

Bair and former Vice Chairman Thomas Hoenig—both Republican appointees—recently wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* that gutting capital rules “would weaken system resiliency.” Current FDIC Chair Martin Gruenberg—a Democrat—said that strong capital requirements were “among the most important post-crisis reforms” and has opposed joint efforts by the Fed and the Treasury to undermine them.

Ms. McWilliams would drop that opposition. In fact, she is not even sure there was anything wrong with the capitalist standards before the crisis. That is not the only rule she would roll back. Donald Trump’s Wall Street mercenaries have taken aim at a lot of critical post-crisis rules, and everything we know about Ms. McWilliams suggests she will support those efforts. Here is what is on the agenda.

First, there is the Volcker rule, which prohibits bank deposits from gambling with Grandma’s checking money. Banks are looking to scrap this rule, even though they are raking in literally record profits, but the FDIC has to agree before there are any changes. As soon as Ms. McWilliams is confirmed, bingo. Sorry, Grandma.

Next is guidance that prevents banks from offering abusive, short-term loans similar to payday loan products. The OCC has told the banks it regulates to have at it. With Ms. McWilliams in charge, it is only a matter of time before the FDIC banks get in the game.

Third, there is also the Community Reinvestment Act, the CRA, which is designed to make sure a bank serves all credit-worthy customers in its community, regardless of the color of their skin. Lending discrimination is rampant in America, even though 98 percent of banks pass their CRA exams, but banks and the Trump appointees they send to Washington want to make the test for passing even easier. Under Ms. McWilliams, the FDIC evidently will not stand in the way.

I could go on and on, but here is the thing. It is not just that I disagree with Ms. McWilliams or think her actions will make consumers and our economy less safe; it is that Senate Republicans are stacking the deck to allow Ms. McWilliams to make these decisions without any discussion.

The five-member FDIC Board is supposed to be split between Republicans and Democrats, but the Senate is moving to confirm Ms. McWilliams before the White House has even nominated a Democratic Vice Chair for the agency. If Ms. McWilliams moves forward, the FDIC will be under complete Republican control for an indefinite amount of time. Democrats should oppose the McWilliams nomination on this basis alone.

Ms. McWilliams is the latest Trump appointee who thinks the biggest problem with our financial rules is that the government is just too darn hard on the banks. Most Americans don’t feel that way. They want tougher rules on

Wall Street, not weaker ones. We should listen to them because they are the ones who pay the price when things go wrong on Wall Street.

I urge my colleagues to vote no.

I yield the floor.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise today in support of Jelena McWilliams to be the Chair of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

A native of the former Yugoslavia, Jelena earned her bachelor’s degree and J.D. from the University of California at Berkeley. From tough experiences that her family shared in Europe, Jelena understands the value hard work provides in a free market environment like ours.

The FDIC plays an important role in ensuring consumer confidence in our Nation’s banks. In addition to their work as the prudential regulator for State-chartered banks, the FDIC is also a key part of many interagency efforts to appropriately regulate financial institutions.

Due to her vast experience, Jelena is beyond qualified for this esteemed position. To put it clearly, she has worked in all fields that interact with her new role. She is certainly no stranger to the Senate. During my time as chairman, Jelena served as chief counsel and deputy staff director of the Senate Banking Committee. Additionally, she was assistant chief counsel on the Senate Small Business Committee and has experience working for the Federal Reserve. Jelena also has private sector experience as an attorney in private practice. She also served as executive vice president, chief legal officer, and corporate secretary for Fifth Third Bank.

Opposition to her nomination is unfathomable. Ms. McWilliams was reported out of the Banking Committee by a voice vote in February. She understands all sides of the areas she will regulate with the highest level of sophistication. However, that has not prevented Members of this body from being unreasonable. Opposition has appeared due to the nature of the Senate today, not due to any question regarding Jelena’s qualification for the job.

