

nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 4, 2020.

PN1853 ARMY nomination of Christopher V. Emmons, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 11, 2020.

PN1927 ARMY nomination of Nathaniel A. Stone, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 21, 2020.

PN1928 ARMY nomination of Margaret C. Brainardbland, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 21, 2020.

PN1929 ARMY nomination of Michael B. McGuire, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 21, 2020.

PN1930 ARMY nomination of Ralph Pean, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 21, 2020.

PN1931 ARMY nomination of Christopher M. Hartley, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 21, 2020.

PN1951 ARMY nomination of Mauro Quevedo, Jr., which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 2, 2020.

PN1976 ARMY nomination of Joshua W. Krupa, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 8, 2020.

PN1977 ARMY nomination of Peter C. Renals, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 8, 2020.

IN THE NAVY

PN1964 NAVY nomination of Robert C. Birch, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 2, 2020.

PN1965 NAVY nomination of Tori J. Moffitt, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 2, 2020.

PN1966 NAVY nomination of Mattheau B. Willsey, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 2, 2020.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 504, 505, 506, 719, and 720.

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

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Joseph Bruce Hamilton, of Texas, to be a Member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2022; Jessie Hill Roberson, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2023 (Reappointment); Thomas A. Summers, of Pennsylvania, to be a Member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2020; Joyce Louise Connelly, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2024. (Reappointment); and Thomas A. Summers, of

Pennsylvania, to be a Member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2025. (Reappointment).

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations, en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc, with no intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Hamilton, Roberson, Summers, Connelly, and Summers nominations?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 754, 755, and 756.

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

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Owen McCurdy Cypher, of Michigan, to be United States Marshal for the Eastern District of Michigan for the term of four years; Thomas L. Foster, of Virginia, to be United States Marshal for the Western District of Virginia for the term of four years; and Tyreece L. Miller, of Tennessee, to be United States Marshal for the Western District of Tennessee for the term of four years.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Cypher, Foster, and Miller nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am grateful to Chairman INHOFE and Rank-

ing Member REED and their staffs for their work to produce the fiscal year 2021 defense authorization bill.

The FY21 NDAA authorizes \$740.5 billion in defense spending, up \$2 billion from last year. The bill provides a 3-percent pay raise for our troops and includes provisions that support spouse employment, childcare, and improved military housing. It ensures that the United States can defend effectively against threats from Russia, China, and North Korea and invests in key and innovative capabilities and technologies. It includes key provisions I requested to boost efforts at Rock Island Arsenal, address military sexual trauma, and protect the health of our military communities from dangerous chemicals.

But this year, we take up the NDAA during a global pandemic, record unemployment, and calls to address racial injustice. The bill touches on some of these issues. It authorizes \$44 million for vaccine and medical research related to COVID-19 and expands benefits for Active Duty and National Guard personnel involved in COVID response.

I am pleased that it includes a provision authored by Senator WARREN to require DOD to remove names, symbols, and other displays honoring the Confederacy. If we want to move toward a more just society, we cannot continue to honor Confederate leaders who committed treasonous atrocities in order to preserve slavery.

I also authored two amendments that were included by consent, the first an amendment supporting strong security assistance for the Baltics that I filed with Senator GRASSLEY. The Baltic States remain key allies and among the few NATO countries that fulfill the target spending of 2 percent of GDP on defense, and this provision encourages support for more robust and enduring security assistance. My other amendment is one I sponsored with Senator PORTMAN, welcoming NATO recognition of Ukraine as an Enhanced Opportunities Partner. EOP status will help only further deepen cooperation with NATO, which is especially critical as 2020 marks the 6th year of ongoing Russian occupation of eastern Ukraine.

But the FY21 NDAA still does not go far enough.

I field two amendments that go to the heart of our duties as Senators, the power to declare war and the power of the purse. Congress must stop abdicating its constitutional responsibilities.

Article I of the Constitution gives Congress the sole authority to declare war. I voted for the war in Afghanistan, but I never imagined that we would still be there nearly two decades later or that the same authorization would be used to justify actions around the world that this body had not contemplated at the time. My amendment would sunset all authorizations for the use of force after 10 years so that Congress can take up the issue and engage in its constitutional duties.

I also cosponsored an amendment led by Senator UDALL making clear that Congress has not given the executive branch any authority to go to war against Iran.

We also cannot continue to let this President raid national defense funds for his ridiculous and racist border wall effort—remember, the one that the President promised Mexico would pay for. Every dollar diverted has been at the expense of our men and women in uniform, especially hurting our National Guard. This bill does nothing to address that. Even when the Ninth Circuit court ruled last Friday that the money grab was illegal, the Department of Defense informed us on Monday that it would not stop construction of the President's campaign promise. That is why I filed an amendment that would keep the President from transferring defense funds outside of DOD for the wall. We need a robust debate on the proper, effective way to respond to the humanitarian crisis at our border, one approved by Congress.

