

(Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA), and the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 64, nays 24, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 226 Ex.]

YEAS—64

Barrasso	Fischer	Perdue
Blackburn	Gardner	Peters
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Reed
Braun	Hassan	Risch
Brown	Hoeven	Roberts
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Romney
Capito	Inhofe	Rounds
Carper	Johnson	Rubio
Cassidy	Jones	Sasse
Collins	Kaine	Scott (FL)
Coons	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Shaheen
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Shelby
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Loeffler	Tillis
Crapo	Manchin	Toomey
Cruz	McConnell	Warner
Daines	McSally	Whitehouse
Enzi	Murkowski	Wicker
Ernst	Murphy	
Feinstein	Paul	

NAYS—24

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Sanders
Bennet	Hirono	Schumer
Blumenthal	King	Smith
Booker	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cardin	Markley	Udall
Casey	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Rosen	Wyden

NOT VOTING—12

Alexander	Heinrich	Sinema
Cantwell	Moran	Sullivan
Harris	Murray	Tester
Hawley	Schatz	Young

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 Senator from South Dakota.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, before I begin, I want to acknowledge the tremendous news released yesterday that early results of a COVID vaccine are showing a greater than 90 percent rate of effectiveness. This is great news and a testament to the innovative power of the private sector and the ef-

forts of Congress and the Trump administration to expedite the development of COVID vaccines.

The trial for this vaccine will continue, and FDA approval will be required, but these early results are very, very encouraging. It has been a tough year for Americans and people all over the world, but hopefully this is a sign that the light at the end of the tunnel is coming.

2020 ELECTIONS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, we are now a week on from the election, but there are still a lot of outstanding races to determine. Votes are still being counted or will soon be recounted in many States. The Presidential race has yet to be certified, and it is important to remember that while media outlets can predict a winner, official results do come later, and there are still House and Senate races that have yet to be decided.

One thing is clear, though: The blue wave that Democrat pollsters and the media predicted was coming did not arrive. Americans emphatically did not endorse the socialist aims of the far left. Instead, they sent a much more moderate message. And I hope that when all the votes are counted and the outcomes of all the races are determined, Democrats will be able to overcome the virulent partisanship that has characterized their behavior over the past 4 years and work with Republicans to deliver results for the American people.

VETERANS DAY

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, tomorrow we celebrate Veterans Day, the day set aside to honor all those who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

This year, we observed the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II, and our Nation's World War II veterans, the veterans of the "greatest generation," have been on my mind a lot.

Sixteen million Americans served in World War II—16 million. These veterans were a fixture in our lives. So many Americans grew up with a dad or a grandfather or a grandmother who had served in World War II. I was one of them.

My favorite veteran, my dad, was a World War II pilot who flew Hellcats off the deck of the USS *Intrepid* in the Pacific. I came to know the values of the "greatest generation" through my dad—humility, patriotism, quiet service.

These warriors who helped save the world didn't brag about their achievements. They deflected praise. If they hailed any exploits, it was those of their comrades. My dad won the Distinguished Flying Cross—or, I should say, received the Distinguished Flying Cross, but that is not what he talked about. He did, however, talk about Cecil Harris, one of South Dakota's aces, whose advice for a deft maneuver

saved my dad's life during a dogfight. It was a move straight out of "Top Gun," only decades before the movie.

My dad always talked about how South Dakota is the only State with two aces with more than 20 shootdowns during World War II. And he talked about the other pilots in his squadron and praised their character and their service.

As I said, these veterans of the "greatest generation" have been a fixture in our lives for a long time. But 75 years on from the war, their numbers are dwindling and dwindling quickly.

My dad died in August of this year at the age of 100. We lose more and more of these veterans every day, and they will be sorely missed, but their legacy lives on in the generations of veterans that have followed them.

In every age and every era, men and women have stepped forward to answer the same call that the "greatest generation" answered. And in every era, those men and women, the men and women of the U.S. military, have embodied the values that characterized men like my dad—humility, courage, love of country, self-sacrifice, a love of freedom and for their fellow man.

Service in the military was once commonplace. But in an age when only a small percentage of the population serves, we need to ensure that we don't forget the vital role of our Armed Forces and the price our men and women in uniform pay to ensure that all of us can live in freedom. It has been said 10,000 times—but it is no less true the ten thousandth and first time—that we live in freedom every day because of the men and women of the U.S. military. We owe them a debt we cannot hope to repay. But on Veterans Day and every day, we can remember to say thank you.

I cannot close without mentioning the men and women I have met who have served and are serving—in particular, the members of the South Dakota National Guard and the airmen at Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota.

Right now, members of the South Dakota National Guard are deployed in support of Combined Joint Task Force—Horn of Africa. The South Dakota Guard also recently served a rotation of deployments to Europe in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve and to the Middle East to support coalition forces. Like many of their counterparts across the country, they have also been a part of the domestic coronavirus response.

At Ellsworth, the B-1 bombers of the 28th Bomb Wing continue to demonstrate their flexible, global reach through Bomber Task Force deployments. The Bomber Task Force missions strengthen our continued coordination with NATO allies in Europe and assert America's commitment to security and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

From the Baltics to the South China Sea to the Middle East, the airmen at Ellsworth Air Force Base continue to

answer our Nation's call and remain ready to respond to threats anywhere in the world at a moment's notice.