Passage of her nomination builds on positive momentum this week. With the passage of S. 2155, Congress has advanced appropriate scaling back of over-burdensome financial regulations. By confirming Jelena, the Senate has the opportunity to continue providing Main Street with commonsense regulatory relief. I am certain that Jelena is up for the challenge and confident that she will do an excellent job in this esteemed position.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this weekend, we honor those who have fought on the frontlines in battle and made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of the United States of America. These men and women represent America at its best—a nation that is restless and

unwavering in combating tyranny, that facilitates peace, and defends human rights and individual liberty across the globe; a nation that is unafraid to call evil by its name and then works to eradicate it through force, if necessary, even at great cost to itself and its own people.

Today, in advance of the holiday weekend, I say thank you to the 200,000 military men and women who are stationed in my State, the State of Texas, and to the 1.7 million veterans who call Texas home.

Thank you for having served over the course of so many years in the face of so many dangers and at such great individual sacrifice.

Of course, many of their predecessors gave their lives defending this country on the bloody fields of Gettysburg, in the trenches of the Western Front, during the storming of the beaches at Normandy, and during the Shock and Awe in Baghdad. These are just some examples, each of them unique but none of which we should ever forget.

We must also thank the military families of those warriors. I pray they find peace on Monday, when many of them will place flowers on military grave sites and speak privately to their loved ones who have passed on.

In just a few days, I will have the chance to speak to young Texans who thought hard about their futures and the future of our country and decided they want to attend our U.S. military academies. These talented high school students are the cream of the crop. They have been accepted to our Nation’s five prestigious military service academies, and they will be gathering together, on Monday, in San Antonio.

Even though I am not the one who has nominated all of them, we invite everyone who has been nominated—and their families—to come to this academy sendoff. This sendoff is something I look forward to each year because it is an inspiration to me. At a time when people talk about the next generation and America’s future, they reassure me that our country still produces talented, patriotic young men and women who want to serve their country and want to preserve our freedom. Meeting these young people who are making such bold and selfless decisions speaks well of the character of our Nation’s next generation.

Then I will be heading down to Georgetown, TX, which is just outside of Austin, to a community called Sun City, which has a large veteran population. There, I will join in celebrating Memorial Day in a place where patriotism is not a dirty word. In Sun City, it is not an act either. Loving one’s country and honoring fallen soldiers is simply a given, and I know there will be a lot of American flags on full display.

In the few days leading up to Memorial Day, we should also reflect on our duty as Members of Congress and as a nation to support our military servicemembers and their families and ask whether we are living up to our end of the bargain in Washington, DC.

Just yesterday, we took a very important step in that regard by passing the VA MISSION Act, which includes some of the most substantial reforms to the veterans' healthcare system that have been made in years.

It lowers the barriers to care for veterans and gives them more treatment options. It also simplifies the bureaucratic system of community care programs and streamlines them from seven to one. It expands the family caregivers program, which I became convinced was important after having visited wounded warriors at Walter Reed. Frequently, because of the catastrophic injuries they have suffered, a spouse has had to quit his or her job and basically tend to the needs of that wounded warrior, just as a practical matter, and provide assistance in addition to the medical care that has been received. Expanding the family caregivers program is, I think, a step in the right direction.

In this bill, we also address opioid prescription guidelines for outside providers and encourage the hiring and retention of more Veterans Health Administration healthcare professionals.

So there is a lot to talk about when we go home for Memorial Day, and I look forward to talking to our Active-Duty military and our veterans and to demonstrating that we are doing more than just talking about it; we are actually doing something that will make a difference in their lives.

Upon our return, I am also looking forward to continuing our hard work on the National Defense Authorization Act, which is something the Presiding Officer is intimately involved in, which was marked up yesterday in the Armed Services Committee.

For 57 straight years, a Defense authorization bill has been signed into law by Presidents of both parties and through the hard work of congressional majorities that have been led by both parties. This year's legislation will help ensure our military has what it needs to achieve the most difficult missions they have ever faced and to embark on those that will inevitably arise tomorrow.

I have spoken quite a bit about the China threat recently at this podium, and that country bears mentioning again, right now, because of its connection to the Defense Authorization Act.

As the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee said recently, it is "[i]n the Indo-Pacific region [where] the United States faces a near-term, belligerent threat armed with nuclear weapons and also a longer-term strategic competitor."

