

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, before I begin, I would like to take just a moment to remember the thousands of innocent lives lost 18 years ago today and to thank the first responders who so bravely sacrificed their lives in the service of others.

September 11 is a day that will always weigh heavily upon our Nation, but it is also a day that shows the strength and resiliency of the American people. In response to tragedy, we saw beyond our differences and came together as a country. That is the lesson we must never forget.

Today, I come to the floor as a voice for families in my home State of Washington who have had enough of just “thoughts and prayers” and as a mother and a grandmother who has had enough of them too. My heart breaks with every report of another horrific mass shooting.

Like my colleagues here today and the rest of our country, I watched in horror last month as devastating gun violence claimed dozens of innocent lives and threw our communities into a state of panic yet again. This heartbreak has become all too familiar to so many of us—from El Paso and Odessa, to Dayton, to Maryville in my home State of Washington, and in schools and movie theaters and community spaces across our country. So what we are doing here today is refusing to accept this as normal and demanding the change that so many families are crying out for.

Democrats are committed to heeding the voices of countless people back in Washington State and across our country who are desperate for leaders in this Washington—including President Trump and Leader MCCONNELL—to address this crisis. That is why I am joining my colleagues on the Senate floor throughout today to call on Leader MCCONNELL to take up commonsense gun safety legislation, starting with universal background checks.

We know universal background checks save lives by closing dangerous loopholes to help keep guns out of the hands of people who should not have them. That is why more than 80 percent of Americans support universal background checks and are demanding immediate action from Congress to make universal background checks the law of the land.

There certainly are other steps we can take as well. We could strengthen the extreme risk protection orders, which have worked in my home State of Washington. We could revive the assault weapons ban, invest in gun violence prevention research, and regulate firearm magazine limits. All of those steps could save lives and prevent more families from enduring the horrific pain and trauma too many already have. But H.R. 8—the universal background check legislation that has already passed the House—is literally sitting here in the Senate, waiting to be called up for a vote.

As I close, I want to be clear. Passing universal background checks must be this body’s first order of business if we are serious about protecting people and helping to keep guns out of the wrong hands. I and all of my Democratic colleagues and so many others are going to keep up the pressure as long as we have to, to get this done.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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. RISCH. 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 is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Akard nomination?

Mr. CRAPO. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 90, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 270 Ex.]

YEAS—90

Baldwin	Durbin	McConnell
Barrasso	Enzi	McSally
Blackburn	Ernst	Menendez
Blumenthal	Feinstein	Merkley
Blunt	Fischer	Moran
Boozman	Gardner	Murkowski
Braun	Graham	Murphy
Brown	Grassley	Murray
Burr	Hassan	Paul
Cantwell	Hawley	Perdue
Capito	Heinrich	Peters
Cardin	Hirono	Portman
Carper	Hoeven	Reed
Casey	Hyde-Smith	Risch
Cassidy	Inhofe	Romney
Collins	Isakson	Rosen
Coons	Johnson	Rounds
Cornyn	Jones	Rubio
Cortez Masto	Kaine	Sasse
Cotton	Kennedy	Schatz
Cramer	King	Schumer
Crapo	Lankford	Scott (FL)
Cruz	Leahy	Scott (SC)
Daines	Lee	Shaheen
Duckworth	Manchin	Shelby

Sinema	Thune	Warner
Smith	Tillis	Whitehouse
Stabenow	Toomey	Wicker
Sullivan	Udall	Wyden
Tester	Van Hollen	Young

NAYS—2

Gillibrand Markey

NOT VOTING—8

Alexander	Harris	Sanders
Bennet	Klobuchar	Warren
Booker	Roberts	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11TH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I think everyone knows today is the anniversary of 9/11. Many of us here remember evacuating this very building on September 11, 2001. We knew the world would never be the same.

For the people of New York, an ordinary beautiful morning was brought to a screeching halt as the clear blue sky filled with smoke. For those at the Pentagon, the workdays in service of our Nation turned into a literal nightmare. For hundreds of air travelers, routine flights gave way to tragedy, and, thanks to the bravery of passengers and crew, incredible acts of heroism.

