Catholic? She was asked that in the Committee on the Judiciary.

Another offered this bizarre and ominous remark: ''The dogma lives loudly within you, and that's a concern.''

So, look, these warning signs on religious freedom are literally popping up everywhere the modern political left rears its head.

Religious freedom in America has never—never—meant and will never mean solely the freedom to worship privately. It has never meant and will never mean the ability to practice only a subset of faiths acceptable to some subset of politicians. What it means is the right to live your life according to the dictates of your faith and your conscience, free from government coercion.

If those statements strike anybody in this Chamber as remotely controversial, that is exactly why President Trump, Senate Republicans, and millions of Americans are focused on confirming Federal judges who will apply our Constitution as it was originally written.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Richard Ernest Myers II, of North Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

FOSTERING UNDERGRADUATE TALENT BY UNLOCKING RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION ACT

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Madam President, first, I thank the Democratic leader for the opportunity to move forward on this unanimous consent.

As in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 212, H.R. 2486.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2486) to reauthorize mandatory funding programs for historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions.

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

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Alexander-Murray amendment at the desk be agreed to and that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 1255), in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Madam President, I know of no further debate on the bill, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Hearing none, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill, as amended, pass?

The bill (H.R. 2486), as amended, was passed.

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senators from South Carolina, Tennessee, Washington State, and Alabama be allowed to speak for brief moments on the great job they have done and that I be given back my leadership time at 10:50.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, on behalf of all of us, I want to thank the Democratic leader for his courtesy and his support on this. He and Senator MCCONNELL have made it possible for us to do this.

I am going to limit my remarks to a couple of minutes, and then Senator MURRAY and then Senator SCOTT, Senator COONS, Senator JONES are here, and we will finish by 10:50.

Madam President, it is hard to think of a piece of legislation that would have a more lasting impact upon minority students in America than the bill that the Senate just passed.

I believe, in doing so, we have improved the provision in the House bill that was sent to us. That is what we did; we amended a House bill that we are now sending back to them. We have been working with leaders in the House to make sure that our bill is something the House can accept and pass. We hope that will happen in the next couple of weeks, and here is the result of it happening: No. 1, a big step for historically Black colleges and minority institutions—permanent funding at the level of $255 million a year for those institutions that serve up to 2 million minority students. That is No. 1.

The second big step is one that Senator MURRAY and I and our committee, Senator JONES, Senator BENNET, Senator KING, and many others have been working on for 5 years to simplify the form that students use to apply for Federal aid for college. Twenty million families fill out what is called the FAFSA, a Federal aid form, every year; then we have students who borrow more than $100 billion a year. What we have done in this bill is reduce the complexity of filing that FAFSA form by saying to students: You don't have to give your Federal tax information to the government twice. We will take the up to 22 questions that are a part of the 108-question FAFSA, and we will eliminate them, and if the student gives his or her express consent, the Internal Revenue Service will answer those questions for the student.

I can't tell you how many times students, parents, college presidents, Federal aid counselors have told me that the application and the verification of this information has discouraged low-income students from coming to college.

Five and one-half million of the twenty million students who fill out these forms have the accuracy of those forms questioned. This will eliminate that for most of the students because they will have to give that information to the government only once.

I want to thank Senator MURRAY especially for her work on this. We work together on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee in the Senate, but Senator COONS, Senator SCOTT, Senator RICHARD BURR of North Carolina—which has the largest number of historically Black colleges—and Senator JONES of Alabama have also been crucial with their support.

I yield the floor to Senator MURRAY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, HBCUs, Tribal colleges, and other minority-serving institutions—or MSIs—are an essential part of our entire higher education system, and those institutions serve nearly 6 million undergraduate students, a large majority of whom are students of color or Native students.

Funding for those critical institutions should never be up for debate, and now, because of this, it will not be. I am so glad we have reached a bipartisan deal that will permanently fund HBCUs and MSIs.

I know many of our colleagues worked very hard on this, but I especially want to thank Senator JONES for his leadership in pushing to make sure this got done, as well as my partner

Senator ALEXANDER, and, of course, Senators COONS, SCOTT, and BURR.

I am also pleased that this legislation streamlines Federal student aid for more than 20 million students applying for aid and nearly 8 million borrowers.

Our Nation's outdated and overly complicated financial aid system is forcing students and borrowers to jump through too many hoops to access Federal financial aid and verify their tax returns, which they have already filled out, and to get help if they are struggling to pay their student loans.

The FAFSA Act, which has been included in this bill, allows data to be securely shared between the IRS and the Department of Education, making it easier for students to fill out the FAFSA and pay their loans.

This bill will strengthen privacy protections and how students and borrowers navigate their financial aid through a streamlined, more efficient process.

This bill is also thanks to Jeff Appel, an integral member of Federal Student Aid who recently passed away. I am grateful for his contribution, and I know that he will be sorely missed.

There is one more way in which this agreement we have reached is important. This proves once again that we can work across the aisle and get things done when we all stay focused squarely on what is best for students.

We have a lot of work ahead of us to make higher education in our country more affordable and accessible and to hold schools accountable for student outcomes and ensure student safety on campus. I am hopeful that we can build on this bipartisan progress we have seen so far as we continue working together to reauthorize the Higher Education Act in a comprehensive way.

Again, I want to thank all of my colleagues for their work on this, and I look forward to more to come.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Madam President, to avoid the risk of being redundant, I want to put a little skin on the bones as relates to what this act really means to college students, particularly those college students entering into the process for the very first time and their families.

What it means is simply this: Simplification means more education for a lot more students, and that is good news. We oftentimes talk about the importance of keeping the American dream alive and keeping it well. This will provide significant opportunities for low-income students to get through the process very quickly.

In South Carolina we have eight HBCUs. The economic impact of those graduates is around $5 billion of lifetime earnings. This bill makes that more achievable, more attainable, and keeps the American Dream alive and well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. JONES. Madam President, I am rising today with just, for lack of a better term, an incredible amount of hope and excitement—something we don't always see on the Senate floor these days. We go through so many routine measures. We go through so many political speeches. But today is truly a day of hope and excitement and optimism because we are on the verge of a significant moment for our Nation's historically Black colleges and universities and all minority-serving institutions. I frankly hope that in our partisan world we are living in and in our partisan America, people across this country are tuning in right now or at least will follow what is happening on the floor of the Senate today, where a bipartisan coalition has come together for a significant and important segment of our population that deserves the same economic and educational opportunities as everyone else.

