ, and ending DEREK A. VESTAL, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN450 NAVY nominations (173) beginning DAVID A. ABERNATHY, and ending JESSE J. ZIMBAUER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 10, 2017.

PN486 NAVY nomination of Kenneth M. King, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 18, 2017.

PN487 NAVY nomination of Garry P. Closas, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 18, 2017.

PN502 NAVY nominations (2) beginning PAUL D. MELVEY and ending ALEXANDER WOLDEMARIAM, which nominations were

received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN503 NAVY nominations (13) beginning WILLIAM J. BAILEY, JR., and ending CHRISTOPHER D. TUCKER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN504 NAVY nominations (21) beginning GINA A. BUONO, and ending SANDRA F. WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN505 NAVY nominations (6) beginning DAVID J. ALLEN, and ending TRACIE M. ZIELINSKI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN506 NAVY nominations (5) beginning DAVID M. BUZZETTI, and ending ERIC R. VETTER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN507 NAVY nominations (11) beginning DAVID E. BAILEY, and ending CHRISTOPHER J. STEWART, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN508 NAVY nominations (8) beginning JOHN R. ADAMS, and ending MARY C. WISE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN509 NAVY nominations (7) beginning SEAN A. COX, and ending LUIS A. PEREZ, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN510 NAVY nominations (13) beginning ELIZABETH W. BUNDT, and ending MICHAEL G. WATSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 2017.

PN552 NAVY nomination of Miguel A. Santiesteban, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 5, 2017.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume 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 MAUREEN RILEY

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a remarkable leader in the airport industry, Maureen Riley, who is retiring on June 30. Maureen is not only an accomplished businesswoman, but also a well-respected collaborator who had the vision and tenacity to get a \$3.1 billion airport redevelopment program off the ground at Salt Lake City International Airport.

For more than 30 years, Maureen's professional life has been marked by many significant achievements in the airport industry. She has distinguished herself as a trusted consultant for numerous airports across the country. She has also served as deputy executive

director at Orlando International Airport and, most recently, as executive director for the Salt Lake City Department of Airports.

Maureen believes in collaboration and sharing information to create better operating results. She has served in top leadership positions for the Airports Council International-North America, ACI-NA, a trade association of airports around the globe. She also served as a member of the ACI World Board of Directors for 4 years.

I first met Maureen after she took over the helm at Salt Lake City's Department of Airports, a position she has served in for more than a decade. During this time, Maureen guided the airport through the planning, financing, and now construction of the \$3.1 billion airport redevelopment program.

Maureen is an exceptional manager who can be credited with gaining approval from the airlines to construct the new airport, which is paramount to the success of Utah's economy. She has the unique ability to bring people together and has been able to persuade the airlines, architects, financiers, and construction teams to get the construction program off the ground. Maureen never backs away from a challenge and does what is necessary to keep a project on track and on budget. She is well respected by her colleagues and is known as being a tough negotiator. As one airline executive once told Maureen, "It is hard to resist your reasonableness."

Maureen is passionate about providing excellent customer service to airport passengers. She is committed to seeing that a project is done right the first time and is not afraid of saying no when a project or proposal does not make sense. Maureen is also committed to promoting women in the workforce and encourages the use of gender-neutral language in meetings by contractors, consultants, and staff.

Maureen has been the driving force to ensure the airport redevelopment program leaves a positive lasting impression on passengers and meets Salt Lake City's passenger growth well into the future.

Maureen Riley is leaving a lasting legacy as she steps down from her position with the Salt Lake City Department of Airports. I want to wish Maureen well in her retirement and send my best wishes to her and her family on this momentous occasion.

VA ACCOUNTABILITY AND WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION ACT

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, the Senate recently passed the Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act. This legislation is intended to improve the VA by strengthening the process of holding nonperforming VA employees accountable, but it does this by removing certain due process protections that are currently in place to protect VA employees from unlawful discrimi-

nation or retaliation. Dr. David Shulkin, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, asked for this authority to reform the personnel system, and the Senate obliged his request.

In Hawaii we have a much different and more pressing problem that this legislation does not address, and that is the challenge we face with recruitment and retention of VA leaders and filling vacant positions at the VA.

Nowhere is this challenge more evident than in the VA's yearlong search to recruit a new executive director for the Pacific Island Health Care System in Honolulu. During this time, six executive directors from six different VA healthcare systems on the mainland rotated through Hawaii on an interim basis. The VA said that its search dragged on for so long because it faced a shortage of individuals with the right skills to fill these medical director positions, but that is no excuse. The VA should have been doing more to develop a pool of qualified people to fill vacant medical director positions. Failure to find long-term, stable leadership undermines accountability not only at the highest level, but across the entire healthcare system.

I am also bothered by the decision to rotate medical directors in from other healthcare systems, even on an interim basis. This stopgap measure failed to ensure the proper leadership required to provide long-term direction for the Pacific Island Health Care System and to make sure that there was someone to hold accountable for the delivery of services to the more than 120,000 veterans that the VA is responsible for in the Pacific. Those veterans and their families deserve better.

Leadership recruitment is not the only staffing issue we face. In its September 2016 report on the Pacific Island Health Care System, the VA's Office of the Inspector General specifically noted that recruitment and retention of staff is an ongoing challenge across our neighbor islands, in large part due to cost of living, distance, and physical isolation. At the time of its report, the OIG noted that there were 75 unfilled positions at community-based outpatient clinics across Hawaii. These are vacant positions at clinics that directly affect veterans' access to healthcare.

I worry that removing important due process protections for VA employees will only make this problem worse, because, where there are already issues in physician recruitment and retention, the VA could compete through the promise of a stable job, in an environment free from unlawful discrimination or retaliation. Knowing that those protections are in place is not only helpful to attracting recruits, but it is helpful to promoting a culture free of inequity and intimidation because people know they will be held to account for their actions. That kind of culture is critical to recruitment and retention because the last thing the VA wants is hard-working employees to search for