

NOMINATIONS DISCHARGED

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Environment and Public Works Committee be discharged from consideration of and the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: PN1035, PN1036, PN1037, PN1038, and PN1172.

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

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Kenneth E. Allen, of Kentucky, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for a term expiring May 18, 2021; A.D. Frazier, of Georgia, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for a term expiring May 18, 2022; Jeffrey Smith, of Tennessee, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for a term expiring May 18, 2022; James R. Thompson III, of Alabama, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for a term expiring May 18, 2021; and Christopher Caldwell, of Arkansas, to be Federal Cochairperson, Delta Regional Authority.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order, and that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Allen, Frazier, Smith, Thompson, and Caldwell nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 502, 554, 556, 559, and PN1196.

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

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Katherine Brunett McGuire, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor; Kate S. O'Scannlain, of Maryland, to be Solicitor for the Department of Labor; Preston Rutledge, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor; Johnny Collett, of Kentucky, to be Assistant Secretary for Special Edu-

cation and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education; and Douglas Webster, of Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of Education.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the McGuire, O'Scannlain, Rutledge, Collett, and Webster nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: PN1109.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jon J. Rychalski, of Montana, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of Veterans Affairs.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

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

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

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. 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.

TRIBUTE TO HEATHER GOOZE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge

an extraordinary woman from my home State of Illinois.

Heather Gooze lives in Nevada now, but she grew up in the Chicago area. She is a survivor of the worst mass shooting in modern American history. On October 1, she was working as a bartender at the Route 91 Harvest Festival in Las Vegas. She was there when a gunman with his own private arsenal rained down gunfire from a high-rise hotel, murdering 58 innocent people and injuring more than 500 others.

Ms. Gooze testified at a recent Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on "bump stocks," the \$200 accessory that the Las Vegas gunman used to make his assault rifles fire almost as fast as a machine gun.

When she heard the first round of shots, Heather thought it might have been fireworks, but suddenly people were running in every direction. Some were shot; many were covered in blood.

Heather directed wounded and frightened people to an exit. With about 20 other people, she then pushed down a fence to make it easier for people to escape the gunfire.

She could have run to safety herself. Instead, she went back to the bar to try to help people who had been shot and lay wounded on the ground.

One young man had been shot in the head. Heather held a jean jacket to his wound to try to staunch the bleeding. When she dropped the jacket, she used her fingers to try to plug the hole in the young man's head. He died the next day.

She then saw three men trying to move another badly injured man using a metal ladder as a stretcher. Heather reached out to grab a corner of the ladder and help lift it. The young man on the ladder grabbed her hand, squeezed it lightly, and then let go—dead.

Heather looked around, saw other dead bodies lying alone, and decided that she would not leave that young man alone like that.

She stayed with his body for hours, until 3:30 in the morning.

When his cell phone rang, she answered. She told the young man's mother that her only child had died. The young man's girlfriend had escaped the killing field to the safety of a nearby hotel. Heather told her that young woman that the love of her life was gone, but Heather would stay with him and learn for the family where his body would be taken.

At the recent hearing, Heather said that horrific night in Las Vegas made her part of a growing, grieving "family" she had hoped never to join: the American family of survivors and victims of mass shootings.

She said that she has asked herself many times in the days after the shooting why she stayed and risked her life for young men she didn't know and for their grieving families. She said the only answer she could come up with was that she hoped that someone would do the same for her and not leave her alone in the midst of a massacre.

I think that is the same plea that many Americans have for this Congress. They understand that gun safety is a politically heated issue. They understand that there are constitutional and legal questions that are difficult to balance.

They want us to have the courage to take up that debate rationally, responsibly and respectfully.

On an average day, 93 Americans are killed with guns—93 people a day, every day. Over 30,000 Americans a year die from guns. Many more live in daily fear that they could be next.

I hope that we can agree to be more like Heather Gooze, to not abandon our fellow Americans to face that danger and fear of gun violence alone. Supporting Senator FEINSTEIN's bill to ban the sale of "bump stocks" would be a good place to start.

TRIBUTE TO ANGELA McQUEEN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the remarkable courage of a woman from my home State of Illinois.

Her name is Angela McQueen—"Angie" to her friends and family.

Ms. McQueen teaches math and physical education at Mattoon High School in central Illinois.

In late September, she was in the high school cafeteria when she saw a student pull a semiautomatic handgun from his backpack and start spraying the cafeteria with gunfire.

Ms. McQueen and other teachers at the high school had recently been trained on what to do when faced with the threat of gun violence at school.

It is sad and distressing to think that teachers need such training today, but that is, sadly, the reality. Thank goodness Angie McQueen had that training.

The instant she saw the gun, she lunged and pushed the young man's hand towards the ceiling so he couldn't shoot others.

She said she had only one thought in her head as she acted, as she put it, "You're not going to do this to my kids."