Fourteen months ago, I came to this Chamber to introduce a permanent extension, an increase of funding for these important institutions of education. Nearly half of all the funding they receive was set to run out on September 30, 2019. We secured a quarter of the Senate as cosponsors of the bill, and we laid out an ambitious proposal.

In the new Congress, with the clock ticking down toward the deadline, we offered a more modest but bipartisan and paid-for plan to avert the looming fiscal cliff. But our goal and the goal of everyone here and the goal of all of those, including my friend Senator ALEXANDER, was to always reach the ultimate goal of permanent funding, a permanent solution for these important institutions.

All told, these schools serve 6 million students across the country. They are often the foundation upon which families begin to build generational wealth—not just one person who goes to college but generational wealth in communities that have long faced systematic barriers to doing so. They create good, sustainable jobs. They are part of the very foundation of our higher education system in this country and in my State in particular.

With all the due respect to my friend Senator MURRAY from Washington, there is a little controversy about who has the most HBCUs. I would claim that Alabama does with 14, but that is for debate on another day. But we can all agree that supporting these schools and the students they serve is not a partisan issue. I think we can all agree on that. I think we have shown that we can agree that funding should never become a political football. We have all been working toward the same goal.

To say the least, I am so deeply relieved that today we forged this bipartisan compromise that will allow these schools the funding and the certainty they need to go forward and continue fulfilling their important mission.

I sincerely especially want to thank my colleagues on the HELP Committee and Chairman ALEXANDER and Ranking Member MURRAY in particular for their leadership and willingness to reach across the aisle and find the common ground for the better good of this community. I also want to thank my friend Senator SCOTT from South Carolina for joining me on what we have done over the last couple of years to introduce the FUTURE Act and to push it forward.

I believe—and I have said this for so long—that we have so much more in common than we have that divides us. This is just one example. It is why I hope folks across the country are looking and see that we can come together and we can be unified.

I am grateful today because in addition to the permanent funding of HBCUs and minority-serving institutions, this agreement, as the Senator from Tennessee said, includes a long overdue, first big step toward simplifying the FAFSA application.

Even with a law degree, I can tell you that with my kids, trying to do that made me pull out what little bit of hair I have left. I didn't need to do that. It is not just a frustrating process; it can be so intimidating that students or their parents just walk away. In Alabama alone, kids walked away from millions of dollars of Federal financial aid and grants, not just loans. The FAFSA as it is today can be a huge barrier for students who want to go to college.

The proposal we have on the table now will help save taxpayers and make the FAFSA process less painful by cutting up to 22 questions from the form. It lays the groundwork for a broader FAFSA reform that Senator ALEXANDER and I have been working on to cut even further to between 17 to 30 questions.

But getting across the finish line today is not just about renewing funding or cutting redtape. At their core, these issues are about opening doors of opportunity for young people who have talent and motivation to succeed in college and in life, but they have not necessarily had the financial means or the family connections to do so. This is about making sure we empower every young person in this country to reach their full potential and then pay it forward for future generations. That is what gives me hope standing here today. It is what makes me excited today.

Again, I want to thank my colleagues for the incredible effort—Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY in particular. Our hearts have always been in the right place. We have always moved the ball forward knowing that the long-term goal was to help these families for generations to come.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, today is about a moment of hope. Today is about a moment of genuine bipartisanship made possible by the discipline

and determined leadership of Senators ALEXANDER of Tennessee and MURRAY of Washington State.

I rise to join my friend and colleague, the Senator from Alabama, who has just given remarks following the Senator from South Carolina. At a moment when what most Americans see on their televisions is partisan division and dysfunction in the Senate and the House, I just want to remind all of us that we can get good, important, and significant things done together, as just happened on the floor a few moments ago.

For generations, American families have worked and saved and strived to send their children to college, but for a long time, our Nation's original sin—the sin of slavery and racism—has left a long shadow and a stain on access to the critical opportunity of higher education. In much of our Nation, for decades, African Americans were denied entry to most of our colleges and universities and still today face unreasonably high barriers to higher education. The establishment of historically Black colleges and universities, HBCUs, and other minority-serving institutions of higher learning has been a critical answer to that tragic history of discrimination.

Men and women who founded HBCUs refused to accept a system of higher education that denied opportunity to African Americans, and over decades, HBCUs have risen to become some of our Nation's finest academic institutions. They have educated hundreds of thousands of young men and women who have gone on to do incredible things and to be some of our Nation's greatest leaders.

That is why all of us who have come on the floor today, Republicans and Democrats, have acted to make a permanent commitment to supporting HBCUs and minority-serving institutions with Federal funding. We have agreed to make permanent $255 million in annual funding for HBCUs.

I am particularly excited about this legislation because my home State of Delaware is home to one of the finest public HBCUs in the country, Delaware State University. Founded in 1891, it is one of the country's premier land grant universities. Over the last 125 years, it has emerged as one of our Nation's premier HBCUs, graduating some of my State's best accountants, business leaders, researchers, scientists, teachers, social workers, and much more.

My friend Dr. Wilma Mishoe, the University's first female president, will end her impressive tenure this month and be succeeded by Provost Dr. Tony Allen, who will continue the upwardly rising trajectory of the Hornets of Delaware State University.

Their research programs are important drivers for innovation in a State with a long history of invention. It is home to the Delaware Center for Neuroscience Research, a partnership of institutions working to advance our understanding of our brains and how we form thoughts, memories, and feelings that may help unlock the key to addiction and other challenges our country faces. It is also home to OSCAR, the Optical Science Center for Applied Research, which is helping speed the detection of disease, supporting our soldiers in detecting threats, and even equipping the NASA Mars rovers with improved sensors. Delaware State has been the lead institution on grants from NASA, NSF, and NIH in just the last few years.

We are very proud of Delaware State. The funding stream last year provided $880,000 in critically needed funding for STEM, faculty, research, and students.

Let me last reference something that my colleagues have also spoken to: the streamlining of the free application for Federal student aid, or FAFSA, which impacts 20 million American families.