China is that longer term strategic competitor, of course, and that is what Congressman MAC THORNBERRY was talking about. Yet we can't just stop with China and North Korea. We need to talk about Russia, Iran, and the civil war and terrorist threat arising out of Syria and the Middle East.

All of those are important in our deliberations on the Defense authoriza-

tion bill because the NDAA prioritizes military readiness across the globe where American leadership remains indispensable. It promotes security and stability in the Indo-Pacific, particularly through military exercises with our allies, and it improves Taiwan's defense capabilities while we keep our commitment to Taiwan that was established a long time ago.

The Defense authorization bill is important for reasons that hit much closer to home as well. In past years, this bill has authorized needed improvements at Texas military facilities like Fort Hood, Joint Base San Antonio, the Red River Army Depot, and Ellington Field. It has also given our troops a much needed pay raise and updated advanced aircraft, ships, and ground vehicles. All of these have implications in Texas.

As we get closer and closer to Memorial Day, let's remember what our Armed Forces have given for us, including their very lives, and everything they have given to us, which is our freedom that we enjoy every day.

Let's make sure we keep up our end of the bargain here in Washington with legislation like the VA MISSION Act and the Defense authorization bill and at home with our patriotism and our frequent signs of appreciation for their service to our great country.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Texas for his inspiring words and for his devotion to Texas veterans and to American veterans across our country.

As we approach Memorial Day, this is a time to honor our fallen soldiers and to reflect on the enormous sacrifices the men and women in uniform have made for us who were killed while serving this Nation.

Mr. President, I rise to recognize the service and ultimate sacrifice of four Hoosier servicemembers who gave their lives in defending our country in the last year. The sacrifices of Ryan Lohrey, Jonathon Hunter, Mark Boner, and Clayton Cullen will not be forgotten.

In July 2017, we lost Navy Corpsman Ryan Lohrey. He died with 15 other servicemembers when a military refueling aircraft crashed in a soybean field in Mississippi. He was 30 years old.

Born in Anderson, Ryan was described as selfless and patient and humble. He played football at Shenandoah High School in Middletown, where he graduated in 2005. Two years after graduation, Ryan joined the Navy and served our country in deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq. During his service, he earned a Purple Heart for being wounded in battle.

Last August, Army SGT Jonathon Hunter was killed in Afghanistan. Jonathon was born in Columbus. He was a man of faith who loved his country and his family. Before joining the Army, Jonathon played football at Co-

lumbus East High School and then pursued his dream of becoming a music producer before enrolling at Indiana State University in Terre Haute.

He left college to join the Army. He was 23 years old and just 32 days into his first deployment when he and a fellow soldier were killed in a suicide bombing attack on a NATO convoy in southern Afghanistan. Jonathon was posthumously awarded a Purple Heart as well as a Bronze Star.

In January, we lost SFC Mark Boner of the Indiana Army National Guard. Mark was born in Fort Wayne. After graduating from Elmhurst High School in 1993, he answered the call to serve his country.

Mark enjoyed being at the lake, and he was a fan of the Notre Dame Fighting Irish. He served in the Army and in the Indiana National Guard. Mark had completed tours in both Iraq and Kuwait and died at Fort Hood, TX, where he was training for his third deployment for his country. He was only 43 years old.

Also in January, we lost another Hoosier: Army 1LT Clayton Cullen, of Bicknell. Clay graduated from North Knox High School in 2011, where he played soccer and served as student body president. After high school, he earned a degree from Indiana University and was in the school's ROTC program.

Clay was 25. He died when the helicopter he was aboard with another servicemember crashed at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, CA.

Each of these courageous men has left behind family, friends, and loved ones who miss them every day, miss them more tomorrow, and even more the following day.

As we pay tribute to these servicemembers, let us also recognize their families. Our hearts go out to every one of them, not only on Memorial Day but every day. At everything from family dinners and get-togethers to holidays, someone is missing their husband, their father, their brother or son. There is an empty seat that every heart wishes was filled.

