

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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Thomas Alvin Farr, of North Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. 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 senior assistant 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 Thomas Alvin Farr, of North Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Lamar Alexander, John Cornyn, James M. Inhofe, John Kennedy, Mike Crapo, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Rounds, Michael B. Enzi, David Perdue, John Boozman, Tim Scott, Lindsey Graham, James E. Risch, Steve Daines, Thom Tillis.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. 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. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 1141.

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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jonathan A. Kobes, of South Dakota, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. 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 senior assistant 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 Jonathan A. Kobes, of South Dakota, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Jerry Moran, Mike Crapo, Steve Daines, Richard Burr, James E. Risch, Thom Tillis, John Thune, Roger F. Wicker, John Hoeven, David Perdue, Pat Roberts, John Barasso, Mike Rounds, Lamar Alexander, John Boozman, John Cornyn.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. 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. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 1064.

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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kathleen Laura Kraninger, of Ohio, to be Director, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection for a term of five years.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. 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 senior assistant 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 Kathleen Laura Kraninger, of Ohio, to be Director, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection for a term of five years.

Mitch McConnell, Jerry Moran, Mike Crapo, Steve Daines, Richard Burr, James E. Risch, Thom Tillis, John Thune, Roger F. Wicker, John Hoeven, David Perdue, Pat Roberts, John Barasso, Mike Rounds, Lamar Alexander, John Boozman, John Cornyn.

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

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the Bowman nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Without objection, it is so ordered.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF LATVIA'S INDEPENDENCE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the people who have called themselves Latvians have been in existence for centuries and centuries, but the nation state that we call Latvia has only existed for 100 years. So I come to the floor to express the fact that on Saturday, the Republic of Latvia celebrates 100 years as a country.

As cochair of the Senate Baltic Freedom Caucus, I recognized the centenary of Estonia and Lithuania in February, and I mentioned that I would be back this November to talk about Latvia's 100th anniversary, like I did Estonia and Lithuania back in February.

On November 18, 1918, the People's Council of Latvia proclaimed independence. However, the establishment of a separate Latvian state did not come out of the blue. The movement toward an independent Latvia was a process of continuous historical development going back to the Latvian national awakening in the 1850s.

At that time, between local German-speaking nobles and the Russian Imperial Government, and divided by the internal political boundaries between the Russian Empire, Latvians did not control their political fate. However, Latvians increasingly began to focus on promoting unity around their distinct language and culture.

With the collapse of the tsarist government in Russia, Latvians began to push for a united autonomous territory, although independence did not yet seem feasible. When the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia and attempted to consolidate control of Latvia, the time came to declare independence. However, as we Americans know well, declaring independence means being prepared to defend that decision of independence.

Much as our Founding Fathers pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to the cause of American independence, the Founding Fathers of Latvia knew they would have to defend their independence with the force of arms. In fact, they had to fight invasions by both Soviets and Germans.

If this sounds familiar, it is because it is pretty much the same story I described in February with the Estonian War of Independence. In fact, the Latvians and Estonians coordinated closely and fought side by side.

Latvia also received help from Lithuania and Poland. Soviet Russia ultimately signed a peace treaty recognizing the independence and sovereignty of Latvia and renouncing forever all claims to the territory that is

now Latvia. Sadly, it wasn't long before the treaty was violated.

Hitler and Stalin agreed to divide up their neighbors between them in the infamous Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

The Soviets annexed Latvia and the other Baltics in the lead-up to World War II. Then, of course, Hitler broke his end of the bargain and invaded. At the end of the war, Stalin had taken back the Baltics and made clear he was there to stay.

Despite courageous resistance of the Latvian forest brothers for many years while Latvians held out hope of assistance by the United States and the Western allies, Latvia remained occupied by the Soviet Union for the next 50 years after World War II. However, the United States never recognized the legitimacy of the Soviet occupation of Latvia.

Throughout the Cold War, we maintained diplomatic relations via Embassy staff who had been accredited to the United States by Latvia before the Soviet occupation.

I should note that if anyone is interested in learning more about the Latvian or Baltic history, there are books on the subject written by a professor emeritus at Iowa State University. The professor's name is Andrejs Plakans.

After World War II, Latvians who had fled the Soviets or otherwise found themselves outside their country were unable to go home to a country under foreign occupation.

The Displaced Persons Act allowed refugees to come to the United States, provided they had a sponsor, and about 700 of them came to my home State of Iowa. There is a Latvian-American community in Iowa to this very day.

In fact, the first Latvians to come to the Des Moines area were the family of the current pastor of the Iowa Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church congregation, Leo Pelds.