The Senate stands with the entire Nation as we remember the terrible events of 18 years ago today and the nearly 3,000 innocent lives that terrorists stole away. We stand in solidarity with those who still grieve, and we honor the patriotic resolve that inspired first responders, U.S. servicemembers, and countless Americans who dedicated themselves, that day and since, to selflessly keeping our Nation safe.

May our remembrances renew our commitment to building a world where terrorist evil has no home. May we never forget.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I join the leader. Eighteen years ago, on a cloudless Tuesday morning, my city, our country, and our world changed forever. In the span of a few hours, the Twin Towers fell, the Pentagon was hit, and smoke rose from an empty field in Pennsylvania.

More than 3,000 souls were taken from us that day. I knew some of them: a guy I played basketball with in high school, a businessman who helped me on the way up, and a firefighter whom I went around the city doing blood drives with. It was one of the bloodiest days on American soil since the Civil War.

Each year we correctly and appropriately pause to remember that awful day. We mourn those whom we lost and think of them. The day after 9/11, I called for every American to wear the flag. I wear this flag every day. I have worn it every day since then in memory of them.

We also remember our resiliency and the resiliency of New Yorkers, the brave firefighters, police officers, and

ordinary citizens who rushed to the Towers.

The generosity—I will never forget a man who had a shoe store about two blocks north of the Towers who just gave shoes to all the people. Some men and women who had to run 90 flight of stairs left their shoes behind.

I remember the next day, when President Bush sent us back up to New York, and the empty skies, a bunch of F-16s around our plane going down there, smelling the smell of burnt flesh and death in the air, and seeing over 1,000 people lined up with little signs, because we didn't know who was gone and who might be found: Have you seen my sister Mary? Have you seen my son Bob?

It was an awful day and a day we live with, but we know our resilience. Many predicted that Lower Manhattan would be a ghost town forevermore. It has more people, more jobs, and more business than before 9/11. Many thought that America would succumb to the evil brutality of the terrorists. We have fought back very successfully.

We think, finally, of those who are dying now as a result of their rushing to the Towers into the hours and days after, and we are also grateful that this body has now fully funded both the health fund and the fund to see that the families are taken care of.

It is an amazing moment. I live with it all the time. I ride my bike around the city, and every seventh or eighth block has the name of a street commemorating someone who died—firefighter this and police officer that.

But America, New York, and all of us have not been beaten by the terrorists and have not been beaten by adversity. On this issue, we have come together, and we will prevail.

I ask unanimous consent that there be a minute of silence in memory of those who were lost both that day and who are still being lost because of their heroism a few days after.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE LIVES LOST IN THE ATTACKS OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will observe a moment of silence in remembrance of the events of September 11, 2001.

(Moment of silence.)

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Dale Cabaniss, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management for a term of four years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Cabaniss nomination?

Mr. HOEVEN. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 38, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 271 Ex.]

YEAS—54

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

NAYS—38

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

NOT VOTING—8

Alexander	Harris	Sanders
Bennet	Klobuchar	Warren
Booker	Roberts	

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of James Byrne, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Byrne nomination?

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 81, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 272 Ex.]

YEAS—81

Baldwin	Fischer	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Peters
Blackburn	Graham	Portman
Blumenthal	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hassan	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rosen
Braun	Heinrich	Rounds
Burr	Hoeven	Rubio
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Cardin	Inhofe	Schatz
Carper	Isakson	Scott (FL)
Casey	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Jones	Shahen
Collins	Kaine	Shelby
Coons	Kennedy	Sinema
Cornyn	King	Smith
Cortez Masto	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Leahy	Tester
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Manchin	Tillis
Cruz	McConnell	Toomey
Daines	McSally	Udall
Duckworth	Menendez	Van Hollen
Durbin	Moran	Warner
Ernst	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murphy	Wicker
	Paul	Young

NAYS—11

Brown	Markey	Schumer
Cantwell	Merkley	Stabenow
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden
Hirono	Reed	

NOT VOTING—8

Alexander	Harris	Sanders
Bennet	Klobuchar	Warren
Booker	Roberts	

The nomination was confirmed.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the Bowman nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Michelle Bowman, of Kansas, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of 14 years from February 1, 2020. (Reappointment)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.