While nothing could ever fill the void left by the loss of these servicemembers, their legacies live on through their families. The people I speak about represent not only the best of Hoosier values but of America's values. They serve their country so that we all can be safe, so that we all can be secure, so that we all can have our freedom protected. We grieve for them and we miss them. I join every Hoosier in praying for their friends, family, and fellow servicemembers.

On Memorial Day, we will pause to commemorate the extraordinary sacrifice so many men and women in uniform from across our State and Nation have made. Every day, in conflict zones across the world, American servicemembers put themselves in harm's way. We thank them for their courage

and bravery, and we remember the patriots who lost their lives and exemplified the very best of what our country is and can be.

One other note, I remember a few years ago when I was driving through Starke County, IN. It was early in the morning on Memorial Day. I drove through the town of Walkerton, IN. It was early in the morning. In the town cemetery there were a couple of dads and moms and their children. They were putting flags on every veteran's grave who had served our country and devoted their lives to our Nation. That scene that I saw was being duplicated in towns all across my State and all across our country, because the one thing all of us as Americans understand—whether we live in Indiana, Philadelphia, or in Ohio—is that there are young men and women from other towns and from other States who lost their lives to protect us, and we are all in it for each other. We are all in it together as Americans.

On Memorial Day, please say a prayer and think about all those who gave us the chance to celebrate our freedoms.

May God bless Indiana, and may God bless the United States of America.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield back.

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. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, last week, Pope Francis released an unprecedented document detailing what is wrong with our financial system. That the Pope thought it was that important to weigh in tells you a lot about where we are as a nation.

We have an economy, the Pope noted, that defines success by corporate profits and measures time in quarterly earnings reports. That is not how families think. Washington may think that way, corporate CEOs may think that way, but families mark time in school years, in 30-year mortgages, and in years left to save for retirement. That is why the Pope called our current financial system “an inadequate framework that excludes the common good.”

Right now, working families are struggling in this country. The economic statistics may look rosy, but they mask serious problems that hold too many workers back and prevent entire communities from sharing in that growth.

The Pope warned last week that “work itself, together with its dignity, is increasingly at risk of losing its value.” Work is increasingly at risk of losing its value. Our economy simply doesn't value work the way it should.

Over the past 40 years, the link between productivity and wage increases

has eroded. Profits have gone up, CEO compensation has gone up, worker productivity has gone up, but wages have been stagnant. Workers simply don't get the help they should in compensation. Workers simply don't share in the wealth they create for stockholders and the wealth they create for executives and the wealth they create for CEOs.

Wages have ticked up a tiny bit recently, but, looking at the long run, they have been largely flat. Think about this: If there are 100 people in the Galleries, if they are average—maybe they are, maybe they aren't. If there are 100 people in the Galleries, 44 of them can't afford an emergency expense of \$400. Think about that. If they are a \$15-an-hour worker and their car breaks down and it costs \$600, what do they do? They go to get a payday loan, and we know what happens when they do that. Forty-four percent of American adults can't afford an emergency expense of \$400.

This is even more troubling: One in four renters in this country spends at least half their income on housing. If one thing goes wrong in their lives—if their child gets sick—they are unlikely to have sick leave or vacation days. So if their child gets sick, they either send their child to school sick or they stay home with their daughter or son and lose a day's pay. And if they are spending 50 percent of their income on housing, what happens? They are likely to be evicted, likely to be foreclosed on if they own their home and then their lives really spiral down.

In light of all that, this Congress thought the best thing to do was pass another giveaway to the big banks because Wall Street hasn't done enough. This body can't help itself. They fall all over themselves. The lobbyists going in and out of Leader MCCONNELL's office, and the Wall Street lobbyists—the White House increasingly looks like a retreat for Wall Street executives. This body just falls all over itself. We always have to help Wall Street. Over the next 7 or 8 years, 80 percent of the tax-cut bill that was passed last year will go to the richest 1 percent of the country, as if they need the help.

The giveaway to the big banks the President is going to sign tomorrow comes on the heels of a \$1.5 trillion—how much is a trillion? A trillion is 1,000 billion. How much is a billion? A billion is 1,000 million. It was a \$1.5 trillion deficit-financed tax cut for millionaires and more likely billionaires who control one political party in this body. It was tax cuts for billionaires and corporations that ship jobs overseas. Apparently that is just not enough, so this week, the House passed a bill loosening taxpayer protections on big banks that received a combined \$239 billion in taxpayer bailouts. Think about that. It weakens stress tests for all large banks. It opens the door to less oversight of foreign megabanks.

