

Florida, both to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit, Sylvia Carreno-Coll, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico, John M. Gallagher, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and Sherri A. Lydon, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Special Committee on Aging is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 16, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks on Thursday, October 17, the Committee on Environment and Public Works be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 53. I further ask unanimous consent that if a motion to proceed is made and agreed to, the time until noon be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, on the joint resolution, and that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the bill be read a third time and the Senate vote on passage of S.J. Res. 53.

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

RELATING TO A NATIONAL EMERGENCY DECLARED BY THE PRESIDENT ON FEBRUARY 15, 2019—VETO

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, is the veto message with respect to S.J. Res. 54 at the desk?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It is.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the veto message on S.J. Res. 54 be considered as having been read, that it be printed in the RECORD, and spread in full upon the Journal.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The veto message is ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S.J. Res. 54, a joint resolution that would terminate the national emergency I declared in Proclamation 9844 of February 15, 2019, pursuant to the National Emergencies Act, regarding the ongoing crisis on our southern border. I am doing so for the same reasons I returned an identical resolution, H.J. Res. 46, to the House of Representatives without my approval on March 15, 2019.

Proclamation 9844 has helped the Federal Government address the national emergency on our southern border. It has empowered my Administration's Government-wide strategy to counter large-scale unlawful migration and to respond to corresponding humanitarian challenges through focused

application of every Constitutional and statutory authority at our disposal. It has also facilitated the military's ongoing construction of virtually insurmountable physical barriers along hundreds of miles of our southern border.

The southern border, however, continues to be a major entry point for criminals, gang members, and illicit narcotics to come into our country. As explained in Proclamation 9844, in my veto message regarding H.J. Res. 46, and in congressional testimony from multiple Administration officials, the ongoing crisis at the southern border threatens core national security interests. In addition, security challenges at the southern border exacerbate an ongoing humanitarian crisis that threatens the well-being of vulnerable populations, including women and children.

In short, the situation on our southern border remains a national emergency, and our Armed Forces are still needed to help confront it.

Like H.J. Res. 46, S.J. Res. 54 would undermine the Government's ability to address this continuing national emergency. It would, among other things, impair the Government's capacity to secure the Nation's southern borders against unlawful entry and to curb the trafficking and smuggling that fuels the present humanitarian crisis.

S.J. Res. 54 is also inconsistent with other recent congressional actions. For example, the Congress, in an overwhelmingly bipartisan manner, has provided emergency resources to address the crisis at the southern border. Additionally, the Congress has approved a budget framework that expressly preserves the emergency authorities my Administration is using to address the crisis.

Proclamation 9844 was neither a new nor novel application of executive authority. Rather, it is the sixtieth Presidential invocation of the National Emergencies Act of 1976. It relies upon the same statutory authority used by both of the previous two Presidents to undertake more than 18 different military construction projects from 2001 through 2013. And it has withstood judicial challenge in the Supreme Court.

Earlier this year, I vetoed H.J. Res. 46 because it was a dangerous resolution that would undermine United States sovereignty and threaten the lives and safety of countless Americans. It was, therefore, my duty to return it to the House of Representatives without my approval. It is similarly my duty, in order to protect the safety and security of our Nation, to return S.J. Res. 54 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.
THE WHITE HOUSE, October 15, 2019.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 1:45 p.m. tomorrow, the Senate vote on passage of S.J. Res. 54, notwithstanding the objections of the President to the contrary.

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

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—S.J. RES. 58 AND H.J. RES. 77

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the titles of the bills for the first time en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S.J. Res. 58) expressing support for freedom of conscience.

A resolution (H.J. Res. 77) opposing the decision to end certain United States efforts to prevent Turkish military operations against Syrian Kurdish forces in Northeast Syria.

Mr. McCONNELL. I now ask for a second reading, and I object to my own request, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will receive a second reading on the next legislative day.

NATIONAL CHARACTER COUNTS WEEK

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 358, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 358) designating the week beginning October 20, 2019, as "National Character Counts Week."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 358) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

NATIONAL POLYCYSTIC KIDNEY DISEASE AWARENESS DAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 356.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 356) designating September 4, 2019, as "National Polycystic Kidney Disease Awareness Day", and raising

awareness and understanding of polycystic kidney disease.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 356) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of September 26, 2019, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

NATIONAL URBAN WILDLIFE REFUGE DAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 324.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 324) designating September 29, 2019, as “National Urban Wildlife Refuge Day”.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 324) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of September 24, 2019, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE ATRIUM IN THE PHILIP A. HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING FOR THE NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK DAY, A SEMI-ANNUAL EVENT FOR THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 359 submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 359) authorizing the use of the atrium in the Philip A. Hart Senate Office Building for the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, a semiannual event for the Drug Enforcement Administration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 359) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in today's RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2019

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10:00 a.m., Thursday, October 17; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator MARKEY.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the impeachment inquiry currently under way in the House of Representatives. The House impeachment inquiry is a solemn and serious matter. It concerns the official conduct of the President of the United States, and it implicates matters of grave importance: our national security, the rule of law, and the very foundations of our Constitution.

We all—Democrats and Republicans alike—have a duty to defend our democracy, so when we are confronted with evidence that President Donald Trump abused his power and violated his oath of office by seeking foreign interference in our elections and then sought to cover it up, we have a constitutional obligation to investigate.

The evidence we have already seen validates Speaker PELOSI's decision to

open an impeachment inquiry and reinforces the need for this inquiry to continue unimpeded. Indeed, Donald Trump himself has already confirmed key evidence.

Just look at what we know so far. We know that Donald Trump asked a foreign power, Ukraine, to investigate his political opponent. The President both admitted it on live television and then released a transcript showing that it had happened just as a whistleblower alleged that it did. That is not in dispute.

We also know that Donald Trump then doubled down, subsequently admitting on camera that he wants foreign governments like Ukraine and China to investigate his political opponents. That is not in dispute.

So instead of focusing on the Latin phrase “quid pro quo,” the President should be saying, “mea culpa”—my fault, but he is not. And with each passing day, additional evidence of serious wrongdoing at the highest levels of our government has surfaced, evidence that Donald Trump has subjugated the Nation's interest to his personal and political interest and evidence that plainly warrants further investigation.

For example, we learned that prior to his phone call with Ukrainian President Zelensky, Donald Trump blocked almost \$400 million in military and security aid to Ukraine. Moreover, as the White House's own partial transcript of the conversation reflects, Donald Trump conditioned this aid on the Ukrainian President's willingness to conduct a political investigation, telling him: “I would like you to do this as a favor though.”

Donald Trump's quid pro quo linking U.S. military and security aid to a politically motivated investigation makes his admitted solicitation of foreign interference in our elections that much worse. It is an abuse of power and betrayal of Trump's oath to the Constitution and promise to the American people.

We have also learned that White House officials moved the transcript of the phone call between President Trump and President Zelensky from its typical electronic storage system to a separate system intended to handle classified information of an especially sensitive nature. In other words, there appears to have been an effort to cover up Donald Trump's wrongdoing.

We are also witnessing extraordinary attacks by Donald Trump on the whistleblower who brought the matter to light.

Donald Trump's attacks on this individual are so serious and so harmful that they may rise to the level of witness tampering and obstruction of justice. They send a chilling message to others who may have information and are contemplating coming forward.

It should go without saying that whistleblowers play an important role