

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Toby Crouse, of Kansas, to be United States District Judge for the District of Kansas.

Mitch McConnell, James E. Risch, Joni Ernst, Marsha Blackburn, Mike Crapo, James Lankford, Thom Tillis, Roy Blunt, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, John Cornyn, John Hoeven, Jerry Moran, Lamar Alexander, Mike Braun, David Perdue.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 566.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Stephen A. Vaden, of Tennessee, to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Stephen A. Vaden, of Tennessee, to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade.

Mitch McConnell, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Thom Tillis, John Thune, Mike Crapo, Mike Rounds, Steve Daines, Kevin Cramer, Richard Burr, John Cornyn, Shelley Moore Capito, Todd Young, John Boozman, David Perdue, James E. Risch, Lindsey Graham, Roger F. Wicker.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 894.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kathryn Kimball Mizelle, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Kathryn Kimball Mizelle, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, John Cornyn, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Steve Daines, Mike Lee, Ron Johnson, Thom Tillis, Richard Burr, Pat Roberts, Cory Gardner, Tom Cotton, John Boozman, John Hoeven, Lindsey Graham.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 893.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Taylor B. McNeel, of Mississippi, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Mississippi.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Taylor B. McNeel, of Mississippi, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Mississippi.

Mitch McConnell, Mike Crapo, Tom Cotton, David Perdue, Mike Rounds, Pat Roberts, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Kevin Cramer, Lindsey Graham, Thom Tillis, Tim Scott, James E. Risch, Michael B. Enzi, John Cornyn, Roger F. Wicker, John Thune, John Boozman.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, the world is celebrating major developments in the global race for a vaccine. All year, since this pandemic hit, our greatest scientific minds have been working around the clock to develop a vaccine that will finally bring the pandemic and the crisis associated with it to an end. Researchers are testing dozens of vaccines in the hope of finding at least one that can stop the spread of the virus, which has claimed more than 1.2 million lives worldwide and nearly 240,000 here in the United States alone.

Early data from Pfizer's vaccine trial gives us a lot of reasons to be hopeful when the company announced on Monday that its vaccine was more than 90 percent effective in preventing the disease. For reference, standard flu vaccines for the seasonal flu are typically 40 to 60 percent effective, so 90 percent is a big deal. This breakthrough is a testament to the ingenuity and the near-universal commitment to trying to find a vaccine that will eliminate the threat of this pandemic, and it is a sign of hope for all people around the world.

Later this month, once Pfizer has collected the recommended 2 months of safety data, the company plans to request emergency authorization for the vaccine from the Food and Drug Administration. By the end of the year, it will have manufactured enough doses to immunize 15 to 20 million people. Congress has made tremendous investments in the development of therapeutics and of vaccines through the CARES Act, and I am incredibly proud of the men and women who have led this fight on the frontlines, including in my State of Texas.

During preclinical trials over the summer, scientists at the Texas Biomedical Research Institute in San Antonio tested the Pfizer vaccine on monkeys, with impressive results. Dr. Deepak Kaushal, who oversaw the study, said they saw a 100-percent protection rate in the monkeys that were given the Pfizer vaccine.

Once it was ready for human trials, hundreds of Texans volunteered to be vaccinated. Nearly 200 patients from Austin have participated in the study. The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston has enrolled more than 500 participants at its three sites in Galveston, League City, and Clear

Lake City, and hundreds more in the Dallas-Forth Worth area have volunteered to be part of the trial.

One of those Texans is a woman named Andrea Lucia, who received her first dose of the vaccine from a clinic in Keller, TX, in late September and returned for the second dose 3 weeks later. Like other volunteers in a double-blind study, where half gets a placebo and the other half gets the vaccine, Andrea doesn't know if she received the vaccine or not, but every week, she is asked if she has any symptoms. Andrea said she will have occasional followup appointments over the next year and a half, and once the vaccine becomes publicly available, she will find out if she received it already through the clinical trials.

I thank Andrea and the thousands of men and women like her who have volunteered to test these vaccines in the ongoing clinical trials. They have risked their own health to ensure the world can access a safe and effective vaccine as quickly as possible and, of course, subject to the determination by the Food and Drug Administration that it is safe and effective.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the brilliant researchers, scientists, doctors, and nurses who sprinted at full speed in the race for this vaccine for months on end. America is proud of their heroic work, and we will keep cheering them on and supporting their work as the race for a vaccine continues.

END-OF-YEAR PRIORITIES

Madam President, finally, while the election updates have dominated headlines over the last week or so, the work of the 116th Congress is far from being finished.

As I mentioned yesterday, my top priority is to pass another coronavirus relief package. We need to ensure that our researchers and scientists have the resources they need to continue to make progress on the therapeutics and eventual vaccine and the money and the logistical organization needed to deploy the vaccine once it is finally approved. I suspect that there will not just be one vaccine but, hopefully, multiple vaccines available.