This bill also eliminates data-gathering that guards against mortgage

discrimination. We are bringing back redlining. There has been no racial discrimination in housing in this country, apparently, so let the banks and let the government that sometimes goes along with the banks get that red pencil—it is done with computers now—and draw around those neighborhoods so that those families—often people of color but not always—can't get equal access to home mortgages.

The Congressional Budget Office, which is the independent, nonpartisan scorekeeper, confirmed that this bill that just passed would increase the likelihood of a big bank failure and a financial crisis and would add \$670 million to the deficit.

What problem exactly is this Congress trying to solve?

One of my favorite quotes is from Abraham Lincoln. He was in the White House, and his staff wanted him to stay there and win the war and free the slaves and preserve the Union. He said: No. I have to go out and get my “public opinion baths.”

When I go back to Cleveland, where I live, or when I see my grandkids in Columbus or when I go anywhere else in the State, I go out and listen to people, and I try to get these public opinion baths. Never once have I heard somebody say: You know, Senator, with the problems we have, the first thing we have to do is weaken regulations to help Wall Street. I never hear that. The only people who say that are bankers and a bunch of politicians who are all well compensated, who have very good healthcare paid for by taxpayers, and who do what the banks want them to do.

The FDIC—the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation—released new data this week. Banks increased their profits by 13 percent over the last year. Of those 100 people in the Galleries, how many of them got a 13-percent raise last year? Well, banks increased their already strong profits by another 13 percent. It has happened almost every year this decade, since Congress bailed out the banks 8 years ago. That 13 percent is not even counting the windfall profits they got from the windfall tax bill. When they take the tax bill into account, banks profits went up not 13, not 15, not 20, but 28 percent.

The banking sector bought back \$77 billion worth of stock last year. Do you know what that means? That is all about raising compensation for the biggest stockholders and the CEO. The average bank teller in this country makes \$26,000 a year. Bank profits are up. CEO compensation is up. They are all doing very well. They got a big tax cut. The average teller makes \$26,000.

At my high school reunion in Mansfield a couple of years ago, I sat across the table from a woman with whom I graduated. She has worked as a teller in a large, well-known bank for 30 years, and she makes \$30,000 a year. She has worked there for 30 years. But the bank CEOs are doing very well—

millions and millions of dollars in compensation.

If these banks fail again, it will be those tellers, it will be the middle manager, it will be the millions of other American taxpayers who will be called on to bail them out. That is why we did Wall Street reform—Dodd-Frank—several years ago. We passed a law that created important protections for the financial system, for taxpayers, for homeowners, to hold banks and watchdogs accountable and prevent another crisis.

Do you know what? The day that bill was signed, the chief Financial Services—do you know what the chief bank lobbyist in this city did? The day it was signed, he said: “You know, it is halftime.”

What does that mean? “It is halftime” means that you might have passed this law that we didn’t like—we, Wall Street—but we are going to fight like hell to weaken the rules to implement the law. And once we get a Republican majority and we have a majority leader and, further down the hall, a Speaker of the House who does whatever Wall Street asks them to do, then it will be time to come back and weaken the laws.

That is what happened with the election of this President and the election of the majority leader and the Speaker of the House. It is time to go back to Wall Street and say: How can we help you, sir? It is almost always a sir.

Another bank lobbyist, when he talked about these negotiations, said: We don’t want a seat at the table; we want the whole table.

Wall Street greed knows no bounds. That is why it is a huge concern that the White House looks like a retreat for Wall Street executives. Special interests are getting the whole table. The President is signing the big bank give-away into law.

Here is the last point I want to spend a little time on. They are trying to install yet another Wall Street nominee with the troubling record of dismissing the harm Wall Street inflicted on Main Street—Jelena McWilliams, who is listed as Ms. McWilliams of Ohio, my State. I would like to support a fellow Ohioan. She hasn’t really lived in Ohio very long. I know she has moved back. But I would still like to support a fellow Ohioan. She has been nominated to be the Chair of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, but she has never supported the need for strong rules and tough supervision for the banking system.

