All of us, Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives, are going to make sure that our markets remain free and competitive. Cheap talking points are not going to cut it; only serious debate will.

I am pleased that recent efforts to rise above the partisan fray and treat this subject with the seriousness it deserves have paid off today.

I expect our colleagues to vote for Makan because of the high-quality lawyer he really is.

I thank my colleagues for joining me in this debate. I congratulate Makan, who is sure to make us all very pleased with the way he can run things and the way he can begin this important work that he knows is important. We know it is important; I particularly know it is important.

Makan has been an honest, decent, wonderful man. He is a good father. He has been a terrific staffer here on Capitol Hill. He has worked with both Democrats and Republicans in good faith. I think almost all of them, if they are honest, will say he was a very, very good person to work with and a wonderful person to fill this position.

It is a blessing that someone like Makan, who comes from a very humble family, could rise to the top in this particular position in antitrust, and I am sure he will do an honest, decent job within the antitrust laws as they are configured and written.

I am proud of him. I think the world of him. I hope everybody will vote for him. But if not, I will commend him, and I know he will do a good job in this particular position.

Mr. President, 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON TARBERT NOMINATION

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I yield back all time on both sides, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Heath P. Tarbert, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury?

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. STRANGE), and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 87, nays 8, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 204 Ex.]

YEAS—87

Alexander	Feinstein	Murphy
Baldwin	Fischer	Murray
Barrasso	Flake	Nelson
Bennet	Franken	Paul
Blumenthal	Gardner	Perdue
Blunt	Graham	Peters
Booker	Grassley	Portman
Boozman	Hassan	Reed
Brown	Hatch	Risch
Burr	Heinrich	Roberts
Cantwell	Heitkamp	Rounds
Capito	Heller	Rubio
Cardin	Hoeven	Sasse
Carper	Inhofe	Schumer
Casey	Isakson	Scott
Cassidy	Johnson	Shaheen
Collins	Kaine	Shelby
Coons	Kennedy	Stabenow
Corker	King	Sullivan
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Tester
Cortez Masto	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Leahy	Tillis
Crapo	Lee	Toomey
Cruz	Manchin	Udall
Daines	McCain	Van Hollen
Duckworth	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	McConnell	Whitehouse
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Wyden

NAYS—8

Gillibrand	Markey	Schatz
Harris	Merkley	Warren
Hirono	Sanders	

NOT VOTING—5

Cochran	Menendez	Young
Donnelly	Strange	

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON DELRAHIM NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Makan Delrahim, of California, to be an Assistant Attorney General?

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, 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 assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. STRANGE), and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 73, nays 21, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 205 Ex.]

YEAS—73

Alexander	Boozman	Carper
Barrasso	Brown	Casey
Bennet	Burr	Cassidy
Blumenthal	Capito	Collins
Blunt	Cardin	Coons
Corker	Hoeven	Portman
Cornyn	Inhofe	Reed
Cotton	Isakson	Risch
Crapo	Johnson	Roberts
Cruz	Kennedy	Rounds
Daines	King	Rubio
Durbin	Klobuchar	Sasse
Enzi	Lankford	Scott
Ernst	Leahy	Shaheen
Feinstein	Lee	Shelby
Fischer	Manchin	Stabenow
Flake	McCain	Sullivan
Franken	McCaskill	Tester
Gardner	McConnell	Thune
Graham	Moran	Tillis
Grassley	Murkowski	Toomey
Hatch	Nelson	Warner
Heitkamp	Paul	Wicker
Heller	Perdue	
Hirono	Peters	

NAYS—21

Baldwin	Hassan	Sanders
Booker	Heinrich	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Cortez Masto	Markey	Udall
Duckworth	Merkley	Warren
Gillibrand	Murphy	Whitehouse
Harris	Murray	Wyden

NOT VOTING—6

Cochran	Menendez	Van Hollen
Donnelly	Strange	Young

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume consideration of the Erickson nomination.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Ralph E. Erickson, of North Dakota, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

TAX REFORM

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, one of the Senate Republicans' most important priorities for the rest of this year is passing comprehensive tax reform. Why? Because comprehensive tax reform is perhaps the single most important thing we can do to get our economy back on the path to long-term health. Comprehensive tax reform done right will boost jobs. It will increase wages. It will provide much needed tax relief for middle-income taxpayers and families. It will help businesses reinvest in their operations, employees, and new products. And most importantly, it will help us achieve strong, consistent economic growth.

Over the past few weeks, leaders from the House, Senate, and White House have been meeting to develop the framework for the tax reform bill we will take up later this year. This morning, they unveiled that framework. The framework supports Republicans' five principles for tax reform: providing tax relief for the middle class; increasing wages, jobs, and economic growth;

keeping good-paying jobs here at home; increasing American competitiveness in the global economy; and simplifying the Tax Code.

The framework released today emphasizes tax relief for the middle class.

First and foremost, we are going to ensure that working families receive a much needed increase in take-home pay. Right now, 50 percent of families are living paycheck to paycheck, while one-third of people across this country say they are just $400 away from a financial crisis. That is not acceptable.

Our tax reform plan will ensure that these families are no longer left behind. Our plan will increase the standard deduction, which will provide tax relief to those families who need it the most. It will also enhance the child tax credit, and I don't need to tell anyone that the important work of raising a family is getting more and more expensive. It is time for hard-working families to get a break with a larger child tax credit. Finally, we will be lowering the rates on middle-class families. By collapsing the seven income tax brackets to three, we will ensure that working families get to keep more of what they earn.

