

nominee and throw in the towel, but the way I see it, if it is something worth fighting for, it is a fight worth having. If it is something worth fighting for, it is a fight worth having. This fight against Thomas Farr is a fight worth having because Thomas Farr is far from what we should accept in a nominee. I know we can do better, and we must do better.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The Senator from South Dakota.

SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the 115th Congress is drawing to a close, and we have accomplished a lot over the past 2 years. Our goal for this Congress was simple—make life better for the American people.

A big part of that was getting the economy going again. After years of economic stagnation under the Obama administration, American families were feeling the pinch. Growth was sluggish, wages were stagnant, and opportunities were few and far between. For too many families, getting ahead had been replaced by getting by. We were determined to change that, and so we took action.

We passed a historic reform of our Tax Code that put more money in American families' pockets and made it easier for businesses to grow and create jobs and opportunities for American workers, and now we are seeing the results: robust economic growth, the lowest unemployment level in almost 50 years, a record number of job openings, growing wages, near-record confidence among small businesses, and the list goes on.

In human terms, that means more opportunities for American workers looking to grow and advance; it means more options for Americans searching for a job; and it means bigger paychecks and better benefits for workers and less worry for families.

I am proud tax reform is making life better for American families and grateful to Senator HATCH and our colleagues on the Finance Committee for the incredible work they did to get this historic reform through Congress.

Tax reform was our biggest economic achievement this Congress, but that is not the only thing we have done to help American workers. Along with the White House, we have lifted burdensome regulations, and we enacted legislation, led by Senator ENZI and Senator ALEXANDER, to prepare students for the workforce by improving career and technical education programs. We also enacted Senator CRAPO's legislation to give Main Street lenders relief from burdensome Dodd-Frank regulations.

On the national security front, under the leadership of the late Senator McCain and Senator INHOFE, we have reinvested in our Nation's military to ensure that our troops are equipped not only for today's mission but to meet the threats of the future. We passed the

largest pay increase for our troops in nearly a decade, and we delivered real reforms for our veterans through the VA MISSION Act. This legislation, helmed by Senator ISAKSON, streamlined the VA's community care programs to help ensure that veterans receive efficient, timely, and quality care. Once fully implemented, it will also expand caregiver assistance to disabled pre-9/11 veterans, an overdue benefit for generations of our heroes. We also modernized the Veterans Benefits Administration appeals system to develop a quicker, more responsive system for veterans.

On the healthcare front this Congress, we passed the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act to address the nationwide opioid epidemic. This was a product that contained policies championed by multiple committees and multiple Senators, and I am grateful for all the work my colleagues did to advance this important initiative.

We also repealed ObamaCare's individual mandate tax which forced patients to buy insurance they didn't want and couldn't afford; we passed legislation, led by Senator JOHNSON, to give terminally ill patients access to experimental care; and under the leadership of Senator HATCH, we passed the longest extension of the State Children's Health Insurance Program in the program's history.

Another major achievement this year has been the tremendous number of good judges we have been able to confirm to the Federal bench. Senator GRASSLEY has done an incredible job of moving these judges through the process and presiding over the confirmations of two Supreme Court Justices. The Federal bench will be stronger for many years because of his work.

Senate Republicans have accomplished a lot in the 115th Congress, and we are excited to get to work in the 116th. Our agenda will stay the same—growing our economy and expanding opportunities for American workers and protecting our Nation.

There are those who wonder how much Congress will be able to accomplish in the next 2 years. After all, we are facing a divided government. We have a Republican President. The American people voted for a Republican majority in the Senate, but they also voted for a Democratic majority in the House of Representatives. Divided government doesn't have to spell the doom of productivity.

Over the last 30-plus years, some of our greatest legislative accomplishments have been the product of divided government—the 1986 Reagan tax reform, 1996 welfare reform, the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, national security legislation in 2002, the 2012 legislation to help working families by making the Bush tax cuts permanent, a major reform of the VA in 2014—all important bills, all the product of divided government.

So I know it is possible for the Republican Senate and the Democratic

House to achieve big things in the 116th Congress, and Senate Republicans are ready to work with our Democratic colleagues. Now it is up to the Democrats to decide whether they want to work with us. Democrats have spent a lot of time over the past 2 years trying to relitigate the last Presidential election, but if they want to get anything done in the 116th Congress, they are going to need to move past 2016. Tying up the House with partisan investigations of the President or running a Presidential campaign from the Senate floor is not a good use of anyone's time. We need to spend our time focused on the American people's priorities like helping working families and increasing opportunities for American workers. That is what Senate Republicans will be focused on in the next Congress.

I hope our Democratic colleagues will join us. If they are willing to work with us, I know that together we can achieve big things for the American people.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Stephen Alexander Vaden, of Tennessee, to be General Counsel of the Department of Agriculture?

Mr. THUNE. 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 Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH).