At her nomination hearing, she declined to acknowledge the role that excessive bank borrowing played in causing the 2008 collapse. What are we going to do? On whom are we going to blame the bank collapse, the economy going into the toilet, the fact that millions of Americans lost jobs, millions of Americans had their homes foreclosed on, and billions and billions of dollars were lost from seniors’ retirement accounts? We are going to blame

that on them? Wall Street, of course, had nothing to do with it.

Right now, the Fed is considering a proposal to weaken protections and give a \$120 billion windfall to the eight largest banks. Even former Chairs and Vice Chairs of the FDIC appointed by Republicans, two people I admire—Sheila Bair, who used to be chief of staff for Bob Dole, appointed to the FDIC by President Bush and kept by President Obama; and Thomas Hoenig, another Republican from the Kansas City Fed and a Republican regulator—they have opposed this proposal. But Mrs. McWilliams refused to do so.

On issue after issue—payday lending at banks, cost-benefit analysis, the Volcker rule—she has shown no independence from this White House that looks like a retreat for Wall Street executives.

The FDIC was designed to be independent and nonpartisan. We don’t need another rubberstamp from Wall Street’s agenda on the FDIC board, particularly when we have no commitment to move the nominations for Democratic seats. We need independent thinkers at these agencies who are willing to push back against a big-bank agenda.

Last week, Fed Vice Chair Randall Quarles gave a speech saying—just as we predicted—the Federal Reserve wants to loosen rules on foreign megabanks. So it is not just that we are doing favors for Wall Street, but we are doing favors for these multidecabillion or hundreds of billions of dollars foreign banks. We decided to make it easier on them.

Yesterday, former OneWest banker Joseph Otting announced that he wants banks to get into the business of payday loans. They have always said they have nothing to do with these payday loans. Well, they do. Otting has other plans to gut the Community Reinvestment Act—a 40-year old law that ensures that banks serve their communities. And we could spend hours detailing what Mick Mulvaney is doing to the Consumer Protection Bureau.

In closing, I will go back to the Pope’s message. He noted that “while most of [the financial industry’s] operators are singularly animated by good and right intentions, it is impossible to ignore the fact that the financial industry . . . is a place where selfishness and the abuse of power have an enormous potential to harm the community.”

A little selfishness, a little abuse can have massive consequences when it comes to the financial system. Families in Ohio can’t afford that risk. It is our job to protect those families.

The Pope said: “Those entrusted with political authority find it difficult to fulfill to their original vocation as servants of the common good.”

We should listen a little more to the people we serve, and we should listen a little less to Wall Street. We should break the addiction to Wall Street money. We should break our allegiance

to Wall Street interests. That is how we create an economy that values work and create an economy that serves the common good and not corporate special interests.

I ask my colleagues to vote against the nomination of Ms. McWilliams.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the votes following the first vote in this series be 10 minutes in length.

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

Mrs. FISCHER. Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Jelena McWilliams to be Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation?

Mr. COTTON. 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) would have voted “yea.”

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 69, nays 24, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 109 Ex.]

YEAS—69

Alexander	Ernst	Manchin
Barrasso	Fischer	McCaskill
Bennet	Gardner	McConnell
Blunt	Graham	Menendez
Boozman	Grassley	Moran
Burr	Hatch	Murkowski
Capito	Heitkamp	Murphy
Cardin	Hoeven	Nelson
Carper	Hyde-Smith	Paul
Casey	Inhofe	Perdue
Cassidy	Isakson	Peters
Collins	Johnson	Portman
Coons	Jones	Reed
Corker	Kaine	Risch
Cornyn	Kennedy	Roberts
Cotton	King	Rounds
Crapo	Klobuchar	Sasse
Daines	Lankford	Scott
Donnelly	Leahy	Shaheen
Enzi	Lee	Shelby

Sullivan	Tillis	Warner
Tester	Toomey	Wicker
Thune	Van Hollen	Young

NAYS—24

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Schatz
Blumenthal	Harris	Schumer
Booker	Heinrich	Smith
Brown	Hirono	Stabenow
Cantwell	Markey	Udall
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Murray	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Sanders	Wyden

NOT VOTING—7

Cruz	Hassan	Rubio
Duckworth	Heller	
Flake	McCain	

The nomination was confirmed.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Jelena McWilliams to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation?