In addition, I filed an amendment that would disapprove of Russia participating in the G7 or being readmitted into a reconstituted G8. Not only does Russia maintain its occupation of Ukraine, but it has continued its interference in the U.S. and other democratic nations. And just last week, The New York Times reported that Russian intelligence secretly offered bounties to Taliban-linked militants to kill American troops in Afghanistan. Apparently, the White House has known about this for months and did nothing. It is unacceptable. My amendment makes it clear that the U.S. should not support Russia's participation in this international summit.

The FY21 NDAA also doesn't go far enough to address the toxic class of chemicals known as PFAS, which have been linked to serious and devastating illness.

That is why I am pleased to cosponsor Senator SHAHEEN's amendments to designate PFAS as hazardous substances and boost DOD cleanup efforts, provide blood testing for servicemembers and their families, and increase funds to study the impact of PFAS on health. In addition, I support Senator GILLIBRAND's amendment that would extend antidiscrimination protections to our transgender servicemembers who bravely make sacrifices for our country. I also am a cosponsor of Senator SCHATZ amendment to limit the transfer of equipment under to the DOD 1033 program to militarize police forces across the country and provide transparency to the program.

I hope that we may be able to debate all of these important issues during consideration of this bill, all of which will only help improve this legislation and provide for our national defense. In the meantime, I reiterate my thanks to Chairman INHOFE and Ranking Member REED for their work on this bill.

FOURTH OF JULY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, July 4 is a day to recognize our Nation's Declaration of Independence 244 years ago. On this day, we collectively pause to honor the values that make this Nation great.

July 4 is also a day of shared reflection to see how well we have made more tangible the ideals of our founders "to create a more perfect union." As we look across the landscape of our country today, these words ring with even greater resonance. Our Nation and our people face a call to action to continue the fight against racial injustice, an injustice that has limited the freedom of too many for too long.

The collective ideals to which Thomas Jefferson gave voice in the Declaration's promise of "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness" still echo through the American experience—from Alexander Hamilton's immigrant dream, birthed before our Nation, to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s July 4, 1965, sermon at Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church. As Dr. King said, "If we are going to make the America Dream a reality, we are challenged to work in an action program to get rid of the last vestiges of segregation and discrimination."

America has been and will be a leader in the world. The American people historically have cherished and spearheaded this role. Leadership at any level comes with responsibility, and, in this case, it means we must look to put our own house in order, where we must address domestic injustices.

We must continue our tireless work to create a more perfect union. The struggle will not stop until all men, women, and children can live the American Dream as Dr. King envisioned. To do this, we must continue to assess the true meaning of liberty and freedom. As we begin to acknowledge fundamental elements of our Nation's history, we must recommit to ensuring freedom for all.

Our country's strength lies in the diversity and equality of our people. Through this diversity and through this equality, today we may celebrate the unity described in the very declaration of our Nation's freedom and independence.

On this historic day, we must also celebrate our country's capacity to change. We have overcome monumental challenges before. The majority of our Founders did not comprehend that Black Lives Matter. Today, we work to ensure actions that back up those important words.

Still, as we reflect on the Nation's founding, we recall our past, honor that which is great, and effect the call we perpetually hear to make our Nation a more perfect union.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I voted against the motion to table Sen-

ator PAUL's amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act not because I support his amendment as written, but because I believe this Senate has a responsibility to fully debate the question of our policy, strategy and plans for Afghanistan. Tabling an amendment cuts off all debate on this important matter. We should not be ducking these decisions. We should confront our policy directly, take stock of where we are, and set a responsible course for the future.

I strongly support ending the war in Afghanistan and the responsible withdrawal of our men and women in uniform. However, I believe that mandating the total unconditional withdrawal on a 1-year timeline will result in the further destabilization of an already volatile region. Unconditional withdrawal divorced from a diplomatic process to achieve political reconciliation between the warring parties will make it harder to achieve a peaceful outcome that serves our national security interests.

Despite my disagreement with much of the substance of the Paul amendment, the Senate should deliberate on these matters, not run away from the discussion. The decision to table the Paul amendment prevented the Senate from performing this essential function.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee and as the Senator from the great State of New Mexico, it is my honor to recognize all of the patriotic Americans who have contributed to 75 years of accomplishments and history at White Sands Missile Range, WSMR.

In the final months of America's engagement in World War II and as the Manhattan Project's unprecedented scientific mission achieved its secret goal of harnessing nuclear power, the U.S. Army established the White Sands Proving Ground on July 9, 1945, in New Mexico's Tularosa Basin. Seven days later, the detonation of the first atomic bomb at the Trinity Site ushered in the nuclear era and began what would become three-quarters of a century of major scientific breakthroughs, critical weapons testing and evaluation, and military technology advances.

We must acknowledge the sacrifices New Mexicans have made over the years that contributed to both the establishment and the enduring missions at WSMR. That includes the families whose historic homes and ranches were taken to create WSMR's land base. It includes local residents in the Tularosa Basin who were downwind from the Trinity test and whose lives continue to be impacted. It includes the local communities in southern New Mexico who play a vital role in supporting WSMR's success today.

WSMR is a landmark of technological advances for all branches of the