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

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 246 Ex.]

YEAS—53

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

NAYS—46

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

NOT VOTING—1

Hyde-Smith

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 Karen Dunn Kelley, of Pennsylvania, to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce.

Mitch McConnell, Johnny Isakson, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, John Hoeven, David Perdue, Tim Scott, John Cornyn, Roy Blunt, Cory Gardner, Tom Cotton, Jerry Moran, John Barrasso, Roger F. Wicker, John Boozman.

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 Karen Dunn Kelley, of Pennsylvania, to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 62, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 247 Ex.]

YEAS—62

Alexander	Cruz	Hoeven
Barrasso	Daines	Inhofe
Blunt	Donnelly	Isakson
Boozman	Enzi	Johnson
Burr	Ernst	Jones
Capito	Fischer	Kennedy
Casey	Flake	King
Cassidy	Gardner	Kyl
Collins	Graham	Lankford
Corker	Grassley	Lee
Cornyn	Hatch	Manchin
Cotton	Heitkamp	McCaskill
Crapo	Heller	McConnell

Moran	Roberts	Sullivan
Murkowski	Rounds	Tester
Murphy	Rubio	Thune
Nelson	Sasse	Tillis
Paul	Schatz	Toomey
Perdue	Scott	Wicker
Portman	Shaheen	Young
Risch	Shelby	

NAYS—37

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Reed
Bennet	Harris	Sanders
Blumenthal	Hassan	Schumer
Booker	Heinrich	Smith
Brown	Hirono	Stabenow
Cantwell	Kaine	Udall
Cardin	Klobuchar	Van Hollen
Carper	Leahy	Warner
Coons	Markey	Warren
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Whitehouse
Duckworth	Merkley	Wyden
Durbin	Murray	
Feinstein	Peters	

NOT VOTING—1

Hyde-Smith

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 62, the nays are 37.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Karen Dunn Kelley, of Pennsylvania, to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:15 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will come to order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

TRIBUTE TO ORRIN HATCH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am here to give thanks. Just a few days ago our country celebrated a national day of Thanksgiving. We celebrated food, fellowship, and freedom with family and friends. By any measure we are a people endowed with an abundance of blessings. As Americans, we have every reason to be grateful to share the prosperity of economic freedom, religious liberty, and self-government.

Today, I come to the floor to extend my gratitude for one of the most distinguished public servants ever to serve in the U.S. Senate. It is my distinct privilege to stand here today to pay tribute to my good friend and colleague from Utah, ORRIN HATCH.

He is a man widely known for his integrity, character, and temperament. He is devoted to his family, his constituents, and his country. With overwhelming support from the good people of Utah, he has served his State and all of America in the U.S. Senate for 42 years.

In those four decades of service, he has brought honor, humility, humor,

and heart to this institution of the U.S. Senate. He has honed his legislative experience on a broad range of public policies. In fact, none of his peers have led more laws to final passage than my friend Senator HATCH. He has built successful bipartisan coalitions to enact laws that make a difference in the lives of everyday Americans.

As former chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and currently the senior member there, he is a champion of religious liberty and the rule of law. He is an advocate for entrepreneurship and free enterprise, as well as a champion of intellectual property rights, which includes being the lead Senate sponsor of the Music Modernization Act. He is just old enough to know when laws aren't keeping up with technology. Thanks to his tenacity, the new law will help ensure songwriters, artists, and creators that they will be fairly compensated for their works.

Like so many Americans, Senator HATCH is a man of humble beginnings. He embraces the promise of prosperity and opportunity that makes America the beacon of the free world, and that brings me to the basis of my remarks today. From his decades of service and the chairmanship at the helm of the Senate Finance Committee, Senator HATCH has shouldered some pretty heavy lifting in the legislative trenches to advance free and fair trade laws to foster economic growth and opportunity.

As we all know, America is home to at least 320 million people. That is a fraction of the world's population, and yet America leads the world in economic output. Thanks to an amazing bounty of natural resources and an economic foundation that rewards ingenuity, productivity and creativity, our country, the United States, produces goods and services that consumers around the world want to buy.

Senator HATCH and I share a core philosophy: lowering taxes and trade barriers as a winning formula for prosperity. To paraphrase a philosophy that often is attributed to our 35th President, "a rising tide lifts all boats." Today, I want to give credit where credit is due. Thanks to Senator HATCH's unflinching leadership and unwavering commitment to advance the principles of free and fair trade, America's formula for prosperity and opportunity stands strong for generations to come.

It is virtually impossible to recall any trade policy in recent history that does not have the fingerprints of my esteemed friend Senator HATCH all over those documents. In fact, he led the renewal of the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015. It paved the way for a robust, transparent review of trade negotiations.

Like Senator HATCH, I understand that America needs to speak with one voice on the world stage for effective, lasting trade agreements. We also agree on the constitutional authority