The nomination was confirmed.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill 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 James Randolph Evans, of Georgia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Luxembourg.

Thom Tillis, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, John Thune, Roy Blunt, Ron Johnson, Cory Gardner, Lindsey Graham, Pat Roberts, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, James E. Risch, Todd Young, John Hoeven, Mike Rounds, David Perdue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of James Randolph Evans, of Georgia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Luxembourg, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 49, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 110 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Alexander	Gardner	Perdue
Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hatch	Roberts
Burr	Heitkamp	Rounds
Capito	Hoeven	Sasse
Cassidy	Hyde-Smith	Scott
Collins	Inhofe	Shelby
Corker	Isakson	Sullivan
Cornyn	Johnson	Tester
Cotton	Kennedy	Thune
Crapo	Lankford	Tillis
Daines	Lee	Toomey
Donnelly	McConnell	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	Young
Ernst	Murkowski	
Fischer	Paul	

NAYS—44

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Hirono	Reed
Blumenthal	Jones	Sanders
Booker	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Smith
Carper	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Udall
Coons	McCaskill	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Feinstein	Murphy	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden
Harris	Nelson	

NOT VOTING—7

Cruz	Hassan	Rubio
Duckworth	Heller	
Flake	McCain	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 49, the nays are 44.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant bill clerk read the nomination of James Randolph Evans, of Georgia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Luxembourg.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 1:45 p.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Nebraska.

TRIBUTE TO VAUGHAN WEHR

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to my longtime scheduler and dear friend, Vaughan Wehr. After 5½ years in Washington, Vaughan is returning home to her sprawling, tight-knit family in Omaha.

Vaughan started with me as an aide in my legislative office in Lincoln. It was an easy decision to ask her to come to Washington as an original member of my team. She did a good job, she worked hard, and she was a joy

to have around. She started out in the Senate, where so many do, answering phones and greeting constituents. That is hard work, but Vaughan always did it with a smile on her face.

It didn't take long for her to take on more responsibility, first as a deputy scheduler and later as a scheduler for nearly 4 years. Throughout that time, Vaughan always did her job with a special blend of diligence and humor. She has earned a reputation in the Senate as a top scheduler and the life of any party.

It is no exaggeration to say that Vaughan has been the beating heart of my office. She has made a mark here by doing her job with love and laughter every single day.

My husband, Bruce, and I are very thankful for her service, and most importantly, we are thankful for her friendship. She is one of a kind. We wish her the very best as she returns home to Nebraska.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

VENEZUELA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it was about 5 or 6 weeks ago that I accepted an invitation and an opportunity to visit Caracas, Venezuela. I had never been to that country before and spent 4 days. It turns out that not many Members of Congress go to this country and very few are given permission if they ask, but for some reason, I was given permission and went down there to meet with the leaders of the government and to take stock of what was happening in Venezuela.

Sadly, I have to report that Venezuela—that proud nation—is teetering on collapse. I met with President Maduro, members of his government, opposition leaders, civic and humanitarian leaders, medical experts, victims of the regime's political repression, and an American who is currently jailed on political charges in Caracas.

What I found there and recounted on the floor a few weeks ago was a heart-breaking set of overlapping crises—humanitarian, economic, and political. While these three inexcusable crises of the government's making continue, the people of this poor nation are increasingly suffering and leaving in desperation. It is one of the most desperate situations I have ever seen in a country that is not in the midst of a war. In my discussion with President Maduro, I urged him to help get his country out of the international isolation that it currently faces and put an end to the human suffering by starting with a clean election.

Last Sunday, there was an election. It was a farce. I asked him to release political opponents so they could run for office. I asked him to authorize parties to field candidates. I asked him to