

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 348.

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 Rachel P. Kovner, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York.

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 Rachel P. Kovner, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Kevin Cramer, John Hoeven, Rob Portman, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley, Richard Burr, John Thune, Roy Blunt.

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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, the Permanent Subcommittee for Investigations just finished a major research project.

I happen to sit on that committee led by ROB PORTMAN. He has done a phenomenal job of trying to pull all the information together to study government shutdowns.

Government shutdowns are not new to us. We hear about them a lot lately, but in the last 40 years, we have had 21 government shutdowns—21.

We have seen this issue over and over again; that when we get to a point of contention and argument, we end up shutting the government down to be able to resolve it.

So the point of discussion is not just here in DC; it is all over the country. The question is, How does that really affect the country and how does that affect the U.S. Government?

The basic study PSI did to go back and look at this was they found that the Federal workforce in the last shutdown lost 57,000 years of productivity, if you spread out all the Federal work-

ers who were furloughed, the time they were furloughed, and the time that was lost.

The total economy lost about \$11 billion in productivity during that time period, and the Federal taxpayer lost right at \$4 billion in lost money that is just gone. The cost of shutting the government down, the cost of reopening, the cost of pay during the furlough time periods when there weren't actually people there—\$4 billion lost to the taxpayer.

Yet we will probably have another one at some point and probably have another one, and it seems they just keep coming—21 of these in the last 40 years.

There is a group of us who have continued to push this. ROB PORTMAN has done it for years, several others of us have worked on other projects to try to figure out how do we resolve this issue of government shutdowns.

MAGGIE HASSAN, a Democratic colleague from New Hampshire, and I a year ago started talking through how we could get to a bipartisan solution to end government shutdowns.

We have a very unique proposal to go with this. It is a proposal that is not trying to be novel; it is not trying to be cute. It is trying to solve the problem.

Our issue is that we have very serious differences when we get to budget areas. It is \$1 trillion in total spending that we are talking about when we do the 12 appropriations bills. It is no small argument. But we should be able to resolve these things in a way that actually works and is effective.

So here is our basic idea. The process works, supposedly, where you do a budget that determines an overarching number that everyone agrees to. This is what is called the top-line number.

Then you take that top-line number in the House and the Senate in their Appropriations Committees. It gets broken up into 12 smaller bills. Those are called the appropriations bills. Those 12 bills all have to be passed by the House, by the Senate, and then they have to conference them together and get that finished by the end of the fiscal year.

It sounds like a good theory. That was the plan, at least, that was made in 1974, when this was designed. But the plan that I just laid out has worked only four times since 1974. So if you think every year that the budget process didn't work again, you are correct. It didn't work again. It has worked only four times since 1974.

What MAGGIE HASSAN and I would like to insert into this process is the ability to have serious, hard debate on difficult financial issues where we have disagreements but contain the fight to Washington, DC, to do two things: Make sure that we get to the appropriations process, that it is done well, and to hold the Federal workers and Federal families and the rest of the country harmless as we argue through this.

Here is the simple idea: If we get to the end of the fiscal year, if we do not have any 1 of those 12 appropriations bills done—and we should have all 12 of them done. But if even one is undone when we get to the end of the fiscal year, there is a continuation of spending exactly as it was the year before. It just continues to run the same as it was the year before so that Federal agencies, Federal workers will continue to operate as they normally do. But because there is not an appropriations bill done for the next year, while Federal workers are being held harmless and agencies are being held harmless, Members of Congress and our staffs and the Office of Management and Budget of the White House would lose all travel ability. We would have no official travel ability at all. We couldn't go home and see our families, couldn't travel on codels, couldn't do other responsibilities. We would be here in Washington and be in session in the House and the Senate every day of the week, weekdays and weekends included.

It is literally the equivalent of when my brother and I would get into an argument when we were kids, which clearly didn't happen often. But when it did happen, my mom would say to my brother and me: The two of you go into one of your rooms. Work this out. When you get it worked out, you can come out.

That would basically put Washington, DC, inside the box. The rest of the country is not in it, but Washington, DC, would have to stay here, and we would have to work out our differences. When it is worked out, then we pass appropriations bills.

The other feature that is added to it is that we can't move on to other things. We couldn't get distracted and say that we are just not going to do appropriations bills and then just stay here and do other things. We would have to do appropriations bills during that time period.

This is a simple idea, though most people I have talked to have said: That is too simple. That would never work.

As I have talked to my colleagues in the House and the Senate, just about all of them have cringed when I have said that we are going to be here weekdays and weekends and keep going on one topic until we finish that one topic.

It is our constitutional responsibility to take care of the American people's tax dollars and to make sure it is done correctly. We can move on to other things when we fulfill our constitutional responsibility on that. Just about everyone I have talked to has said: That is an idea that I could vote for, that I can support.

I bring it up to this body to tell people that we are still negotiating the final language of this bill. If there is an idea that people have to say "I have one thing to ask about it," bring it. If you have one thing to suggest to change it, bring it. But in the next few

weeks, before we get to the November 21 deadline, which is the new deadline now for spending—before we get to that spot, I want this issue resolved. I want government shutdowns off the table. I never want to see on any of the news channels ever again the countdown clock to when the government shuts down. That hurts the American people; it hurts American companies; and it certainly hurts the Federal families who go on furlough during that time period.

Let's stay in the ring, boxing it out, and let's hold everyone else harmless as we go through the process.

