

which he has done a number of times for the committee and increasingly for the business community, talking in an honest, straightforward way about the security threats, the intellectual property theft, the host of concerns that confront our country by China.

Bill Evanina is one of those rare public servants, and I don't think—as the chairman has pointed out, since he received unanimous confirmation from the Intelligence Committee—that there is any question about his service, any question about his temperament, any question about his ability to do the job—no partisan challenges to him, as the chairman has mentioned. He has served in his current position for 3½ years.

We do him and other intelligence professionals a disservice when they are arbitrarily held up for confirmation, not because of a substantive issue that this individual may have performed or not performed but because of a totally extraneous issue.

My intent today, along with the chairman, was to ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the Executive Calendar nomination, getting Bill Evanina permanently confirmed to this job. He is an individual who, if we are not careful and don't act on soon, may decide to take his extraordinary professional skills and find much higher remuneration in the private sector rather than serving our country.

I am not going to ask for that UC today in deference to one of our colleagues who has lodged an objection to the nomination. It is my hope that before the end of this session, the chairman and I will come to the floor one more time and make this request.

I implore the Member who has a challenge against Mr. Evanina, again, not based on his performance, not based on his politics, not based on any professionalism he brings to this job—my hope is that the Member will reflect and decide to remove this extraneous objection and allow this great professional to be confirmed to a position he has already served in for the last 3½ years.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

TRIBUTE TO DEPARTING SENATORS

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to salute my colleagues who are departing the Senate at the conclusion of the 115th Congress: BOB CORKER of Tennessee, JEFF FLAKE of Arizona, ORRIN HATCH of Utah, HEIDI HEITKAMP of North Dakota, DEAN HELLER of Nevada, JOE DONNELLY of Indiana, CLAIRE McCASKILL of Missouri, BILL NELSON of Florida, and JON KYL of Arizona. All of these Members have dedicated themselves to serving their constituents, their States, and our country. The institution of the Senate and the Nation as a whole are stronger because of their service and commitment.

I have been privileged to serve with each and every one of them and want to spend a few moments thanking each of them for the wisdom and experience they brought to their work and for their friendship.

BOB CORKER and I worked on many foreign policy matters together, given my role as ranking member on the Armed Services Committee and his as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. I have appreciated BOB's willingness to reach across the aisle in an attempt to remove barriers to gaining bipartisan cooperation on bills and other policy matters. I also appreciate how much BOB was willing to speak his mind and stand up to administrations of his party and of my party over the last several years, particularly with respect to his very astute analysis of the situation with Russia and other major issues confronting the United States today.

He has long focused on international development and human rights, causes I have been glad to support alongside him, including a joint resolution, Supporting a Diplomatic Solution in Yemen and Condemning the Murder of Jamal Khashoggi; for promoting economic growth in developing countries through U.S. business investment in the recently enacted BUILD Act; and consistently fighting to end modern slavery.

We also served together on the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee. Here, too, he spent his time reaching across the aisle, trying to find constructive solutions, and informing our work on issues ranging from financial system reforms to housing finance.

We will miss his bipartisan spirit, and I wish BOB only the best as he leaves the Senate.

I have also had the privilege and pleasure to join with JEFF FLAKE in many moments; last week, we were at an event together honoring the late Senator John McCain. He reminisced about the times he worked with John on key policies that aimed to put our country over party politics.

He worked hard to resolve tough issues like immigration reform and protecting the special counsel investigation, and his preferred route to addressing these challenges was not to increase the heated rhetoric but to turn down the volume of the debate, so all sides could be heard and so the Senate could try to move forward in a rational and bipartisan way.

Just as with BOB CORKER, JEFF's approach will be missed in this body. I hope others on both sides of the aisle will recognize what they have done and take up their mantle.

ORRIN HATCH has long served the people of Utah with distinction as chairman of three committees: Finance, Judiciary and what was once called the Labor Committee but is now the HELP Committee. He worked across the aisle to pass landmark laws, often with his friend Senator Ted Kennedy. He was instrumental in passing critical laws,

like expanding access to healthcare for children through the CHIP program and providing help to those suffering with HIV/AIDS through the Ryan White CARE Act.

