

Kelly Slaughter, of Maryland, to be a Federal Trade Commissioner for the term of seven years from September 26, 2015 en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 757.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Andrea L. Thompson, of South Dakota, to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. McCONNELL. 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 Thompson nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume 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.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, many of us were shocked when the President tweeted that he was deploying the National Guard to the border.

The President's claim that we face a crisis at our Southwest border is simply false, and it is particularly ironic when the President himself has repeatedly bragged—again, falsely—that illegal border crossings are at an alltime low.

I remain concerned that the Trump administration is diverting Defense Department resources to the border to help carry out its deportation agenda. The Department is unable to tell Congress how much these deployments may cost our Nation—paid for with money diverted from other, critical de-

fense programs. So far, the Department of Defense has provided a preliminary estimate that these deployments will cost \$182 million in fiscal year 2018, but there is no end in sight.

I am also concerned that these deployments may harm the readiness of our National Guard by disrupting training for core missions. As one local elected official in New Mexico noted in the Albuquerque Journal, "We're going into forest fire season. A big percentage of the state is in drought right now, and if National Guard folks are continuously rotated down to the border for a problem that doesn't exist, are they going to be available for a real problem when it happens?"

Well, yesterday, Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson issued a surprising report, which inadvertently agreed with these concerns.

Last year, Congress required the Department of Defense to examine past deployments of National Guard troops to the border and to analyze those experiences for whether they had been beneficial for those Guard members. As Vice Chair of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, I received the Department's report yesterday.

It is fair to say that its conclusions are probably not what the President wanted to hear from his own political appointees.

The report notes that several States have conducted training and operations along the Southwest border. It concludes that training and operations by California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas Guard units "does not directly contribute to collective core Mission Essential Task readiness" of those units. In other words, we are diverting them from their most important missions.

It was even harsher in its conclusions for National Guard units from other States traveling to the border for similar training. It describes a pilot program to send 250 National Guard personnel to the border. Not only did the pilot program cost a half a million more than that unit's regular, scheduled training, but it also resulted in only 22 more apprehensions than normal, while contributing almost nothing to the unit's training.

The report also notes that these kinds of deployments "comes at a cost to the individual soldier, his/her family, and her/his employer, as well as to overall united readiness."

Is that what we want? To impose costs on our volunteer Guard personnel, their families, their employers supporting their service?

The report goes on to say, "Such tasking could also potentially impact support to validated Global Force Management Allocation Plan requirements." That is a mouthful, but it means that these deployments could make our National Guard less prepared to respond to a natural disaster back home or, God forbid, a war.

Is that what we want? No. There's an old adage that goes, when you find

yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is to stop digging.

We all know that the President wants to build a wall on the border, but he has failed to convince Congress that spending \$25 billion on a campaign promise is the right thing to do. Instead, he is sending the outstanding women and men of the National Guard to the border, as if to compensate for his inability to work with Congress.

I have met a great number of members of the National Guard, and I know they will carry out their assigned duties as well as they can. Many will view their deployments as a chance to serve the country they love, but we owe it to them to send them on a mission that is worth it, and the Pentagon's own study raises serious questions about that.

I hope that we end National Guard deployments to staff the crisis that the President invented and get them back to their core job: protecting their States and protecting this country.

FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ABDUCTION OF THE CHIBOK GIRLS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I would like to recognize a tragic anniversary upon us this month. Four years ago this month, the terrorist group Boko Haram kidnapped 276 girls in the dead of the night from a school in Chibok, Nigeria, where they were taking final exams.

Some of the girls managed to run away, but Boko Haram abducted 219 girls.

These hundreds of young girls were held captive, abused, made to be slaves, forced into marriage with their abductors, raped, starved, and, in some cases, forcibly converted to Islam.

Some have tragically died while trying to flee or even during childbirth.

You might recall the global campaign on Twitter, #BringBackOurGirls, to urge the rescue of the girls.

Former First Lady Michelle Obama was moved to join the campaign for the release of the girls, as were over 3 million people around the world.

