

We should instead capitalize on the good will that we are trying to generate in this first package on appropriations by immediately moving to the next one that funds the military and so many other agencies.

This process only works if we work together in a bipartisan way, as Madam President knows. Let's work together this afternoon, and let's do our job so we can move forward for the American people. I think we should not leave our military and others to think that the government is in limbo any longer.

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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, as the distinguished senior Senator from Alabama has said, we are going to be voting soon on our "domestic minibus." We will vote on a cloture motion to proceed to H.R. 3055.

I understand that once we are on the bill, Chairman SHELBY is going to offer a substitute amendment that will include four bills that were reported from the Appropriations Committee with every Republican and every Democrat voting for them—the Agriculture bill, the Interior bill, the Commerce-Justice-Science bill, and the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development bill.

I know that some feel that sometimes the Congress gets so polarized that we could not have a unanimous vote that the Sun rises in the east, but this was a case where we did in our committee, which has representatives of all wings of the Republican Party and all wings of the Democratic Party. We all voted aye, and I would urge Members to vote aye.

I am pleased that the substitute package will not include the Military Construction and the Veterans Affairs bill, and let me explain why.

The underlying House vehicle we are moving to contains the House version of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bill, but the Senate Appropriations Committee has not yet considered this bill. We have not had debate in the committee. We have not had a vote on it in committee. It would be premature to bring it to the Senate floor.

It is an important bill. It is an important bill that I have always supported because it funds critical programs, particularly for our veterans. But President Trump wants to insist on using the bill to take funding from our troops and their families to fund his ineffective wall—a wall that he gave his word Mexico would pay for—and that is unacceptable.

Look at the people who are affected by the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bill. Let's not get them tied up in a Presidential campaign promise. Let's look at the military families who are now living in substandard housing. Let's look at the veterans who are not getting the care they need. Let's have a clean bill.

Had the bill with the President's wall been in this—the American people would be paying for it and not Mexico, as the President promised—I would have been unable to support the cloture motion.

I am going to have more to say about each of the four bipartisan bills included in Chairman SHELBY's substitute when we turn to them. Hopefully we can by tomorrow. Each one funds programs that are important to the American people and our economy. They make critical investments in affordable housing, infrastructure, rural development, our farming communities, our small businesses, and our environment. They are good bills. I was glad to work with Senator SHELBY so we could have these bills before the Senate. They speak to real needs of the American people.

Now we have only 4 short weeks before the continuing resolution we are operating under expires. Four weeks can go by very quickly around here. We need to do our work. We need to do it quickly. We should be able to enact all 12 appropriations bills into law. I was going to say the Senate deserves no less, but it is the American people who deserve no less. So I will continue to work with Senator SHELBY and others, both Republicans and Democrats alike, to get these bills done.

We have a vote coming up soon.

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. CARDIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

VOTE ON BREMBERG NOMINATION

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

Mr. CARDIN. Madam 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 Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), and the Senator

from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 329 Ex.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—44

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

NOT VOTING—6

Booker	Isakson	Warren
Harris	Sanders	Whitehouse

The nomination was confirmed.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.J. RES. 77

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I am rising once again to ask the Senate's consent to move to the H.J. Res. 77 condemning the President's abrupt decision to withdraw U.S. troops from northern Syria.

Despite the Pandora's box of problems the President's decision has opened, the slaughter of our partners, the Kurds—and I think many of us on both sides of the aisle ache for the Kurds who risked their lives. Many of them lost their lives so our soldiers would not be in harm's way.

With the strategic gains of our adversaries in Tehran, Moscow, and Damascus and, most troubling, the potential resurgence of ISIS, the President has failed to articulate any strategy at all. We have asked to have Secretary Pompeo, Secretary Esper, and Director Haspel come before us. They have canceled again today because they don't have a plan.

Now, this is America at risk. We in New York know better than anybody else how a small group of people thousands of miles away—evil people—can

cause terrorism and hurt us. There is no strategy about what to do with the tens of thousands of ISIS prisoners and their fellow travelers who had been locked up and guarded by the Kurds.

No one believes—and I have talked to the top military intelligence people—that either Syria or Turkey has the interest in preventing ISIS from escaping that we do. Erdogan, in fact, hates the Kurds far more than he hates ISIS.