I was pleased to have the opportunity to work with him in 2005, 2010, and 2015 to reauthorize the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act, to build upon and improve the National Marrow Donor Program and the National Cord Blood Inventory to better treat diseases and expand access to lifesaving therapies.

Most recently, he helped enact the Music Modernization Act, which I know meant a lot to him, given his own musical interests and talents.

He ends his service here as the Senate's President pro tempore. I wish him health and happiness in his retirement. I think his retirement will be just as active as his days in the U.S. Senate, given his personality and also given his determination to serve wherever he is.

HEIDI HEITKAMP, as she put it "beat the odds" to get here. A breast cancer survivor, the lesson she learned from that experience is to use the time she has been given for "good and noble purposes." She "chose for good or for bad to come to the United States Senate" and has served a noble purpose with noble action.

We are so grateful that she did. HEIDI has been a tireless champion of North Dakota throughout her time in the Senate. She worked hard to advance opportunities for Native Americans and veterans, to boost funding for flood protection, and to secure the northern border, to name just a few.

She and I worked together on the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee. Most recently, I was particularly appreciative of her insight on proxy access and her support for my legislation on this matter, S. 3614, the Corporate Governance Fairness Act.

HEIDI has also been a relentless advocate for a functioning Export-Import Bank, an issue critical to many North Dakotans. Her voice and insight will be missed on this issue and so many others that come before the banking committee.

In addition, over the last 2 years, HEIDI has taken on the issue of maternal mortality rates in our country. More women in the United States die from pregnancy-related complications than in most developed nations, and the number is increasing. This has impacted so many families in North Dakota and across the country, and HEIDI has worked across the aisle to put forth solutions. In the coming days, we expect President Trump to sign into law her legislation, which I was privileged to cosponsor, to help address this issue. I salute her and wish her the best.

DEAN HELLER and I worked together with a great deal of energy and commitment when both of our States and our Nation were in deep crisis in the aftermath of the Great Recession. Nevada and Rhode Island took turns having the sad distinction of the highest

unemployment levels in the country. We worked to ensure extensions of emergency unemployment assistance in order to provide relief to Americans who lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

Our work together was of great importance, and I wish him the best in all of his future endeavors.

I want to turn my attention to three Members I had the privilege to work with and serve with on the Armed Services Committee.

JOE DONNELLY has been the ranking member of the Strategic Forces Subcommittee. He chose this position because of the Navy's installation in Indiana called the Naval Surface Warfare Center—Crane. This installation serves as the primary engineering center for the Navy's Strategic Systems Program, which manages our fleet of ballistic missile weapons systems. I had the chance to join Joe on a visit, and I was most impressed with their capabilities but more impressed with his tireless efforts to ensure that this facility—and indeed all of Indiana—had the very best.

In addition to ensuring our men and women in uniform have the resources and tools they need—like those manufactured in Crane—JOE has always been concerned about caring for veterans and is a well-known advocate for suicide prevention programs. Indeed, it was his legislation, more than any others, that helped establish a program to assist veterans and to assist Active-Duty personnel who are coping with suicidal tendencies. That was something JOE did with great passion and great commitment and great success.

JOE assumed the seat that Senator Richard Lugar previously held and carried on the legacy of Senator Lugar's Cooperative Threat Reduction Program into the future, which today continues to secure stocks of nuclear, chemical, and biological agents around the world. His work on reducing stockpiles of these dangerous weapons is a critical component of making the world safer for generations to come.

JOE DONNELLY has done great work here, and I wish him well. He is a gentleman and someone I admire and respect immensely.

I have also been extremely proud to serve alongside CLAIRE McCASKILL on the Armed Services Committee. Claire has been a leader of the Senate effort to prevent and respond to sexual assault in our military. She was a principal cosponsor of the Victims Protection Act, a bipartisan package of reforms that represent a substantial leap forward in preventing and responding to sexual assaults in the military. It is a testament to CLAIRE's determination and hard work that these laws are in place, but, also, she was the first to recognize that our work is not done. She was continually involved in ensuring that whatever legislative initiatives we passed were actually implemented. That work is ongoing, and CLAIRE's efforts have given us a strong foundation to continue those efforts.

