

South Carolina and to deal with the agricultural emergency we have had.

We also say a prayer of thanksgiving for the great opportunity we have to live in the Southeast but also recognize that we are now ground zero for tornadoes and those types of death-defying acts that are taking place. We want all of the people in Georgia and Alabama to know that our prayers go out to them. We will do everything we can to make them right.

Thank you.

I yield back my time.

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. ISAKSON. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of our time and call the previous question.

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

The 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 Allison Jones Rushing, of North Carolina, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, Mike Crapo, Johnny Isakson, John Cornyn, Pat Roberts, James M. Inhofe, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Lindsey Graham, Roy Blunt, John Thune, John Boozman, John Barrasso, James E. Risch, Richard Burr, John Hoeven.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that the debate on the nomination of Allison Jones Rushing, of North Carolina, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 34 Ex.]

#### YEAS—52

Alexander	Fischer	Portman
Barrasso	Gardner	Risch
Blackburn	Graham	Roberts
Blunt	Grassley	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Isakson	Scott (SC)
Collins	Johnson	Shelby
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Cramer	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	McConnell	Toomey
Cruz	McSally	Wicker
Daines	Moran	Young
Enzi	Paul	
Ernst	Perdue	

#### NAYS—43

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

#### NOT VOTING—5

Brown	Murkowski	Sinema
Heinrich	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 43.

The motion is agreed to.

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, all postclosure time on the Rushing nomination be considered expired at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, March 5; further, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### 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 therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

#### REMEMBERING BERTA CACERES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, 3 years ago yesterday, Berta Caceres, an indigenous rights activist in Honduras who had been a vocal opponent of the construction of a hydroelectric dam that threatened the territory of the Lenka people, was murdered in her home.

That cowardly crime, about which I have spoken many times, was the culmination of years of harassment and threats against her life, and it was by

no means an isolated case. At the time, it was only the latest of scores of assassinations of social activists who protested against the confiscation of land, forced evictions, and infrastructure development involving corrupt payoffs to circumvent environmental and social safeguards, and against abuses by Honduran security forces. Nobody has been punished for any of those other, similar, crimes.

I did not know Berta Caceres, but I knew of her. I remember when she was awarded the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize. I remember the disgust and outrage I felt when I learned that she had been murdered.

I remember thinking that whoever would murder Berta Caceres, a charismatic leader who was recognized not only in her native country but around the world, must have been confident that they would never see the inside of a jail cell, because in Honduras only a small fraction of homicides, not to mention other violent crimes, ever results in conviction. Impunity and the corruption that enables it is a way of life there.

It was no surprise that in the days and weeks after Berta Caceres was murdered, the Honduran police tried to cover it up. It was only because of international pressure, including by the U.S. Embassy, that the fraudulent "investigation" did not end there, as so often happens in Honduras when the victim is not someone of notoriety.

Eventually, last November, after what seemed like interminable foot dragging, a trial resulted in the conviction of seven of those involved. That was a significant achievement, considering that absent international pressure Berta Caceres's case would have faded from memory like all the others. That trial also implicated top officials of the hydroelectric company DESA, one of whom is still awaiting trial 3 years later.

I was a prosecutor before I became a Senator. I prosecuted many murder cases. While premeditated murder is a horrific crime, it is often relatively easy to prove. In Berta Caceres's case, there was a lot of evidence. So to those who ask why, 3 years later, we are still waiting for justice, I think the answer is obvious. There are powerful forces within the Honduran Government who are beyond the reach of the Honduran justice system, and the attorney general recognizes that.

So today, 3 years later, there are some who conceived of, or knew of, the plan to murder Berta Caceres who have not been charged. The question, 3 years later, is when will they be charged? When will they be brought to justice?

Neither I nor the world have forgotten Berta Caceres. Our desire to see justice done in her case is as strong today as it was 3 years ago not only because of the importance it has for her family and her community, but for the larger cause of justice in Honduras. Impunity is a powerful, evil force, but I believe the whole truth about this crime will eventually be known.

Beyond Berta Caceres's case, the central question is whether the Honduran Government is serious about fighting the corruption that permeates not only the justice system, but practically every crevice of Honduran society and Government.

A government that is serious about fighting corruption would enact the plea bargaining law that has languished for years, without which it is extremely difficult to investigate and prosecute crimes involving top public officials or corporate executives.

A government that is serious about fighting corruption would put an abrupt end to legislation referred to as the "impunity pact." That legislation would bar the attorney general from bringing charges against someone for stealing public funds until the Supreme Auditing Tribunal, whose members are all loyal to the President, has investigated and ruled on the alleged theft. It is a transparent attempt to ensure that cases of public corruption are never prosecuted.

A government that is serious about fighting corruption would support strengthening the Mission to Support the Fight against Corruption and Impunity, not seek to "renegotiate" its mandate to eliminate or substantially weaken its investigative authority.

The Honduran Government, which professes to be a partner of the United States in fighting corruption, is not doing any of these things. The inescapable truth is that it is not serious about fighting corruption, which is apparent to anyone who is not easily fooled.