So every day this lack of policy and this lack of common sense from the President and this White House puts American lives in danger. What is the best way to get the President to act? Well, my friends, you know it. It is you. When Republican Senators protest what the President has done, he sometimes acts. Witness Doral. I guarantee you my speeches had very little effect on him, but yours did. Well, this is far more important than Doral. This is America, and lives are at stake. Our battle against terrorism, to be fought jointly most of the time, is now being jeopardized. Frankly, when Leader MCCARTHY and Representative SCALISE and Representative CHENEY can vote for this kind of resolution, why should we not be doing the same? It will send a better message to the President than anything else we can do.

My friend, the Republican leader, said we need a stronger resolution. Quibbling over words at a time when America is in danger doesn't make sense to me—particularly a resolution that he knows will not pass the House and not go to the President's desk.

So I would plead with my colleagues, let's move forward. I plead with my friend from Kentucky—they are both my friends from Kentucky—but I plead with the junior Senator from Kentucky, do not stand in the way.

He has a different world view than almost all of us. We talked earlier this morning. I asked him if he was against going after the Taliban and bin Laden when they hit us in America, in New York, and he said no. Well, this is the same kind of thing. We are happy to vote on his resolution. Let's vote on both. This is momentous.

These terrorist acts from escaped ISIS prisoners might not occur tomorrow, they might not occur 6 months from now, and they might not occur a year from now, but they may. They certainly—almost certainly will at some point in the future, and we will risk lives: the American lives of our intelligence officials, of our Special Forces, and we will risk the security of America and spend millions of dollars.

The sooner we can put this back—and the only person who can is President Trump, and the only people who can really pressure him are sitting right here. I would plead with my colleague from Kentucky and with all of us because even if he objects, we could pass this joint resolution within a few days to do it. Our security, the security of this wonderful country and its beautiful 320-some-odd million people deserve no less.

Madam President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 246, H.J. Res. 77; that the joint resolution be read a third time, and the Senate vote on passage with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, reserving the right to object. If Democrats want to send our young men and women to fight in the Syrian civil war, let's have that debate. By all means, let's have a constitutional debate today on the Senate floor, right here, right now. If Democrats are so hungry for war, let's have that debate.

Our Founding Fathers gave us a constitutional method to go to war. If there be a national security interest in Syria, let's hear it. The other side does not want that debate. They want to lob invectives at the President, but they aren't prepared to debate about whom we are to go to war against.

Do they wish to declare war on our NATO ally, Turkey? Do they wish to declare war on our former ally, the Free Syrian Army? Do they wish to declare war on Syria's Assad? They don't know.

No, Democrats just want to heap abuse on the President. They don't want to debate war because they have no clue on whom to declare war.

In reality, the President made the wise decision to move 50 soldiers out of the way of tens of thousands of Turkish troops. Ironically, the President's decision may finally allow the Kurds to negotiate with Assad for a semi-autonomous region in northern Syria. Perhaps, if the Kurds pledge their battle-proven fighters to Assad, they might receive in exchange some autonomy and a share of the oil receipts, much as the Kurds did in Iraq. Already we are seeing promising cooperation between the Kurds and Assad.

This week, Turkey's Erdogan met with Putin. Putin already is allied with Assad. There is a possibility diplomacy may actually break through here. There is a real chance that the Syrian civil war could come to an end if Assad, with the Kurds' help, would agree to secure the border and not allow Kurdish raids into Turkey.

The permanent war caucus on both sides of the aisle claims that repositioning 50 troops is the end of the world. Perhaps, just maybe, less of our presence in Syria will actually lead to diplomacy and, ultimately, peace. Only time will tell.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I don't want to prolong this. I will make two quick points. No. 1, my friend from Kentucky thinks he knows what is better for the Kurds than the Kurds know. The Kurds hate going into the arms of Syria—hate it.

Second, if our friend from Kentucky believes that any time we have a small number of Special Forces in different places—and we have them all over—we need a declaration of war, then his view is different from 99.9 percent of America and every other single person in this Chamber.

We do not need a declaration of war for a small number of Special Forces to be there to protect us against terrorism, and my friend from Kentucky knows that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, if our goal is to create a Kurdish homeland and to defend it for them, hell yes, we need a debate and a vote and an authorization of force.

You can't just say that we are going to stay there forever. It would take tens of thousands of troops if you want to pacify Syria. It has not been pacified for 8 years. It is an utter and complete mess, and it is time we get the hell out.

CLOTURE MOTION

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 motion to proceed to Calendar No. 141, H.R. 3055, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, John Cornyn, John Thune, John Hoeven, John Boozman, Thom Tillis, Steve Daines, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Richard Burr, Shelley Moore Capito, Roy Blunt, Mike Rounds, Mike Crapo, James E. Risch.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 3055, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes, 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 Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.