In addition to the Victims Protection Act, CLAIRE led the effort to reform management of Arlington National Cemetery to address significant problems with the burials of servicemembers and helped to establish a single agency responsible for POW-MIA recovery and accounting efforts.

CLAIRE has also worked tirelessly to end wasteful wartime contracting practices, following in the footsteps of another Missouri Senator and one of her political heroes, President Harry S. Truman. CLAIRE has been a steadfast advocate for oversight throughout her career, and her work to root out waste and strengthen accountability has made a difference in how effectively the government works for the American people.

Again, I wish her well in the future and know it will be a future that is also committed to service to others.

BILL NELSON has been a close and valued colleague for many years in the Armed Services Committee. He is the only Senator to have flown in space and, as a result, has been our acknowledged expert, to both Republicans and Democrats, on matters pertaining to space. His knowledge of military and civilian space issues was particularly important during our debate on replacing the Russian RD-180 rocket engine, which is used in a number of national security launches, with a U.S. variant. That debate, along with his leadership on NASA reauthorization legislation, has introduced competition for space launch to a wide array of new companies. As a nation, we are much better off for his efforts. Because of Senator NELSON's leadership, we now have a vibrant and entrepreneurial launch and satellite industry that reaches well outside the traditional national security realm and is lowering the cost of access to space.

Recently, he took on the cyber mission as the ranking member on the Cybersecurity Subcommittee. His steady hand was integral in guiding this new subcommittee during a time in which we face countless cyber threats. We will miss his knowledge and leadership as we debate pressing issues of our national security in the next Congress and Congresses to come.

He has also done able work as the lead Democrat on the Commerce Committee, fighting for consumers. And, as a strong advocate for stricter gun control legislation, we worked together on the 3D Printed Gun Safety Act of 2018 and on the Extreme Risk Protection Order and Violence Prevention Act.

I also want to thank him for his leadership in enacting the Military Lending Act in 2006, which caps the annual interest rate for an extension of consumer credit to a servicemember or his or her dependents at 36 percent. Because of his efforts, servicemembers and their families have strong consumer protections that defend them against unscrupulous lenders who unpatriotically prey upon them while they are selflessly and courageously

defending our Nation. He has done a remarkable job because this legislation truly does protect our protectors—those men and women who serve overseas—so they are not taken advantage of here, back at home.

I enjoyed our time serving together and wish him the best as he goes forward. He is a great American.

Finally, I would like to recognize Senator JON KYL. I thank JON for his willingness to serve again following the passing of Senator John McCain.

I had the privilege of serving with him in his prior stint in this body. He served for many years in Republican leadership, including as minority whip. He was also a longstanding member of the Finance Committee. I was not on this committee, but given my advocacy for extending unemployment insurance—for which there was a critical need at the time—I did have a chance to serve with him on the Conference Committee for the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012.

It was a pleasure to serve with him. He is a man of principle, a man of great decency and dignity, someone who has honored the Senate with his service, honored Arizona with his service, and makes us all very proud to know him. It was indeed a pleasure to serve, all too briefly, with him as a member of the Armed Services Committee.

I would like to thank him for his service and wish him well as he leaves this body once more. To all my colleagues, I give them my greatest respect and admiration for their service to their States, to the Senate, and to the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. My friend from Nebraska, Senator SASSE, tells me he has remarks that will take approximately 2 minutes. I have remarks that will follow that will take somewhat longer than 2 minutes.

I ask unanimous consent that Senator SASSE be allowed to speak before me and that I might speak afterward for such time as I will consume.

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

The Senator from Nebraska.

CONSTITUTION DAY ESSAYS

Mr. SASSE. I thank the Senator from Mississippi for yielding to me.

Mr. President, I rise to highlight the work of some truly impressive Nebraska high school students. In September, to celebrate Constitution Day, my office offered a challenge to high schoolers in my State to submit essays describing "The Relationship Between the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution." We received contributions from across Nebraska from students in public, private, and home schools.

Today, I am pleased to announce the three winners: Ingrid Williamsen from Logan View Senior High School in the