I, myself, was mortified to learn that, for the mere act of seeking an education, the girls were abducted and forced into child marriage or slavery. That is why, back then in 2014, I introduced a resolution condemning the Chibok abduction and calling for the immediate, safe return of the girls.

Since the kidnapping, just over 100 girls have been released, leaving over 100 girls still missing. I fear some may have already perished.

Parents marked the fourth anniversary on Saturday by marching with thousands of others to the school in Chibok where the girls were abducted in 2014.

I think we should join them here in the Senate in remembering this tragic anniversary.

That is why I have introduced, with some of my female colleagues, a resolution calling for the immediate release of all Boko Haram captives, especially the remaining Chibok girls.

The girls who have returned have told of the deplorable abuses Boko Haram fighters made them suffer.

No one should be subject to the depravity of an organization that doesn't value human life, let alone young girls simply trying to get an education.

Unfortunately, since 2012, Boko Haram has conducted a violent campaign of mass kidnappings of women, girls, and boys in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger.

Boko Haram remains one of the deadliest terrorist groups in the world, killing more than 13,000 people since 2013. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees says almost 2.5 million people in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger have been displaced—that is forced from their homes—because of Boko Haram's brutality.

And the terror continues.

Just in February, Boko Haram militants stormed the town of Dapchi in Nigeria and abducted 111 girls and 1 boy.

Thankfully, most of those children have been returned to their families, but, heartbreakingly, some died during their ordeal, and one girl still remains a hostage.

The New York Times recently ran a stirring front page piece about some of the Chibok girls who have been freed. I applaud the extraordinary bravery of those survivors, who have come forward to share their stories and experiences at great risk to themselves.

The courage and strength of the girls who are still being held captive to remain resilient in the face of unspeakable brutality is deeply moving.

As a testament to their fortitude, let us all recommit ourselves to ending discrimination and violence against women and girls, to ensuring the safety and welfare of women and girls, to pursuing policies that guarantee girls education, and to the release of the remaining Boko Haram captives.

Thank you.

REMEMBERING DAN AKAKA

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I would like to take a moment to recognize the life and achievements of Dan Akaka, a veteran, educator, U.S. Senator, and most importantly, a dear friend of mine. Dan passed away recently after 93 years of life imbued with the aloha spirit, and I have been reflecting on his legacy of quiet but effective work in the Senate.

Dan Akaka was a tireless advocate for indigenous people. As I was working on the 2013 reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, his cooperation and persistence as chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee helped include important provisions to protect Native-American women from violence. He also worked hard to support vital programs that provided education, healthcare, housing, and other basic services for Tribes across the country.

A World War II veteran himself, Dan was a strong supporter of the National

Guard. He was one the first cosponsors to support my National Guard Empowerment Act and give the Guard the representation that it deserved. He will also be remembered for fighting to have the valor and sacrifice of Asian-American soldiers in World War II recognized, sponsoring legislation that awarded long overdue Medals of Honor to those who had been discriminated against because of their race.

Hawaiians were lucky to have him as a champion in the Senate, and I was lucky to have him as a friend.

I ask unanimous consent that the New York Times article "Daniel Akaka, Former Democratic Senator From Hawaii, Dies At 93" be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Apr. 6, 2018]

DANIEL AKAKA, FORMER DEMOCRATIC SENATOR FROM HAWAII, DIES AT 93

(By Adam Clymer)

Former Senator Daniel K. Akaka, a Democrat who represented Hawaii for 36 years in Congress and successfully fought for the belated recognition of Asians and Asian-Americans who had fought for the United States in World War II, died on Friday in Honolulu. He was 93.

Jon Yoshimura, the senator's former communications director, confirmed the death, saying Mr. Akaka had been hospitalized for several months. The Associated Press reported.

A World War II veteran, Mr. Akaka sponsored legislation in 1996 that led to a re-evaluation of the service records of Asian-Americans who had fought in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion during the war.