I spent a long time—roughly 20 years of my life—actively involved in the national ''I Have a Dream'' Foundation, which provides college-access opportunities for young people from families with no means or experience of attending higher education. I myself sat with dozens of young Delawareans and struggled as we finished the FAFSA form for them. This long-worked-for solution that Senators Alexander and Murray have advanced streamlining this form from 108 questions to 22 is a critical first step that will make a lasting difference for access to education all over our Nation.

I am so grateful for the opportunity to join this bipartisan coalition and look forward to even more progress in the months and years ahead.

Thank you.

With that, I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first, let me thank my colleagues from South Carolina, Tennessee, Washington State, Alabama, and Delaware for their hard work on this very important issue. I appreciated their words, and I think far more appreciated even than their eloquent words is the fact that we are getting this done, finally. I am so glad for it.

Let me just add my words of support for the FUTURE Act. A few minutes ago, as I mentioned, we passed the FUTURE Act by unanimous consent. I am so glad and grateful that the Senate came together today to give these institutions and the students they serve the certainty needed to continue focusing on their important mission.

In America, we believe in ladders up. People should have to climb those ladders. No one is going to put them up on a pedestal. But there should be the ladders there so that if somebody wants to work hard, they are given fair opportunity and barriers—sometimes barriers based on bigotry and discrimination—do not stand in their way.

One of the best ladders-up we have in America is our HBCUs. HBCUs make up 3 percent of colleges and universities, but they produce 27 percent of African-American students with bachelor degrees in STEM fields, 80 percent of African-American judges, 40 percent of African-American engineers, 50 percent of African-American lawyers, and 40 percent of African-American colleagues here in the Congress are HBCU graduates. So this is one fine ladder-up, as are our other institutions that spend much time helping Hispanic Americans and Native Americans as well.

We need these ladders. They are part of America. We should help them whenever we can. Tribal colleges and universities serving Black, Hispanic, and Native American populations serve more than 130,000 American Indians and Alaska Natives, the most underserved group in higher education. Hispanic-serving institutions have grown by nearly 40 percent since 2009, helping the Latino community make big inroads in college enrollment and completion. They now enroll 66 percent of all Hispanic undergraduates but account for only 15 percent of nonprofit colleges.

So all three of these types of institutions—the HBCUs, the colleges and universities serving American Indians and Alaska Natives, and Hispanic-serving institutions—are amazing ladders up. They are essential for making higher education accessible, affordable, and attainable for all Americans; essential for having that bright Sun—the American dream—actually shine on people instead of it being some words that are meaningless to them.

This is a very fine moment, and I want to thank all of those who put this all together and made it happen. We can celebrate. Most of the things that pass by UC around here—or many of them—are really kind of small and narrow. This is not. This is very important. And my salute to those who made it happen, whom I mentioned earlier.

IMPEACHMENT

Madam President, now on a less happy subject, this morning the Speaker of the House instructed House committee chairs to begin drafting articles of impeachment against the President of the United States. That is a very solemn duty and solemn undertaking. The Speaker's decision comes after the House Intelligence Committee reported that its inquiry had ''uncovered a months-long effort by President Trump to use the powers of his office to solicit foreign interference on his behalf in the 2020 election.''

We know Russia interfered on Trump's behalf in 2016, and now he is trying to make it happen again, this time by trying to push Ukraine.

The charges against the President are extremely serious. No belittling of these charges will hold any water. The charge to use foreign interference on behalf of a candidate in the 2020 elections is dramatic and awful stuff.

These charges concern our national security. They concern the sanctity of our elections and the potential corruption of our Nation's foreign policy for

personal political interests of the President of the United States. The gravity of those charges demands that Senators, if Articles of Impeachment are served to us, to put country over party and examine the evidence without prejudice or partisanship, which is why it is so disheartening, confounding, and deeply disappointing that, at this historic moment, I heard the Republican leader criticizing in such strident terms the process of the impeachment inquiry in the House for being too short and not including enough witnesses or due process for the President.

I respond on two counts. First, the Republican leader is simply wrong to suggest that the House process has been anything but deliberate, even-handed, and serious. Speaker PELOSI, the House Intelligence Committee, and the House Judiciary Committee are proceeding exactly how the Constitution prescribes. But, second, it is the height of hypocrisy to criticize the House process for being too short and not including enough witnesses when the Trump administration is the one blocking witnesses from testifying.

What hypocrisy? How can a leader even say it with a straight face? Will this febrile obeisance to President Trump never cease? Are they so afraid of him and his bullying that they can't admit the obvious truth and twist themselves in pretzel knots to make arguments that are so spurious? It is the height of hypocrisy to criticize the House for not including enough opportunities for the President to make his defense when the President is refusing to participate. It is the height of hypocrisy to say that there are not enough witnesses when we don't hear a peep out of the Republicans urging the President to allow the witnesses that the House wanted to come forward.

This hyperventilation about the length of the House process and the number of witnesses is simply ridiculous. The Trump administration is responsible for those things, not House Democrats. Everyone knows that. Everyone knows they have gone to court to block witnesses and documents.

I remind my colleagues, if the Articles of Impeachment are indeed passed by the House, Leader MCCONNELL and Senate Republicans must work with Democrats to set the parameters of a fair and impartial trial. Every Member of the Senate should support a fair process. The House is running a fair process now. We must do the same in the Senate if it comes to that.

All week, I have been urging my Senate Republican colleagues not to spread or even speculate about the dangerous myth that Ukraine—not just Putin—interfered in the 2016 elections. The myth was invented by Putin's intelligence services to deflect blame away from Putin while driving a wedge between the United States and Ukraine, one of Putin's top goals. When certain Senate Republicans are parroting Putin's talking points, we have a serious problem.

Hopefully, the overwhelming criticisms of the Members who did that this week have convinced them to stop and back off in the Republicans' absurd denial of fact and total defense of President Trump, even when it is obvious that he is not telling the truth. We have reached a low moment, and maybe the lowest of all was the mounting of Putin's conspiracy theory about Ukraine.

Now, another insidious conspiracy theory was doused with cold water this morning. The truth comes out, Republicans, sooner or later. Another theory was doused with cold water when it was reported that Attorney General Barr's handpicked prosecutor had reportedly found no evidence that the FBI probe into the Trump campaign was a setup. Republicans in the House, conservative media personalities, FOX News, and other blind partisan loyalists to the President have long conjured and peddled these deep-state conspiracy theories without evidence.