Second, our tax plan will increase wages, jobs, and economic growth by lowering taxes and improving cost recovery for American businesses and job creators. The framework released today lays out a goal of a 20-percent corporate tax rate. Right now, our corporate tax rate is the highest in the developed world. Our competitors pay an average rate of 22.5 percent, while U.S. companies face a 35-percent tax rate. That is a big problem. Our uncompetitive tax rate has driven companies to move their headquarters and jobs overseas and led to wage stagnation and a lack of opportunity for American workers. Lowering the corporate rate will create jobs and increase wages for working families across the country.

An equally important priority laid out in the framework is lower tax rates for small businesses, farms, and ranches. Like bigger businesses, small businesses—from partnerships to S corporations—currently face high tax rates, at times even exceeding those paid by large corporations. Lowering tax rates for these businesses and creating a new maximum passthrough rate will allow a business to reinvest more of its earnings in successful operations. In short, it will help these job creators thrive. The Republican tax plan will also allow for unprecedented expensing. Allowing small businesses to recover their costs more quickly will free up capital and allow them to grow and to create jobs.

The framework released today also shows how we are going to meet our goal of making America more competitive and keeping those good-paying jobs here at home. A key part of keeping good-paying jobs here at home is making the United States an attractive place to do business by reforming our outdated worldwide tax system. Having a worldwide tax system means that American companies pay U.S. taxes on the profit they make here at home as well as on some or all of the profit they make abroad, once they bring that money back to the United States. The problem with this is that American companies are already paying taxes to foreign governments on the money they make abroad. Then, when they bring that money home, they too often end up having to pay taxes again on part of those profits and at the highest tax rate in the industrialized world. It is no surprise that this discourages businesses from bringing their profits back to the United States to invest in their domestic operations, new jobs, and increased wages.

Between 1983 and 2003, when the U.S. tax rate was much more competitive with those of other countries, there were 29 corporate inversions where U.S. companies moved abroad. Between 2003 and 2014, when other countries were dropping their corporate tax rates and shifting to territorial tax systems, there were 47 such inversions.

Our tax plan addresses this drag on our economy by moving from our outdated worldwide tax system to a territorial tax system. By shifting to a territorial tax system here in the United States—a move, I might add, that is supported by Members of both parties—we will eliminate the double taxation that encourages companies to send their investments and their operations overseas. Combine that with a reduction in our high corporate tax rate, and we can provide a strong incentive for U.S. companies to invest their profits at home in American jobs and American workers instead of abroad.

We will also simplify our Tax Code. Each year, Americans spend 2.6 billion hours filling out complicated individual tax forms. Not only is this a drag on our economy, it is an annual frustration and burden for hard-working families. The goal of our tax reform plan is to let American families complete their taxes on something as simple as a postcard.

Lower rates, fewer tax brackets, and a generally simplified code will end the complicated mess that too many families face every tax season.

We will continue to develop the details of this framework in the coming weeks as we work toward a final draft of our comprehensive tax reform bill. I look forward to collaborating with my colleagues in the Senate Finance Committee as we work to put our country on the path toward long-term economic health and the jobs, increased wages, and opportunities that come along with it.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. WYDEN. I will be happy to.

Mr. INHOFE. I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of the remarks from my friend from Oregon, Senator WYDEN, that I be recognized for such time as I shall consume.

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

The Senator from Oregon.

CHRONIC CARE ACT

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, often late at night when the Senate passes a piece of legislation by unanimous consent, people often don't get a chance to understand what it really means, and usually there is a sense of, well, this maybe won't be the most important thing coming down the road, and everybody just said OK, and so it passed the Senate.

Last night, the Senate took action on Medicare. At a time when 10,000 people will turn 65 every day for years and years to come, Medicare is something millions of older people rely on, and their kids and grandkids make plans to make sure their grandparents are taken care of, but also they want to know what their future is going to be all about.

What the Senate did last night—Democrats and Republicans coming together—is, in my view, transformational for seniors today and the beginning of an effort that is going to evolve in the days ahead for kids and their parents and their grandparents to, in effect, benefit from an updated Medicare guarantee that will stand the test of time for many years to come. The reason I say ''updated Medicare guarantee'' is that Medicare is not a voucher. It is not a piece of paper. It is not something you get and then, well, maybe it will do you some good, but if your healthcare costs go above your vouchers, you are going to get buried in costs. Medicare is a guarantee that vital services are going to be available to those over 65.

Last night, all Senators voted to send to the House of Representatives a bipartisan effort that was years in the making to update the Medicare guarantee to start focusing on chronic illnesses, such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and Alzheimer's.

Mr. President, I am going to make this a little bit personal. I am so grateful to Chairman HATCH, Senator ISAKSON, Senator WARNER—the bipartisan group in the Senate that has been working on this.

What I can tell the Senate tonight is that back when I was director of the Gray Panthers and ran the legal aid services for older people, Medicare was a very different program. Back in the 1970s when we were getting the Gray Panthers off the ground, it was a very different program than it is in 2017. Medicare really consisted of two parts. There was Part A. If a senior broke their ankle or needed surgery for a broken hip, they went to the hospital, and Medicare Part A would be there to cover a senior's surgery. If a senior had an awful bout of the flu, he or she visited the doctor and they used Part B. That is not Medicare in 2017. Medicare in 2017 is not primarily about treating the flu or a broken ankle. It is there for those conditions, and we are very glad that it is, but more than 90 percent of the Medicare dollars go to treat