

local deduction. It will cause pain for millions of Americans across the country, not just in the West—in places like California and Oregon—and the Northeast but for those in scarlet red areas who voted for the President on election day—places like North Carolina, Georgia, Wisconsin, and Texas. Then there is the plan to double the standard deduction while simultaneously getting rid of personal and dependent exemptions.

When you cut out all of the tax lingo—as I have said, one hand giveth and the other hand taketh away—what it means, based on the information that is out now, is that a family of six in Medford, OR, could see its taxes increase by thousands of dollars per year. That is a holiday surprise. My guess is that people are going to say that it is the nightmare before Christmas if this plan becomes law.

Even more middle-class Americans who checked on the news over the last few days probably had the wind knocked out of them when they read that their 401(k)s may be on the ropes under the Republican plan. A few days ago, the President said: No, do not touch the 401(k). But it seems to me like Republicans just cannot help themselves. When the President was asked about it again, the new Trump position was that middle-class retirements are a bargaining chip to get this lopsided tax handout through the Congress.

Let me repeat that last part. The President of the United States said that middle-class retirements are a bargaining chip in this crusade to cut taxes for the most fortunate. Nothing illustrates more clearly how this process has gone horribly wrong, and I want to make clear to the American people to watch the details. Watch the details because every time a new detail leaks out, the middle class loses.

So my bottom line, colleagues, is real tax reform ought to be about putting more dollars back in middle-class pockets, but right now the majority is taking a different tack. It amounts to a hunt for ways to force the middle class to pay for the tax breaks for those at the top.

This scheme will explode the deficit. It is a con job on the middle class. It is failed economic policy, but it could rocket in the Congress in the weeks ahead before the American people catch on.

So my counsel is, everybody ought to strap in and get ready for what is coming. Every step of the way in the Finance Committee and here on the floor, I will continue working with my Democratic colleagues to fight for middle-class priorities and tax reform, and I hope we will have some from the other side of the aisle join us. We intend to keep sounding the alarm on a Republican plan that as of now gives trillions of dollars of handouts to those at the top while hiking taxes on millions of middle-class families.

Now that the House has passed its budget, this is kicking off the debate,

and the idea that we would have a bunch of fake promises to the middle class, very specific gifts to folks at the top, and somehow unicorn theories of growth that will justify this, while really creating deficits that hurt Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and our safety net—those are the issues the American people deserve to know more about. We are going to tell them a lot more about the details in the days ahead because we believe in tax reform that puts the middle-class first, doesn't give gifts to the people in the very top 1 percent, doesn't clobber Medicare, Social Security, and Medicaid, and, as Bill Bradley said earlier this week in a conversation with me, is based on the kind of bipartisanship that a hugely important issue like tax reform warrants.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, that at 5:30 p.m., Monday, October 30, all postclosure time on the McFadden nomination be considered expired and the Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; further, that it be in order to proceed to the following nominations during today's session of the Senate: Calendar Nos. 368, 369, 432, and 433.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 368, Amy Barrett.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Amy Coney Barrett, of Indiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented

under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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 Amy Coney Barrett, of Indiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Orrin G. Hatch, John Cornyn, Chuck Grassley, Thom Tillis, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Johnny Isakson, Roger F. Wicker, John Thune, Marco Rubio, James Lankford, Richard Burr, Steve Daines, Todd Young, Ben Sasse, Mike Crapo.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 369, Joan Larsen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Joan Louise Larsen, of Michigan, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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 Joan Louise Larsen, of Michigan, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Steve Daines, Tom Cotton, Pat Roberts, John Boozman, Mike Rounds, Patrick J. Toomey, John Barrasso, Cory Gardner, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, James E. Risch, John Cornyn, Lamar Alexander, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 432, Allison Eid.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Allison H. Eid, of Colorado, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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 Allison H. Eid, of Colorado, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Steve Daines, Tom Cotton, Pat Roberts, John Boozman, Mike Rounds, Patrick J. Toomey, John Barrasso, Cory Gardner, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, James E. Risch, John Cornyn, Lamar Alexander, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 433, Stephanos Bibas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Stephanos Bibas, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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 Stephanos Bibas, of Pennsylvania, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Steve Daines, Tom Cotton, Pat Roberts, John Boozman, Mike Rounds, Patrick J. Toomey, John Barrasso, Cory Gardner, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, James E. Risch, John Cornyn, Lamar Alexander, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the pending cloture motions ripen following the disposition of the McFadden nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, in my opening remarks today, I commended President Trump once again for the outstanding judicial nominations he has made, and I reiterated the Senate's determination once more to continue confirming them regardless of the often mindless partisan obstruction we have been seeing across the aisle.

This pointless obstruction is designed simply to waste time, not to change an outcome, and it will not. It didn't stop the Senate from confirming Scott Palk, it will not stop the Senate from confirming Trevor McFadden, and it will not stop the Senate from confirming even more outstanding nominees next week. You can count on it.

I have filed cloture on four more well-qualified nominees for our Nation's circuit courts: Notre Dame law professor Amy Barrett, a nominee for the Seventh Circuit; Michigan Supreme Court Justice Joan Larsen, a nominee for the Sixth Circuit; Colorado Supreme Court Justice Allison Eid, a nominee for the Tenth Circuit; and University of Pennsylvania law professor Stephanos Bibas, a nominee for the Third Circuit.

By confirming these nominees, we can take a big step toward restoring our Nation's courts to their proper role, interpreting and applying the law based upon what it actually says, not what a judge might wish it to say. It is quite a departure from the last administration's philosophy when it came to selecting judicial nominees.

For the last 8 years, we had a President who said a criterion for lifetime positions was the ability to empathize with certain groups over others. It came to be known as the "empathy standard." That is a great standard if you are the party in the case for whom the judge has empathy, not so great if you are the other person. It also is not in keeping with the longstanding American legal traditions of applying the law equally to all, giving every litigant a fair shake, and ruling based on the actual meaning of our Constitution

and laws, not what a judge or some preferred political constituency might wish they meant. That, I believe, is the view of the American people.

President Trump has done a terrific job of nominating judges who are already helping to restore the courts to their intended function in our system of government. The nominees we will consider next week are sure to do the same.

We will continue our efforts with consideration of the Barrett nomination on Monday. Amy Barrett is a professor of law at one of our Nation's premier law schools. Notre Dame happens to be a Catholic University. Amy Barrett happens to be a nominee who is a Catholic and who speaks freely and openly about her faith and its importance to her. For some on the left, that seems to be a disqualifying factor for her nomination.

I would remind colleagues that we do not have religious tests for office in this country. There is no religious test for office in the United States of America.

Amy Barrett's nomination has received outstanding reviews. She is clearly well qualified for the office to which she has been nominated. As the president of Notre Dame recently wrote, "Her experience as a clerk for Judge Laurence Silberman of the U.S. Court of Appeals and Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia is of the highest order. So, too, is her scholarship in the areas of federal courts, constitutional law, and statutory interpretation."

Amy Barrett is going to make an outstanding Federal Circuit Court judge. So, too, will Ms. Larsen, Ms. Eid, and Mr. Bibas. I look forward to the Senate confirming all of them next week.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

Mr. McCONNELL. I yield the floor

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I rise to address the latest mass shooting in our country. This one took place last week in my own State of Maryland, in the city of Edgewood, in Harford County, which is northeast of Baltimore.

In this case, the suspect gathered co-workers at his place of business, Advanced Granite Solutions, and began shooting. He killed three coworkers