The Attorney General is even using the resources of the Justice Department—which could be exposing Chinese Communist Party's spies or tracking would-be radical terrorists or fighting opioids or tackling ransomware attacks on cities across the country—to investigate the origins of the 2016 probe. Attorney General Barr's actions are presumably in the hopes of turning up evidence to support these far-fetched theories.

Well, too bad, Republicans. Too bad, hard right. The Attorney General's handpicked prosecutor found no evidence to these conspiracy theories, that the investigation of President Trump was started with evil and political intent. The only evidence we have is that the outlandish loyalist theories peddled by President Trump and his allies to defend this administration are totally baseless.

BORDER SECURITY

Now, on another note, airport face scans, this morning, it was reported that the Trump administration will propose a rule to require U.S. citizens to have their faces scanned whenever they enter or leave the United States. This sounds like something out of China. Currently, all U.S. citizens are allowed to opt out of facial scans when entering or exiting the country. Now, the Trump administration is poised to remove that option and make facial scans mandatory for all travelers, including U.S. citizens.

I have significant concerns about what this policy would mean for the privacy of every American citizen. Just last year, a cyber attack of CBP compromised the personal information—in this case, it was license plates—and facial data of just under 100,000 people. Imagine if DHS were required to retain the facial data of every American who travels in and out of the country.

There are, of course, legitimate questions about whether the Federal Government is legally allowed to collect and store this data. Those questions must be answered before—not after—the Trump administration moves forward with its new rules. On something as serious as this, Congress should debate this issue.

Regardless, I see no reason why the current opt-out policy must change, and I will work with privacy advocates in the Senate, like my friend Senator MARKEY, to legislatively prevent the administration from moving forward.

TRACED ACT

Another issue, robocalls, the House of Representatives yesterday passed bipartisan legislation to crack down on the tens of billions of robocalls that plague Americans every year. All of us are bothered by these darn robocalls. They come at the worse times, and they are on and on. You can't even shut them off.

Last year alone, Americans were battered by 48 billion—billion—robocalls. That is 150 calls per person, per year. Robocalls are annoying. They are persistent, and beyond that, many of them are dangerous to consumers. Foreign companies can make thousands of calls with a push of a button and can charge Americans simply for picking up the call. Can you believe that? Many are designed to scam elderly Americans. We have heard about elderly Americans who are frightened and send their life savings to these criminal callers. Many of the calls target institutions like hospitals and slow down important businesses.

The TRACED Act passed by the Senate in May and recently amended and passed by the House requires phone companies to block robocalls without charging consumers and will give the Justice Department and the FCC better tools to prosecute scammers who prey on unsuspecting—many elderly—Americans. I am proud to be a cosponsor of the original Senate bill. I pushed hard to move it forward. The Senate should now take action on the amended and expanded robocall legislation from the House and pass it before the year is out.

As we saw with the recent legislation to the democratic protests in Hong Kong, when there is bipartisan consensus on an issue, we can move swiftly to enact bipartisan legislation. These moments, unfortunately, are far too rare under Leader MCCONNELL, who has avoided the consideration of legislation on the floor, even when it has bipartisan support, but I hope as we enter the final few weeks of the year, Leader MCCONNELL will address the issue of robocalls and send this bipartisan to the President's desk.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The Senator from Texas.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I know the American people, when they see what is happening in Washington, think that we fight all the time and we disagree about everything, but let me

just agree with my friend, the democratic leader, on the issue of the nuisance of robocalls.

But as important as that is to our quality of life and to protecting vulnerable seniors and others who may be misled by some of these deceptive calls, some of the most basic functions of the Federal Government have not been fulfilled, like appropriating the money that is necessary to support our men and women in uniform. The bipartisan spending caps bill that we agreed to in August has been walked back by our Democratic friends, and we find ourselves with a lot of uncertainty here at the end of the year in terms of what the future may hold in terms of our ability to actually get anything done, things like pass a highway bill. That is one thing that Republicans and Democrats can all agree on, is our disdain for traffic and congestion.

That is one thing we can work on together. We could work together to bring down drug prices, particularly the out-of-pocket costs for consumers with high deductibles and high co-pays. We could pass USMCA, the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement. All of these enjoy broad bipartisan support, but unfortunately, they are now all held captive by this impeachment mania which has stricken the House of Representatives, and it is scheduled to come over here to the Senate probably around the first of the year, depending on the schedule that Speaker PELOSI keeps in the House.

IMPEACHMENT

So while there are plenty of good ideas out there about things that we can work on together on a bipartisan basis, we all know that the Senate and the Congress has limited bandwidth. We can't do everything we want to do. We need to prioritize. I would hope that our priorities would be the American people's priorities and not the political priorities here of partisans in Washington, DC, but unfortunately, it looks to me like the partisans are winning and the people are losing. We need to keep fighting against that. But that is where we are right now, particularly with Speaker PELOSI's announcement this morning that the House is now going to proceed to draft Articles of Impeachment, something that has only been done four times in our Nation's history. This will be the fourth time.

We know what the outcome is likely to be with the 67-vote threshold here in the Senate, and I think all of us in America listened or have been exposed to anyway the various arguments on both sides of the question, but I don't really, frankly, expect anything new to come out of this. A lot of this is rehashed over and over again ad nauseam in order to justify a partisan impeachment process less than 1 year before the next general election. I would think we would be a little bit cautious about 535 Members of Congress working here in the Nation's Capital reversing the decision made by more than 60 million Americans in the last Presidential election. That is a very sobering and serious matter indeed, but, unfortunately, I don't see this issue getting the kind of sober and serious consideration that the Founders contemplated or that the American people deserve.

AMERICAN ENERGY

Mr. President, on another topic, a number of our colleagues here in Washington have undertaken a radical approach when it comes to providing the energy that our country needs. As a matter of fact, if you think about it, it is because of the energy being produced by the oil and gas industry here in America today that the average price of gasoline is now probably roughly $2.50 per gallon.

In Austin, TX, where I live, you can drive from the airport to my home, and you can see gas prices at $2.15 a gallon. It is cheap relative to the historical prices. And you think about what that means in terms of consumers, regular, everyday working folks and families. It means they are able to spend money on other things that are important to them in their lives and not spend all of their income on filling up their gas tank. That is a huge, huge gift to the American people and consumers, but rather than focus on the benefits of what our innovative and entrepreneurial industry has done, we know that some of our friends here in Washington want to reorder the world in their own image. They say the goal is to completely eliminate the most affordable and reliable sources of energy. For what? Well, in pursuit of net zero emissions. I will talk more about that in a moment.