Hundreds of students were in the cafeteria at the time. One student was shot and hospitalized briefly, and another student suffered minor injuries when he was apparently grazed by gunfire.

School and law enforcement officials say that Ms. McQueen's selfless actions likely saved students' lives.

One student who witnessed the incident told a reporter for a local newspaper, "Ms. McQueen is like Chuck Norris, basically. She's a hero."

Angela McQueen is the daughter of two retired teachers. In her biography on the school's website, she was asked to describe why she became a teacher. The first reason she gave: "I wanted to make the world a better place."

She has certainly done that.

Ms. McQueen is modest. She doesn't like being in the spotlight, but she recently allowed the city and families of

Mattoon to thank her publicly at a reception at the school.

Mattoon School superintendent Larry Lilly undoubtedly spoke for many when he said, "We are forever grateful to Angela for her courageous actions that saved the lives of our kids. She was a ray of light in our darkest hour."

"You're not going to do this to my kids." That was what Angela McQueen vowed before she risked her life to disarm a young man with a semiautomatic handgun.

I hope that all Members of Congress will take those words to heart as we debate gun safety and what we can do as a society to protect our children and all Americans from gun violence.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, we are a Nation of immigrants. That should be an obvious point, but it bears repeating at a time when our President sees political advantage in trafficking in xenophobic scapegoating. Unless you are Native American, you come from a line of people who come from somewhere else. Indeed, that simple fact is an integral part of the American story.

We are also a nation that believes that anything is possible. Our ancestors and relatives journeyed here because, in America, where you come from does not determine what you can accomplish. In this great country, as long as you work hard and play by the rules, you can achieve your dreams. That itself is the American Dream.

No single group of people embodies these ideals more than our Nation's Dreamers. Dreamers grew up in this country; they were brought here as children. They seek only the opportunity to contribute to our Nation and to be legally recognized as the Americans that they are. Dreamers are our neighbors, our teachers, and our first responders.

Nearly a thousand Dreamers serve in our Armed Forces, risking their lives to defend the only country they have ever known as home. We cannot in good faith claim to care about the American Dream if we neglect to protect the very people who are living it.

Take, for example, Dr. Juan Conde, a DACA recipient and a resident of Vermont. Dr. Conde was born in Mexico and brought to the United States as a child by his mother. In 2007, his mother was tragically taken by cancer. Showing remarkable courage and determination for a young man, this tragedy inspired Dr. Conde to find a way to help cancer patients like his mother; yet he was unable to become an oncologist due to his immigration status. So instead, he decided to obtain a Ph.D. in cancer research from the University of Texas.

Dr. Conde wanted to treat cancer patients, not just study the disease. After receiving DACA status in 2012, he was empowered to pursue his medical degree. He is currently a medical student at University of Vermont's Lanier College of Medicine.

Dr. Conde hopes to spend his life in the United States treating cancer pa-

tients and helping to find a cure for the disease. My hope is that we can make that happen, not just for Dr. Conde but for every other Dreamer. There are almost 800,000 Dreamers like Dr. Conde, all of whom have just as much potential to make our communities and our country truly great. To deny them these opportunities because they were brought here as children is as senseless as it is cruel.

Yet that is the decision the president made. He could have worked with Congress to find a permanent solution for Dreamers while leaving DACA protections in place. Instead, he cast them aside. His administration has made absurd, nonfactual, and offensive arguments in support of that decision ever since. When Attorney General Sessions announced that DACA was being terminated, he argued that the program was an example of the Obama administration's repeated failure to enforce our immigration laws. He argued that such failure caused crime, violence, and even terrorism. During Senate Judiciary Committee hearings, I pressed both the Attorney General and his Department on this point, to name just one Dreamer who was involved in terrorist activity. Of course, they could not, but apparently, fear-mongering is more effective than acknowledging simple truths.

By definition, Dreamers are law-abiding. They seek nothing more than to contribute to our country. If the President refuses to stand with Dreamers, then Congress must. We have done it before in the Senate. Four years ago, 68 Senators, Democrats and Republicans, voted for comprehensive immigration reform legislation that I managed on the Senate floor. That legislation included key protections for Dreamers, including an expedited pathway to citizenship. It is time for the Senate to act again now and for the House to follow suit. The future of Dreamers and the fate of the American Dream itself lies in our hands.

PERU

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to speak briefly about the unfolding political crisis, which is also a crisis for justice, in Peru.

Peru transitioned to democracy in 2000, after two decades of internal armed conflict and authoritarian rule. The country has made important strides in rebuilding its democratic institutions, consolidating the rule of law, and combating impunity, but today, efforts by a majority in the Peruvian Congress to arbitrarily remove judges from the country's highest court, the Constitutional Tribunal, and to oust the attorney general for courageously doing his job, threaten to undermine those gains and reverse Peru's democratic progress.

As a former prosecutor and the senior Democrat on the Senate Judiciary Committee, I am especially concerned about the attempt by the majority in