As a result, almost two dozen Medals of Honor, the military's highest award, were ultimately bestowed belatedly, some posthumously, on Asian-American veterans, most of them of Japanese heritage. Only one had been awarded during the war itself.

After a White House awards-presentation ceremony led by President Bill Clinton in 2000, Senator Akaka said the medals had dispelled apparent wartime discrimination against Asian-American military personnel.

The most prominent recipient was Senator Daniel K. Inouye, Mr. Akaka's much better-known colleague—and Hawaii's senior senator—for 22 years in the Senate. Mr. Inouye, who died in 2012, had lost his right arm while serving with the 442nd in Europe.

Senator Akaka also successfully pursued legislation that provided onetime compensation for members of the Philippine Scouts, an American-led unit of mostly Filipino and Filipino-American recruits who fought alongside United States troops but did not qualify for Veterans Administration benefits.

And he secured a formal apology for the United States's role in the overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani of Hawaii in 1893 as well as a transfer of land that the federal government had taken.

But he failed in repeated legislative efforts to have native Hawaiians recognized as an indigenous people so that they might receive federal benefits similar to those provided to American Indians and natives of Alaska.

During his Senate years Mr. Akaka had stints as chairman of its Committee on Veterans Affairs and of its Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. Akaka was an outspoken critic of the war in Iraq. On March 17, 2003, three days be-

fore the United States attacked that country, he warned the Senate:

"If we pursue our current path, we will have a war lacking in many things essential to achieving complete success. It will be a war without broad international support, without sufficient planning for post-conflict reconstruction and stability, without a definite exit time and strategy, and without a firm price tag.

"Moreover," he continued, "it will be a war with serious ramifications for our long-term readiness capabilities for homeland security and for managing other crises."

A steadfast liberal on most issues, he was known as a champion of federal workers, complaining that his Senate colleagues too often denigrated them and cheerfully froze their pay.

He chaired a Senate subcommittee on the federal work force and was the chief sponsor of the 2012 Whistleblower Protection Act, which provided safeguards against retaliation to federal workers who report waste, fraud and abuse.

Daniel Kahikina Akaka was born in Honolulu on Sept. 11, 1924, the youngest of eight children. His father was of Chinese and Hawaiian descent; his mother was Hawaiian. He attended public schools.

After service with the Army Corps of Engineers, he graduated from the University of Hawaii in 1952 with a degree in education and taught music, social studies and math in elementary, middle and high schools. He later became a school principal and earned a master's degree.

After Hawaii was admitted into the union in 1959, he was an official in the state's Department of Education and was named director of the Hawaii Office of Economic Opportunity, an antipoverty program.

Mr. Akaka was first elected to the House in 1976 and easily re-elected afterward. In 1990 he was appointed to fill a Senate vacancy caused by the death of Spark Matsunaga. He was elected that fall and re-elected in 1994, 2000 and 2006. He announced in March 2011 that he would not run again in 2012.

Mr. Akaka, who lived in Honolulu, is survived by his wife, Mary Mildred Chong, whom he married in 1948; a daughter, Millannie Akaka Mattson; four sons, Daniel Jr., Gerard, Alan and Nicholas; and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

While he was never known as a key lawmaker, Mr. Akaka was familiar to watchers of C-Span: his name came first whenever the Senate roll was called and, in his early years, he relished presiding over that body, a duty many of his colleagues regarded as tedious.

In 1992, the Senate presented him with its Golden Gavel Award for presiding for at least 100 hours.

"I really was proud of being able to chair the Senate floor over the years and really looked forward to it," he said in a 2011 interview for this obituary.

Even in his final years, he left instructions with the Democratic cloakroom that he would preside in a pinch, saying, "Any time you can't find somebody, call me."

REMEMBERING HESTER GOODENOUGH CALDWELL

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I want to take a moment to remember a Vermonter who, with seemingly boundless energy and enthusiasm, devoted her life to her family, her students, her friends, and her community. Hester "Hep" Caldwell, who died on April 10, 2018, will be forever remembered and admired for a life well lived.