As I said, we owe our men and women in uniform a debt we cannot hope to repay, but we can resolve to live our lives in such a way as to be worthy of their sacrifices. Today and every day, may we remember the gratitude that we owe our military men and women and imitate their love of freedom and their devotion to our country.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

2020 ELECTIONS

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, a Republican candidate in California by the name of Errol Webber lost his race for Congress by 72 points, and yet he is not conceding that he has lost. He says:

I'm going to the Los Angeles County Registrar's Office to audit the vote counting procedures. I will NOT concede. Every LEGAL vote needs to be counted!

Just up the road in Maryland, a Republican candidate by the name of Kim Klacik lost by 40 points, and she is refusing to concede. She retweeted a post from President Trump in which she claimed that the election was stolen, and she wrote:

I beat my opponent on day of & in-person early voting, along with absentee. However, 97k mail in ballots were found in his favor?

My colleagues, there is an epidemic of delusion that is spreading out from the White House and infecting the entire Republican Party in the wake of this election, and it presents a real threat to this country.

President Trump didn't win the election. Every single one of my colleagues knows this. And he didn't just lose. He lost by a pretty substantial margin. He lost by 4.3 percent of the popular vote, likely around 70 electoral votes when all the counting is done.

And while the results haven't been certified yet, this isn't the election in 2000. There aren't any hanging chads. We are not arguing about 500 votes here or there. In Michigan, the margin today is 148,000. In Nevada, the margin is 36,000. In Pennsylvania, it is 47,000. In Wisconsin, it is 20,000. In Georgia, it is 12,000. In Arizona, it is 14,000. Thousands and thousands of votes are these margins.

Hillary Clinton, in 2016, lost by less than the President did in Pennsylvania and Michigan and by about the same amount in Wisconsin, and she conceded the day after the election. Now, this is important, and I think we need to talk about it here because it has real consequences for democracy and for national security.

Why hasn't the President conceded? Now, it is not because there was voter fraud or because the election was stolen from him. We are a week out, and the President is still desperately searching for evidence of fraud. He won't find it because it doesn't exist. It doesn't exist in Pennsylvania or Michigan or Wisconsin or Georgia.

The President has empowered the Department of Justice to now go out and launch investigations of voter fraud despite a longstanding precedent for the DOJ to stay out of elections if their actions could be determinative. But the President is so desperate now to fill in his mythology, his narrative, with facts that he doesn't have, that he is sending the DOJ on this massive national fishing expedition.

He hasn't conceded—not because there is fraud. There hasn't been. He is not conceding because he believes that there is a chance he could remain as President without having won the election, so long as congressional Republicans are willing to stick with him step by step, and, so far, there is no evidence that congressional Republicans are ever going to step away from President Trump's delusional assault on democracy.

Senator MCCONNELL said this week that the President is "within his rights" to fight the election. That is of course true. The President can keep filing frivolous legal challenges if he wants. We are not going to stop him from doing that. But just because he has the right to mount these legal challenges, that doesn't mean that Republicans here have to support him in those efforts if they contravene the interests of democracy and the interests of a smooth transition of power.

Today, Republicans support the President's refusal to concede. They support his lawsuits. They call on election officials—most recently, in Georgia—who refuse to bend their knee to Trump to resign, and they endorsed the President's decision to refuse to begin the transition.

This may sort of seem like a side-show now to the inevitability of a transfer of power, but what is next? What if President Trump asks Republicans here to contest the selection of electors? What if he gets the message from Republicans in Congress that if you are willing to support all the steps he has taken since Tuesday, that you will continue to support his efforts to try to remain in office despite losing both the popular vote and the electoral college? That is within his rights, to ask you to support a contest of electors. But will you do it? What so far have we seen to suggest that there is an end to your decision to put your allegiance to this President above an allegiance to the country?

The Secretary of State was asked today if he thought there would be a smooth transition of power from President Trump to the winner of the election, Vice President and President-Elect Biden. And Secretary Pompeo

said: "There will be a smooth transition to a second Trump administration."

Listen, these guys aren't playing. This isn't just for show. They are going to keep pushing the bounds of democracy until somebody stops them. It is logical to ask: If Republicans have been willing to support every conspiracy that the President has engaged in over the last week, then why wouldn't they support the next set of attacks on democracy that this President engages in?

How far are Republicans willing to go in their attacks against the decision of voters?

Now, for the President, there is really no downside to what he is doing right now. Either he steals the election or he grows his political power, because we have learned in the last 24 hours that the President is raising money today online from his supporters, not for a fund that is designed to strictly finance a recount effort but for a new political action committee that he has established that will fund his political efforts over the next 4 years. The button you click may give you the idea that you are supporting the President's recount but, in fact, you are helping him to amass resources that will allow him to be a major political presence for the next 4 years. So either the President is successful in continuing this assault on the transition of power or he is able to amass resources that help him into the future.

There is no downside for the President. There is a big downside for the rest of us. There is a big downside for this country.

In the short run, the country's national security is threatened by a messy transition. This has been covered, I think, well today, but, traditionally, the President-elect would be able to start getting briefings on national security threats, would start to get access to classified information, and would begin to be able to do background checks on individuals that he would like to be part of his national security cabinet. Traditionally, those are among the first confirmations that move through this body, the President's national security team. All of that is being delayed by a President who refuses to begin a transition and a Republican Senate that refuses to put pressure on the President to change his mind.

But, also, and in some ways more insidious, is the attack on the rule of law and the idea of peaceful transition of power itself. The narrative that President Trump is spreading and that congressional Republicans are facilitating right now that the election was stolen or rigged, it isn't being written on a white board that is going to be neatly and tidily erased as soon as 2021 shows up. No, the work that is being done right now by the Republican Party to undermine faith in our elections will have a very long, very long tale. And when the American people or a large