After his family's initial arrangements for a job at a creamery in Birmingham, AL, fell through, they heard that Iowa would be a good choice as the climate would be what they were used to. So that family moved to Des Moines. Other Latvians soon arrived, and they sponsored further Latvians until there were 300 to 400 just in the Des Moines area.

The Latvian Society of Iowa was formed in 1950, and the Latvia Lutheran congregation was formed in 1952 after the arrival of the Latvian pastor. Like in other Latvian diaspora communities around the world, cultural events were organized to keep the Latvian culture alive, and a Saturday school was established to teach Latvian language, history, geography, and folk dances. Song festivals have played an important role in the preservation of Latvian culture going back to the national awakening, so naturally there was also a choir.

The Latvian Society of Iowa was part of the larger effort of the Latvian, Estonian, and Lithuanian American communities to keep the plight of the Bal-

tics on the radar of our American political leaders.

Then, in 1991, thanks in part to the external pressure from the United States, as well as the courageous efforts of Latvians themselves and others in the Soviet Union demanding their freedom, the "Evil Empire" collapsed. Latvia is now back in the family of free democratic European nations, where it belongs.

Latvia is a member of NATO in excellent standing, both in terms of meeting its financial commitment of 2 percent of GDP and in terms of its soldiers fighting shoulder to shoulder with Americans and other allies in places like Afghanistan and Iraq.

Even while Latvia is looking toward a bright future, its large neighbor to the east is ruled by a man who sees the fall of the Soviet Union, including losing Latvia, as, in his words, the "major geopolitical disaster of the century."

Those are the words of Vladimir Putin. He appears to be stuck in an old-fashioned way of thinking that assigns smaller countries to the Russian sphere of influence. He bullies neighbors that do not toe the Russian line. In fact, he has even occupied the Ukrainian region of Crimea, which the United States does not recognize, just as we didn't recognize the Soviet occupation of the Baltics.

Vladimir Putin resents the fact that Latvia and the other Baltics naturally choose to align with fellow European countries to their west, with which they share a common European history, culture, and outlook.

Given their past and current experience dealing with KGB thugs like Putin, the Latvians can provide invaluable insight as we grapple with how to combat Russian disinformation. In fact, it is appropriate that Riga is home to NATO's StratCom Centre of Excellence, which provides analysis and solutions for NATO on strategic communications and countering disinformation.

So, as I conclude, I look forward to continuing the strong partnership between Latvia and the United States, and I offer my best wishes to all the Latvians as they celebrate 100 years of Latvian statehood.

I yield the floor.

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

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

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 for up to 10 minutes each.

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

BUDGET SCOREKEEPING REPORT

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to submit to the Senate the budget scorekeeping report for November 2018. The report compares current-law levels of spending and revenues with the amounts the Senate agreed to in the budget resolution for fiscal year 2018, H. Con. Res. 71, and the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, BBA18. This information is necessary for the Senate Budget Committee to determine whether budgetary points of order lie against pending legislation. The Republican staff of the Budget Committee and the Congressional Budget Office, CBO, prepared this report pursuant to section 308(b) of the Congressional Budget Act, CBA.

This is my sixth scorekeeping report this year. My last filing can be found in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for July 18, 2018. The information included in this report is current through November 13, 2018.

Budget Committee Republican staff prepared Tables 1-6.

Table 1 gives the amount by which each Senate authorizing committee exceeds or is below its allocation for budget authority and outlays under the most recently adopted budget resolution and the fiscal year 2019 enforceable levels filing. This information is used for enforcing committee allocations pursuant to section 302 of the CBA. For this reporting period, 10 of the 16 authorizing committees are not in compliance with their allocations. The six committees that are fully compliant with their allocations are the committees on Armed Services, Foreign Relations, Rules and Administration, Intelligence, Indian Affairs, and Small Business and Entrepreneurship. The aggregate 10-year reduction in budget authority shown in table 1 is largely the product of savings that are generated at the end of the enforcement window through changes to customs user fees, Miscellaneous Tariff Bill Act of 2018, P.L. 115-239; Orrin G. Hatch Music Modernization Act, P.L. 115-264, or from the sale of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018, P.L. 115-270.

Tables 2-3 give the amount by which the Senate Committee on Appropriations is below or exceeds the statutory spending limits. This information is used to determine points of order related to the spending caps found in sections 312 and 314 of the CBA. Appropriations for fiscal year 2018, shown in table 2, are consistent with the statutory limits. Table 3 shows that the Appropriations Committee is currently compliant with spending limits for fiscal year 2019. Currently, seven Appropriations subcommittees are operating under a continuing resolution, the Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education