We remember earlier this year they introduced the Green New Deal—arguably the most extreme energy and climate proposal this country has ever seen. The Green New Deal is chock-full of utopian ideas but completely devoid of any pragmatic plans to implement any of its pie-in-the-sky proposals. It puts a range of unrealistic environmental and socialist policies under one big green umbrella with an unaffordably high pricetag.

The best evidence of how extreme this proposal is, is when it came up for a vote in the Senate. Not a single Senator voted for it—that includes all of the cosponsors of the proposal. That is not exactly a profile in courage, to tell the American people this is the solution to our environmental and energy problems, and then when it comes up for a vote, you run and hide. Nobody voted for it. If this proposal were not so terrifying, it would be a terribly bad joke.

While that may be the most extreme proposal we have seen, it is not the only one. We know some of our Democratic colleagues in the House have tried to impose government mandates. That means more regulation, more taxation, more control by Washington, all in an effort to achieve net zero emissions by the year 2050. In some ways, 2050 seems like a long way off, and in other ways it doesn't seem a long way off, but in pursuit of programs that would address a problem in 2050, how about let's take care of the business that is sitting here right before us today first. We seem to have lost any sense of urgency in our most important priorities, like funding the government and funding the military.

On top of that, a number of our Democratic friends who are running for President claim we should ban fracking. I would really like to ask them if they even know what that is or how it works.

Some of them have said they also want to ban the export of crude oil. This month, for the first time in 70 years, America became a net exporter of oil. I will talk more about that in a moment.

Some are saying they even want to go so far as to ban the use of natural gas. Natural gas has been responsible for taking formerly coal-fired powerplants and putting them into a cleaner energy source, which has actually reduced emissions by a substantial amount, but, no, in pursuit of their pie-in-the-sky utopian dreams, the ideologues want to eliminate something that has been a very substantial improvement in terms of the reduction of emissions while providing affordable energy.

I think it is safe to say that we all agree—Republicans, Democrats, Independents, everybody—we should do what we can to protect our environment. In fact, we live here. We breathe the air. We drink the water. We should all be equally concerned about the environment.

I really think some of these proposals are nothing more than virtue signaling. They are not a solution to a problem. All of these folks are trying to paint the energy industry as the enemy in the process. Every good story needs a villain, and our friends on the left believe the energy industry that has provided that cheap gasoline so people can drive to work, take their kids to school, or go about their business is really the enemy, not our friend. Well, it is just not the case.

By the rhetoric you are hearing, you would think oil and gas companies have bankrupted the country, ruined our international alliances, and sent the entire globe into an energy famine. Well, that is not true. It is just the opposite of truth.

When you talk about global energy security, American oil and gas has reversed the tide of the energy landscape in our favor and supported our friends and allies around the world in important ways.

Our colleagues proposing these unworkable and unaffordable mandates would be wise to look at how the global energy landscape has changed over the last half century and consider the broader consequences of their proposal.

To understand the importance of American energy on the world stage, we need to rewind just a bit to the 1970s. At that time, the vast majority

of the world's oil and gas came from the Middle East, giving these nations a great deal of power. In fact, you may remember back in 1980 President Jimmy Carter announced something called the Carter Doctrine. He said if any foreign power would block the flow of oil through the Straits of Hormuz, it would be an act of war. That is what Jimmy Carter said in 1980, such was our reliance on imported energy from the Middle East. Our country dealt with this situation, and we addressed it responsibly and effectively.

We know another indication of our dependence on imported energy is when the United States supported our friend and ally Israel in the Yom Kippur war of 1973. OPEC, the organization of petroleum exported countries, primarily Middle East countries, banned the sale of crude oil to the United States. Those who are old enough to remember, remember that prices quadrupled, some States banned neon signs to cut down on energy use because they were worried about the energy that would be necessary to create that electricity, and a number of towns asked for citizens not to even put up Christmas lights. This was because our source of oil and gas was cut off from the Middle East, such was our dependence. Despite strong domestic production, we were still relying heavily on imports. Once that supply was cut off, we were caught flat-footed.

The Arab oil embargo brought to light the risk of our energy independence and underscored the need for America to do something about it. There was a consensus—has been a consensus—that we needed to grow our supplies here at home so we were less dependent on imports. So less than 2 years later, Congress, thinking we were doing a good thing, put a ban on export on American crude because we thought we needed it here and didn't want to export it abroad.

Over the next four decades, a lot has changed. Advancements in the energy sector, including hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling, have dramatically increased the production of American energy. As I said, for the first time in 70 years, America has become a net exporter of oil. That is how dramatically this has turned around.

In the process, we have achieved our goal of reducing our reliance on imported energy from dangerous and unsettled regions of the world, like the Middle East, but pretty soon we found ourselves sitting on a gold mine, and it became clear it was time to lift the export ban. In 2015, after 40 years of no exports, that is what Congress did. We did so because we believed, No. 1, we had more than we could use here in America, but we also believed this would be a huge boon to our economy. That was part of the equation. Just as we were able to reduce our reliance on oil from unreliable and unstable regions of the world, we knew that by exporting the oil that America produced, we could help other countries—our friends and allies around the world—that were dangerously dependent on sources of energy from countries like Russia that is all too ready to use energy as a weapon. They say: Do what we say, and we will keep the energy and gas flowing. Do something we don't like, and we will shut you down.

In the not-so-distant past, many of our allies in Europe looked to Iran and Russia for their energy needs, and the Baltic States, all NATO allies, relied almost exclusively on Russia for their oil, gas, and electricity. Seven European countries depended on Russia for 80 percent of their gas, and on the whole, one-third of the gas Europe consumed came from Russia.

When our allies are looking to our adversaries for basic needs like heating, electricity, and fuel, that is a real problem. It is a strategic vulnerability not only for those countries but also for the United States.

Our friend John McCain had quite a sense of humor—those of us who knew him during his lifetime. He aptly described Russia as a gas station masquerading as a country. Russia's ability to export that energy to other countries was the lifeline for their country. I think Senator McCain hit the nail on the head, especially when Russia uses that energy as a weapon.