Until that changes and until all those involved in the murder of Berta Caceres are brought to justice and until Hondurans who speak out against corruption and impunity are no longer vilified and attacked, the amount of assistance we provide to the Honduran Government will be far less than it would otherwise be.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO COLONEL IAN BRYAN

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, today I honor Col. Ian Bryan of the Tennessee Air National Guard for his outstanding service to our country and congratulate him on his retirement from the U.S. Air Force. Colonel Bryan has worked closely with me, the Appropriations Committee, and across Capitol Hill to inform and advise Congress so that we may ensure a strong and ready National Guard. He has also helped the Pentagon work more productively with Congress, promoting a strong national defense.

Colonel Bryan has distinguished himself through his professional character and dedication to serving this Nation in the military for over 25 years. He has done so selflessly. He has quietly, but tenaciously advocated for the Chief of the National Guard Bureau's prior-

ities to make the National Guard a ready, capable force for operations both in the homeland and overseas.

As the Chief of the programs division in the National Guard Bureau Office of Legislative Liaison from April 2017 to February 2019, Colonel Bryan performed his duties deftly. His strategic-level thinking and foresight contributed to the completion of numerous high-level engagements between the National Guard and Congress. He was vital in the establishment of the first ever National Guard liaison office in the Senate, greatly increasing the communication between the National Guard and Congress.

Colonel Bryan is a 1990 graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, with masters from The Ohio State University, and a law degree from the University of Virginia. He has served as a KC-135 Pilot, professor at the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, air team leader in the National Guard Bureau, Office of Legislative Liaison, and as a division chief at the Air National Guard Readiness Center.

After serving in his latest role for the past 2 years, Colonel Bryan will retire at the end of the month. Ian, his supportive wife Emily, and their two children have sacrificed much as a family in service to our Nation. I join my colleagues today in congratulating Colonel Bryan on his well-earned retirement and in expressing our gratitude for his selfless service.●

##### TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN JON "JR" RODGERS

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, today I honor one of my constituents, CAPT Jon "JR" Rodgers of the U.S. Navy, who is retiring in June after three decades of dedicated service to our great Nation. JR has spent the last 2 years of his career serving the U.S. Congress as the Navy's Deputy Chief of Legislative Affairs. In this role, JR maintained oversight of the Navy team that provides Members and committees of Congress with information concerning the programs of the Department of the Navy.

JR's Tennessee roots run deep. The son of an air traffic control chief, he began life in Humboldt, TN, married his beautiful wife Sherry Masters from Celina, TN, and plans to return to our great State once his naval service has ended.

This patriot's naval career began by enlisting as a nuclear trained electronics technician until receiving an NROTC scholarship to Cornell University. He graduated with a bachelor's of science degree in agriculture engineering technologies and received his commission as a surface warfare officer in 1990. JR continued his education by attending the National Defense University, graduating with honors from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces with a masters of science degree in national resource strategy. He also attended the Naval War College in New-

port, RI, with a masters of arts in national security strategy.

His sea duty assignments include tours on the USS *England*, CG 22, and the USS *Bonhomme Richard*, LHD 6, as a plank owner, where he received the Surface Navy Association's Arleigh Burke award for Operational Excellence. He also served as executive officer aboard the USS *Cleveland*, LPD 7, during Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom as part of Amphibious Task Force West.

More recently, JR commanded the mighty USS *Makin Island*, LHD 8, the first Navy ship with hybrid electric propulsion, where he completed a successful deployment to 5th and 7th Fleet. He also commanded USS *Ponce*, AFSB 15, as the Navy's first dedicated afloat forward staging base permanently deployed to Fifth Fleet.

JR's overseas experience is just as impressive. He served as the U.S. European Command J3 chief of staff and branch head for the crisis action group during Operations Odyssey Dawn and Unified Protector. He commanded Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron Six, where he led over 600 Active and Reserve sailors on worldwide security missions that included the USNS *Comfort* Theater Security Cooperation missions throughout South America. He served as commander Task Unit Northern Arabian Gulf on the Iraq Al Basrah, ABOT, and Khor al-Amaya, KAAOT, oil terminals point defense mission, Panama and Suez Canal Embarked Security Team transits, and Operation Vigilant Mariner in Rota, Spain.

I want to thank JR for his almost 30 years of loyal service to this Nation. He has made a lasting and significant contribution to the U.S. Navy and our Nation. I wish him, his wife, and their daughter all the best as they begin this new chapter in their life.●

##### REMEMBERING WILLIAM "BILL" MURRAY

• Mr. COONS. Mr. President, today, it is with a heavy heart that I wish to recognize the life and legacy of William "Bill" Murray, a tremendous advocate for kidney disease patients in my home State of Delaware. This week, advocates from across the country will travel to Washington, DC, to meet with their congressional representatives, share their stories, and ask that we remain committed to investing in kidney disease research.

Like Bill, who became involved with the National Kidney Foundation and the kidney disease community in 2014, many patients, family members, and caregivers throughout the country will meet with their legislators and government officials to increase awareness of and improve policies focusing on kidney disease.

I am proud to say that Bill made being involved with the National Kidney Foundation a family event, often bringing his partner Linda, daughter-