I encourage my colleagues to bring their ideas, and let's get this resolved in the next few weeks.

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

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

The Senator from Ohio.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICORPS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, this fall we celebrate the 25th anniversary of AmeriCorps. Since President Kennedy challenged Americans to serve our Nation abroad in the Peace Corps in his famous University of Michigan speech, generations of Americans have recognized that our greatest strength as a nation is our compassion. But it wasn't until AmeriCorps was founded about 30 years later, 1994, that we truly addressed the need for service here at home.

When I think about the work AmeriCorps members do, I think about the words of a speaker at a Martin Luther King breakfast in my home city of Cleveland on a cold January morning, and the speaker said: Your life expectancy is connected to your ZIP Code.

Think about that. Your life expectancy is connected to your ZIP Code. Whether you grow up in Appalachia or Ohio, Indiana, whether you grow up in a city, an inner-ring city suburb, a small city like I did in Mansfield, or a small town, your ZIP Code often determines whether you have access to quality healthcare or good education and the social support necessary to succeed. Whether it is through City Year or Senior Corps or VISTA—all parts of AmeriCorps—America works to fight that and ensure that so many Americans, regardless of their ZIP Code, have the opportunity not only to succeed but to thrive.

I have seen firsthand what a difference AmeriCorps makes in people's lives. My two daughters had amazing, life-changing experiences, teaching for a year through City Year. We all benefit when we invest in organizations that serve communities that are too often left behind and when these organizations are staffed by young Americans who care about those they serve.

In Ohio, we have a City Year in Cleveland and Columbus. I have met many of these City Year volunteers and see the work they do.

AmeriCorps in my State played a major difference in the Summer Feeding Program. Literally tens and tens of thousands of children are able to eat well in the summer because of the work that AmeriCorps does.

Since 1994, more than a million Americans have served in communities across the country, serving tens of millions of Americans. All of their work will have a lasting impact on children and families, and I can't wait to see what these good AmeriCorps members will do over the next quarter century.

TRIBUTE TO JENNY DONAHUE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today not very happily, if I can say, as my employee and my friend Jenny Donahue is leaving our office to take a really big job in the U.S. House of Representatives, especially at a challenging, difficult time, and she will serve there, I assume, every bit as well as she served in the U.S. Senate.

Jenny is a middle-class kid who grew up in small town Idaho. I have not hired a lot of people in my office from Idaho, but if the next person from Idaho is this good, that will be a great thing. She graduated from the University of Montana. Moving east, she went on to become a leader in the U.S. Senate. She is a leader among communications directors. She is a leader in my office, and she is a leader in this entire body. She has left an indelible mark.

Part of being a good leader is being a good mentor. She nurtures young talent. She brings out the best in the people she works with.

My wife, Connie Schultz, who is one of Jenny's greatest admirers—and there are many great admirers of Jenny—loves to say that she is one of the most fierce advocates for young women she has ever met in her life. She also says, oftentimes, that Jenny carries as she climbs. As she moves up in life and moves up into a new position, you can bet that so many people are going to benefit from her leadership and her mentorship.

She has earned my wife's respect. That speaks such volumes about our friend Jenny. She has earned the respect of many Ohio reporters. She understands how important their work is to Ohio communities and to our democracy.

She respects journalism, understanding that journalism is about comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable. She knows that without journalism—good journalism—you can't have good democracy.

She has been with me through some of the biggest moments over the past 4 years as a friend, as an adviser, and challenging me sometimes and telling me when I am wrong oftentimes but always being there in the right ways.

She has been part of the dignity of work rollout. She was part of our trip to the border to bear witness to the hu-

manitarian crisis in part caused by the President of the United States. She was part of the historic 2016 Democratic National Convention.

She helped put my vision of dignity of work on the road earlier this year, including a trip to Selma, AL. Jenny has such courage of her convictions. She is not afraid to tell me when I am wrong. She is not afraid to challenge others, always coming from a place of integrity and honesty—always.

She never does anything halfway. When she says she will do something, when she sets her mind to doing something, she does it, and she does it fully. She does it well. She does it better than pretty much anyone else could.

The day after the 2016 election, my staff was pretty stunned that a human being like Donald Trump would be in the White House; that someone with his lack of character, with his inability to tell the truth, with his treatment of women, would be President of the United States. We were all pretty stunned.

I gathered the staff in my office and told them our jobs would become that much more important. Jenny took on this charge. Jenny, who was already good before the 2016 election, took on this charge of how our work mattered, how I was one of the only selected officials in Ohio who would challenge the President's dishonesty, who would challenge the President's illegal behavior, and who would challenge the President's mean-spiritedness at the border, on the overtime rule, cutting food stamps—all the things this billionaire has done. Jenny knew how important that was. She took on this charge with a sense of responsibility and a purpose that made me proud, just like I know her parents and her grandparents are.

As she moves on to her next job in the House of Representatives, a leader in the House, as she has been in the Senate, she moves on to continue fighting for justice and the dignity of work in her new role.

Jenny, Godspeed.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO GENERAL JOHN KELLY, GENERAL JAMES MATTIS, AND GENERAL JOSEPH DUNFORD

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, this afternoon I would like to honor and recognize the important service of three men, three Marine generals who have served their country in uniform and who have served their country in the civilian world as well, who have served with honor and dignity in ways that I think deserve recognition on the floor of the U.S. Senate. They have done this service in a manner that is befitting of marines, with dignity, class, and honor. I am talking about