As I alluded, in 2009, we saw the vulnerability this created when Russia effectively turned the lights off in Ukraine. For almost 3 weeks, they shut down the energy supply. This affected at least 10 countries in Europe whose natural gas traveled through Ukraine.

Just as the United States realized how dangerous our foreign oil reliance was, our allies began to understand the implications of their dependency as well. Many of our friends in Europe have been working to diversify their energy supply, which is a good thing, and build strategic gas interconnectors between countries reliant on Russia for natural gas. Getting a diversity of sources is an insurance policy for those countries so Russia can't just cut off their energy supply.

Supplying our friends around the world with American oil and gas not only strengthens our security but it alleviates the power our adversaries, like Russia, hold in important regions of the world, like Europe.

In addition to increasing global security, American oil and gas has allowed us to provide affordable, plentiful, and reliable energy to countries struggling to provide power for their own citizens.

If you think about it, low-cost energy coming from America has the potential to be the greatest poverty reduction program in memory. For example, when I first traveled to India in 2004—if you drive from Delhi, the capital, to Agra, where the Taj Mahal is, you will drive across vast areas where the population is very poor. Huge swaths of that population lack access to things to cook their food with or electricity to light their homes. So what do they do? Well, they burn cow dung; they burn coal; they burn wood pellets or other high-emission fuel sources. By America agreeing to export the energy we have here—the cleaner energy we have here—we are agreeing to help one of our closest friends and partners in the world and, in the process, help Prime Minister Modi and the leadership there lift more Indians out of this grinding poverty and relying on things like cow dung simply to cook their food.

Last year, we doubled the amount of LNG exported to India, and I dare say that the sky is the limit.

I think many of our Democratic colleagues should reflect back on the lessons of history before advocating a return to the 1970s when it comes to the way we approach American energy. I understand the importance of innovation in the energy sector to lower emissions, and I am all in, but rather than another government program, higher taxes, more regulation, or surrendering control of our freedom to Washington, DC, why don't we let the innovators, the entrepreneurs, come up with solutions? That is what has happened when it comes to American oil and gas. They came up with the answer, not Washington, DC, and we are all benefiting from the results.

When it comes to innovation, I have introduced legislation—and a number of our other colleagues have, too—to increase research dollars going into ways to lower emissions by looking at alternative ways to deal with energy production, like electricity. For example, there is a small natural gas-fired powerplant in La Porte, TX—which I visited with our friend Senator COLLINS from Maine—that emits zero carbon dioxide. That is a boon to the environment, and I think it also provides a solution to the oil and gas industry because what they do is pipe the CO_2 off the back end, and they use it to inject into the ground in the oilfields, so they produce more oil and gas. It is called secondary recovery.

Here at home, it is easy to take dependable energy for granted. We do it all the time. We don't worry about having the energy to cook our dinner at night or refill our cars' gas tanks. We take that all for granted. But the truth is, in countless countries in the world and for the majority of the world, it is a completely different story.

For our friends who advocate these utopian ideas like the Green New Deal, I don't begrudge their desire to improve the environment, but I would ask them to be more pragmatic when it comes to trying to solve the problem. I would ask them: Are you really trying to solve a problem? If you are, we want to work with you to reduce emissions, but if your goal is to pursue some fantasy that will not work and we can't afford, count me out. If you want to solve the problem, count me in.

American energy is simply powering the world. It is strengthening global security and lifting millions of people out of poverty. We need to continue to harness the power of one of our country's greatest national assets.

I will conclude there. I will continue to share some of my thoughts on the importance of American energy on the Senate floor. It is a topic bigger than one floor speech, and it will hopefully remind and encourage all of the Members of the Senate to work toward energy abundance and help keep energy affordable, which will improve the standard of living and the quality of the lives of all Americans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

REMEMBERING LAUREN BRUNER

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, on September 10, just a few months ago, Lauren Bruner, a veteran of Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, passed away. Mr. Bruner wasn't just any veteran. He was a veteran who served on the USS *Arizona* during the attack that morning.

On Saturday, December 7, millions of Americans across the country will pay tribute to the attack at Pearl Harbor National Memorial to commemorate what happened that morning, which brought the United States fully into the Second World War. Aboard the USS *Arizona* were 1,512 officers, sailors, and marines. The attack that day on December 7 killed 1,177 of them, and 335 brave people survived that morning. Lauren Bruner, who passed away September 10, was one of four who were on that ship that December morning in 1941 who have survived.

Lauren Bruner passed away at the age of 98, and on this Saturday, his ashes will be interred at the USS *Arizona* to join his shipmates—those who were lost that morning and others who have joined their fellow sailors, marines, and officers since.

Three men remain that are veterans of that war from the USS *Arizona*: Lou Conter, 98 years old; Ken Potts, 98 years old; and Donald Stratton, 97 years old from Colorado Springs, CO. Ken Potts and Don Stratton will join together for most likely the last time this Saturday as they will watch a live video feed of the ceremony at Pearl Harbor at the USS *Arizona* Memorial to view the interment of their shipmate, Lauren Bruner, at the USS *Arizona*.

The Senate was able to play a small role in recognizing what brought Don Stratton, Lauren Bruner, and the others together. You see, on that morning, when their ship was bombed, Lauren Bruner had been shot in the leg and Donald Stratton was on fire. The two of them and four of their other shipmates were on a control tower as the ship was on fire when a rope appeared. It was a line from the USS *Vestal*, a ship next to the USS *Arizona*. A line was thrown from a sailor named Joe George. They tied to the tower and were able to shimmy across 70 feet from the burning USS *Arizona*—while they were on fire—to the USS *Vestal*, to their safety.

Lauren Bruner had 70 percent of his body burned and was shot in the leg. Don Stratton suffered burns and spent a year in the hospital as a result. He went back into the service to continue the rest of the war.

This Chamber in Congress helped make sure that the gentleman who threw that rope, that lifeline from the USS *Vestal* to the USS *Arizona*, received final recognition for his act of heroism. Joe George went for decades without recognition for his act of bravery to save these six sailors. He was able to receive just a couple of years ago, on December 7, 2017, the Bronze Star, in recognition of his acts.

December 7, 2017, also marked the last time that Donald Stratton was able to join the memorial service to commemorate December 7, Pearl Harbor. I have this picture here that I will show of Donald Stratton, who again this weekend will be joining Ken Potts as Lauren Bruner is interred to join the other men and women who lost their lives that morning.