We also need to make sure that our ongoing economic recovery keeps trending in the right direction.

While addressing this pandemic should be our top priority, we can't take our eyes off of other threats. Over the last few months, I have been working with a bipartisan group of Senators and others in the House to advance legislation to address our vulnerabilities in one of our most critical supply chains. This is one of the most significant lessons this virus has taught us—the vulnerability of some critical supply chains. One of those is for semiconductors.

Regardless of how much the average consumer knows about semiconductors, these chips, these integrated circuits, are everywhere. They are in the technology for everything, including

our cell phones to the advanced weapons systems that support our national security and defense. Yet, for all of the ways our dependence on products that use semiconductors has grown, so has our vulnerability, because the U.S. production of these chips has declined over the last two decades. It will come as no surprise that other countries have stepped in to fill the void.

China has gone from manufacturing zero semiconductors to manufacturing 16 percent of the world's supply. You can bet it doesn't plan to stop there. China is preparing to invest another \$1.4 trillion in semiconductor technologies. If you are looking for a reason that this is so dangerous, just look at the personal protective equipment shortages we faced at the start of this pandemic. The need was so high that hospitals asked the public to help boost their supplies. They took donations from folks who had extra boxes of N95 masks in their garages, and they took gloves from salons that had closed their doors to help in the mitigation efforts.

We didn't reach that point because of there being a lack of preparation by hospitals but, rather, because of our reliance—our dependence, if you will—on other countries, notably China, to produce this medical gear. It has been a wake-up call and a reminder that we need to take action today to protect our most critical supply chains from similar vulnerabilities. If we are going to regain lost ground in semiconductor manufacturing, it is going to require a strategic investment by the Federal Government.

That is where the legislation I introduced with our colleague, the senior Senator from Virginia, Senator WARNER, comes in, which is called the CHIPS for America Act. It creates a Federal incentive program, through the Department of Commerce, to encourage semiconductor manufacturing in the United States. This will, we hope, help to stimulate domestic advanced semiconductor manufacturing and boost both our national security and our global economic competitiveness.

We worked hand in glove with Senator COTTON from Arkansas and with Senator SCHUMER, the Democratic leader, in drafting an amendment that was adopted by the whole Senate by a vote of 96 to 4 in the national defense authorization bill. So, as you can see, this is a priority for both the Republicans and the Democrats in the House and in the Senate, and I am optimistic that it will head to the President's desk with the full National Defense Authorization Act in the coming weeks. Yet this just means we are halfway there.

The next step is funding. I am working with colleagues on both sides to ensure we can provide the full funding for this legislation and finally restore American leadership in semiconductor manufacturing. This is key to our long-term national security and economic

competitiveness, and it will be one of my top priorities in the coming weeks as the Senate prepares to consider appropriations bills.

It is no longer possible for us just to leave this sort of laissez-faire free market economics. Our competitors—notably, Communist China—are investing billions of dollars in everything from 5G to artificial intelligence, to quantum computers. They don't have to go through a democratic or constitutional process like we do in order to appropriate money for that purpose.

I just think it is time for us to rethink and maybe reset the way we view our vulnerabilities and our need to be competitive and, indeed, to win that competition with countries like Communist China, which do not play by the same set of rules as we do.

Before the end of the year, I also hope we can get another piece of legislation across the finish line called the Jenna Quinn Law, which is the ultimate example of noncontroversial, consensus legislation. Senator HASSAN of New Hampshire is my partner on this particular bill. It is named for an inspiring Texan who is one of more than 42 million adult survivors of child sexual abuse nationwide. Sadly, these victims often stay silent for months, years, or some for even a lifetime, and as a result, they and countless other victims continue to be subjected to abuse.

Jenna has devoted her life to interrupting this cycle. She was the driving force behind a State law in Texas which requires training for teachers and caregivers and other adults who work with children on how to prevent, recognize, and report child sexual abuse. The signs of child sexual abuse are unique from other forms of child abuse, and correctly identifying these signs is integral to bringing children out of an abusive situation.

After our State law passed in 2009, one study found educators reported child sexual abuse at a rate almost four times greater after training than they did before training. It was one of the first child sexual abuse prevention laws in the United States to mandate such training, and now more than half of the States have adopted some form of Jenna's Law.

Well, you might ask, if the States are passing these laws, why would we need to pass one here at the Federal level? Many States that have required training simply don't have funding for these programs. The Jenna Quinn law, when we pass it out of the House and it is signed by the President, will change that. It will allow the Department of Health and Human Services to make grants to be used for specialized training for students, teachers, and caregivers to learn how to identify, safely report, and hopefully prevent future child sexual abuse. It encourages States without similar laws to implement innovative programs to address child sexual abuse.