This is an opportunity for us to once again say thank you to the 2,403 people overall at Pearl Harbor who were killed, to the people who survived, who went on to fight the Second World War, and our veterans today who live and continue to live a legacy that was given to them that December 7 morning.

On Saturday, as we join our families and do weekend work, I hope we will take a little bit of time to reflect once again on a dark chapter in American history that led to a great American century, to be thankful to the men and women who served our country, to the men and women who fight for our Nation each and every day, to the people like Ken Potts and Lou Conter and Donald Stratton, who continue to remind us each and every moment why this Nation is worth fighting for.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

TAX REFORM

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about the importance of passing the expired tax credit provisions for many small businesses and industries that support families and help revitalize economic, depressed communities, and those that are underserved.

We all know that 2 years ago, the Republicans and President Trump enacted a $2 trillion tax break for large corporations, and there was a lot of lobbying here that went in to getting that legislation passed. Yet, when it comes to these provisions, which are just about tax certainty in the Tax Code that has been there for decades that really needs to be reauthorized, Congress is not getting the job done, and we need to come to terms now about why it is so important to help small businesses have tax certainty in the code, to help families and communities, and to get this provision done by December 31.

We all know how important it is that these individuals, green energy companies, economic development, and many other aspects of the Tax Code are being basically held hostage—since, I believe, 2017—by Congress's inattention to this issue. Our Tax Code is most effective when we have certainty, predictability, and when we have made decisions out of Congress that we think we do want to incent and motivate investment.

Renewables are a large source of private sector infrastructure investment, and the clean energy tax credits have allowed industry to scale and invest in technologies that have brought prices down in wind by 68 percent and solar prices by 88 percent. We have seen unbelievable growth in the energy sector because of our investments in the green energy tax credits.

Another example is the biodiesel tax credit that I worked on with Chairman GRASSLEY for years. That particular tax credit and its uncertainty and Congress's failure to act and give predictability have led to more than 10 biodiesel plants being closed so far, and there could be many more closed if we fail to act before December 31.

This means a loss of jobs and a loss of production of fuel. It means the loss of economic benefit to regions, and it means an impact to soybean and other sectors that have been a part of this growing economy. We need to act before more plants close.

I am very concerned about a particular facility in Grays Harbor, WA. While it may employ only 37 people at this point in time, Grays Harbor is an important point in the Washington State economy, located on our coast, and has many great attributes positioned for the future of trade. Not only do I want to see biodiesel grow, I want to see biodiesel exports grow. I think it is shortsighted that Congress can't get its act together to give people predictability and certainty about the Tax Code.

Let's talk about some other examples that are not just about clean energy—for example, the medical expense deduction. These deductions give taxpayers certainty on deductions for high out-of-pocket medical costs, and these are things that allow people to deduct qualified expenses that exceed 7½ percent of their gross income through 2018. This year, the threshold increased to 10 percent of adjusted gross income. If we are not going to give people certainty, it is going to be more dollars out of their pockets.

Another example is the mortgage debt forgiveness. When you lose your home, you should not have to pay taxes on your mortgage debt. That is what is going to happen if we don't give people certainty in the Tax Code. Without this provision, if your house is foreclosed on and the remaining debt forgiveness is in bankruptcy, the amount you would have to pay is the same amount you would have to owe instead of being forgiven.

So, to me, that inability to not have that mortgage debt deduction—it is just wrong that Congress can't get its act together. If you are going to get your act together and pass a major bill

for corporations, you should at least give small businesses and individual taxpayers the certainty they deserve in the Tax Code.

These provisions have been in the Tax Code for a long, long time. This is not like a surprise. It is not as if we haven't done this before. But instead of taking care of today's Tax Code before December 31, people are off making grandiose discussions.

I get it that some people on this side of the aisle would like to change and make corrections to the Tax Code, and other people on our side of the aisle would like to make a $100 billion investment in child tax credit. Look, I am appreciative of that discussion, but quit waging that battle, and do our day job, and take the Tax Code and the expiring provisions, and give taxpayers certainty by the 31st of this month.

Another example is that the expired provisions would help address the high cost of higher education by allowing students and families to deduct up to $4,000 for tuition and other high education costs. With total student loan debt of $1.5 trillion and average student debt of over $31,000, provisions like these on deductibility are very important.

On employment and economic development, nearly 26 percent of the provisions that are expiring are related to incentivizing employment investment in lower income communities.

The new markets tax credit. There is probably not a Member in the Senate who has not had a jurisdiction in their State use the new markets tax credit as one of the most effective economic development and community tools. This credit encourages private investments in low-income communities. Since the program was enacted in 2000, the new markets tax credit has delivered over $95 billion in project financing to more than 6,000 projects and created over 1 million jobs.

Why can't we have certainty on the new markets tax credit by December 31 of this year? There is no reason.

The new markets tax credits expire, and where are we going to be on building affordable housing, healthcare facilities, community clinics, research and technology incubators, and mixed-use commercial programs? I see no reason why we can't get this job done. I have been working with Senators CARDIN and BLUNT on a bill that would make this program permanent, and, hopefully, we wouldn't have to go through this routine every year.

But take another example. The work opportunity tax credit has been an incredibly effective tool in helping individuals, including veterans, to find gainful employment. The work opportunity tax credit provides up to $2,400 for hiring a certified person, including veterans and people receiving SNAP and TANF benefits. We know this program works. In my State, for each person certified to receive the tax credit, there is a net savings of $17,700 in Federal subsidies. Where is the voice for people who say: Let's give a tax credit and put people to work and actually reduce Federal subsidies? Oh, we are letting it expire again and giving uncertainty in the Tax Code.

Why? I am not sure because people are too busy posturing in a big debate instead of getting our basic tax extender homework done. Let's not continue to fail. Let's get out here and give these work opportunity tax credits the predictability people would like to see. In 2013, Washington had over 26,000 individuals certified with the tax credit, helping them find employment, and that represented a total of $42 million in savings.

All of these issues I am talking about—investments in our communities, investments in tax credits that give businesses certainties so that they can continue to drive down costs, investments in low-income communities, investments to help retrain and get people off the subsidies—why can't we get this done? I hope that people will understand that these small businesses and these families don't have people running through the halls to lobby for them as they did on the big corporate tax break, but I guarantee you, they deserve the tax certainty. They deserve the predictability.

Yes, we can continue to debate the last big tax bill all through 2020. I guarantee you that we will spend a lot of time talking about it, and each side can raise their voice and wage their battle. But do not fail to get this basic job done that we keep failing to do—literally, not giving these businesses and individuals certainty, I think, since 2017. People keep thinking you are going to make it retroactive for 3 years. No, stop. Get this job done and give the certainty to small businesses and underserved communities that they deserve. Help them to succeed just like you helped big corporations.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

NOMINATION OF RICHARD ERNEST MYERS II

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I rise along with Senator BURR to urge our colleagues to support the confirmation of Professor Richard Myers to serve as a district court judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

President Trump has nominated an eminently qualified and principled individual to serve in the Eastern District. In his career, Professor Myers has worked as a journalist, a prosecutor, and a professor. Each step Professor Myers has taken in his professional career has prepared him for this role. From the newsroom to the courtroom to the classroom, Professor Myers has shown his commitment to the principles of truth, of justice, and of wisdom. I cannot imagine a more solid foundation upon which to place the responsibility of a district court judgeship than that of Professor Myers, which he has exhibited throughout his career.

Professor Myers is a first generation college graduate who has close ties to Wilmington, where he has chosen to locate his chambers. Once confirmed, Professor Myers will hold court in Wilmington, the same city where he was raised, where he went to college, and where he was a journalist. North Carolinians are lucky to have someone like Professor Myers with his caliber and his sense of duty to represent us in the Eastern District of North Carolina.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote for Judge Myers', or soon-to-be Judge Myers', confirmation when it comes up later today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I also rise today to voice my strong support for the President's nomination of Professor Richard Myers to serve as a judge in the Eastern District of North Carolina. I might add for my colleagues that it is the longest court vacancy in the history of our court system. Professor Myers was reported out of committee on a strong bipartisan vote on October 31. I am pleased that the Senate will today consider his nomination.

I want to give my colleagues some additional insight into a man whom we are asking them to vote on and that goes beyond his stellar legal credentials. The first thing I want my colleagues to know is that Professor Myers embodies a work ethic and diligence that we deserve in all of our judges. As an immigrant of Kingston, Jamaica, Professor Myers is a first-generation college student in his family. He worked his way through his undergraduate degree at the University of Wilmington, and after college he pursued a career in journalism. He worked for the Wilmington Morning Star. It was his investigative reporting that gave him the desire to earn his law degree. He graduated magna cum laude at the University of North Carolina School of Law and began a legal career as a clerk for Judge David Sentelle of the DC Circuit Court of Appeals.

Second, Professor Myers will be a judge who understands the value of public service, having made a career change from practicing at a prestigious private firm to contributing to our Nation's justice system following the attacks of September 11, 2001. He said that his change in career ''was something I felt that I could do and that I owed to a country that had been really good to my family.''

He did this first in the Central District of California and then in the Eastern District of North Carolina. Professor Myers then took a different path of service at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, instructing the next generation of lawyers to be people who, in his own words, ''do the right thing every day.''

If confirmed, Professor Myers will serve on the Eastern District of North Carolina and, as Senator TILLIS said, will hold court in Wilmington. Ironically, this court is currently meeting

in the building that once housed the Wilmington Morning Star, his first job as a reporter. However, when considering Professor Myers' story, it seems fitting that someone with the character, work ethic, and servant's approach to life will be returning to the building of his first post-college job wearing the robe of a Federal judge. I have faith in Professor Myers' ability to do the right thing every day in this critically important role, and I am grateful for the opportunity to speak on his behalf to our colleagues. This is well-deserving, and he will be an incredibly effective serving judge in our district court system. I urge my colleagues to support him unanimously.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

Mr. BURR. 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that 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. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 68, nays 21, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 383 Ex.]

YEAS—68

Alexander	Cassidy	Enzi
Barrasso	Collins	Ernst
Blackburn	Coons	Feinstein
Blunt	Cornyn	Fischer
Boozman	Cotton	Gardner
Braun	Cramer	Graham
Burr	Crapo	Grassley
Capito	Cruz	Hassan
Cardin	Daines	Hawley
Carper	Duckworth	Hoeven
Casey	Durbin	Hyde-Smith
Inhofe	Murphy	Shaheen
Johnson	Peters	Shelby
Jones	Portman	Sinema
Kaine	Reed	Sullivan
Kennedy	Risch	Tester
King	Roberts	Thune
Lankford	Romney	Tillis
Leahy	Rosen	Toomey
Lee	Rubio	Warner
Manchin	Sasse	Wicker
McConnell	Scott (FL)	Young
McSally	Scott (SC)	

NAYS—21

Baldwin	Heinrich	Schumer
Bennet	Hirono	Smith
Blumenthal	Markey	Stabenow
Brown	Menendez	Udall
Cantwell	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Schatz	Wyden

NOT VOTING—11

Booker	Moran	Rounds
Harris	Murkowski	Sanders
Isakson	Paul	Warren
Klobuchar	Perdue	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Lydon nomination, Calendar No. 489, be made pending.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Sherri A. Lydon, of South Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina.

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. 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 Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that 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. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 76, nays 13, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 384 Ex.]

YEAS—76

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

NAYS—13

Bennet	Hirono	Schumer
Blumenthal	Markey	Smith
Brown	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cantwell	Murray	
Gillibrand	Schatz	

NOT VOTING—11

Booker	Moran	Rounds
Harris	Murkowski	Sanders
Isakson	Paul	Warren
Klobuchar	Perdue	

The nomination was confirmed.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Robert M. Duncan, of Kentucky, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2025. (Reappointment)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 150

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I come to the floor again to seek unanimous consent for a resolution that commemorates the Armenian genocide.

In October, the House of Representatives passed a version of this resolution by a vote of 405 to 11—405 to 11. This vote was historic, and I applaud the bipartisan courage of those in the House to stand up for what is right.

For those here in the Senate who would consider objecting to this request, I urge you to think long and hard about what it means for your reputation, what it means for history, and what it means for the Senate as an institution. History is watching, and it will not look kindly on those who object to recognizing genocide.

In recent speeches before the Senate, I have laid out the case for why we must move forward on this resolution.