

You all know that he served as president of a university, Governor, Senator, and Secretary of Education. I have watched firsthand as he has led the Senate's Committee on Health and Education. I don't know any person who has worked longer, harder, and more effectively for the well-being of America's children than LAMAR ALEXANDER.

His service extends, of course, beyond the children. As we have endured the COVID-19 pandemic, he has led the Senate as we have helped to guide and fund our national response. His healthcare expertise and his determination to keep each of us informed and involved has been invaluable.

While America's response to the pandemic may not have been exemplary, LAMAR ALEXANDER's leadership of the Senate's role has been superb. The speed at which we will have a vaccine is, in no small measure, a testament to his determination and vision.

But LAMAR is much more than a Senator. I have seen the devotion he has for his wife and family. I have watched him entertain rooms full of celebrating Republicans with his piano and singing. And I have experienced very personally the kindness and graciousness that have long characterized this man. He was the first Senator to come to meet me when I joined this body.

His impact on the Senate, on the State of Tennessee, and on the Nation extends well beyond his legislative accomplishments and leadership. His greatest impact has been that of his personal character. He is a man without guile. He is true to his conscience. He speaks and acts with truth and honesty. He cares about people and endeavors to help others. He is a genuine friend, as is evidenced by the many members of his team wearing plaid masks around this room.

He has used his talent and energy not to aggrandize himself but to serve. It could be said of LAMAR ALEXANDER that he is a great American of exemplary character. We are a better people because of LAMAR ALEXANDER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I think Mark Twain said, among many other things, that there is nothing more troubling than a great example. And, as we have had all of these speeches today, I felt less and less adequate as the speakers talked about the great things that LAMAR has done, the great things he stands for, the incredible character that defines his life and his work. It has been wonderful to be here and to see the appreciation that Senators have for somebody who is proud to be a Senator.

Not that often do you get to start a last speech in the Senate referring to somebody else's maiden speech over almost 50 years ago. But that kind of sense of the Senate, that sense of community, that split screen that LAMAR talked about with educators, where you do have the one screen where it ap-

pears that nobody can get along and get anything done—and, particularly in the Senate, you have this relatively small community of people, all of whom got here by figuring out, normally, how to get along with other people, as one of their attributes of getting to the Senate. And then you have rules in the Senate that require you to get along to get anything done. So you have that other screen that doesn't get nearly the attention. But when you do look at the accomplishments, even at a time of great frustration, those accomplishments have been significant, and so many of them have included LAMAR.

I knew LAMAR before I came to the Senate, but, particularly, the last 10 years of working with LAMAR in the Senate have been great for me, and the time that Abby and I have been able to spend with him and Honey have been great.

He says things in passing that really define the opportunity to be here in such a significant way. We have heard many of them today. There are others I think of often—one LAMAR told me not too long ago, when I was talking about how well our staffs work together. He said: Well, it always seemed to me that when the Senators obviously got along, the staff figures that out and they understand they are supposed to get along too.

LAMAR is blessed with a great staff. It will be interesting to see the new standard of having that other speech that so significantly talks about the staff and what the staff means. I have a great staff—many of us do—but when those staffs work together, as opposed to looking for reasons they shouldn't work together, things happen.

I remember LAMAR told me one day: They always remember the last thing you do.

And if that turns out to be the case, at least the last Senate year of Senator ALEXANDER has been extraordinary, as others have been.

But this year I had a chance, as the appropriating chairman of the committee that LAMAR is the authorizing chairman for—and, by the way, he also sits right beside me on the Appropriations Committee in most of our hearings when Senator SHELBY isn't able to be there, the chairman of our full committee. But in this last year, particularly from March on, we have done so many things together.

In March, April, May, June, there was almost never a day when we didn't have at least one call with somebody who is running a laboratory or someone at the FDA or someone who understood this investment arm we had, BARDA, that had been designed about 10 years earlier but never used as we have used it to bring the private sector and public sector together in partnership in a way that advances both tests and vaccines.

We would spend sometimes hours a day in a series of 30-minute phone calls, trying to put the pieces of this puzzle together. I remember one day we

were talking to someone at the White House, and the comment from his part of the conversation was knowing how many other conversations we had had that day.

If people had any idea how much the Senate and the two of you—he was saying at that moment—are committed to get things done, they would be surprised because that is a story that never gets told.

So much of the story of LAMAR—his work here and the good spirit he brings to that work—isn't told, but it is so very obvious, certainly for me.

One of the great gifts of my working life has been for LAMAR ALEXANDER to be such an important part of it for the last 10 years. I am grateful for it; I am grateful for him. I look forward to his continued friendship and advice.

I think Senator ALEXANDER, like many of us, is more of a next-chapter guy than a last-chapter guy. He is neither shy nor retiring. I expect him to continue to have great impact in his State and in our country. And, in my case, I hope he continues to have great impact in my life.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ERNST). The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first, I spoke earlier about Senator ALEXANDER, but I would like to compliment my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. This is a fine and rare moment of bipartisanship and support of somebody we all admire and respect.

NOMINATION OF ALEJANDRO MAYORKAS

Madam President, now back to regular Senate business—I would like to conclude my remarks from earlier this morning on Senate business, but first I want to mention that I just met with another of President-Elect Biden's exceptionally qualified slate of Cabinet nominees over video conference, and that was Alejandro Mayorkas for the Department of Homeland Security.

No one exemplifies the hope and promise of America better than Ali, an immigrant from Cuba who has risen to the highest echelons of public service in his adopted country. We had an excellent conversation about how to restore integrity and trust at DHS and how to make this into a department that is not just anti-immigrant but relishes the fact that immigrants are so important to the future of America.

Now I will note that in previous administrations, the Secretary of Homeland Security has been confirmed by the Senate on Inauguration Day for President Obama and for President Trump. The Senate should continue the tradition and quickly confirm Ali Mayorkas for the third time so that he can get to work on day one of the Biden administration.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Madam President, now, on Senate business, before the end of the year, the Senate has three major priorities: Fund the government; pass the annual Defense bill; and deliver another round of significant COVID relief.

The appropriators from both sides of the aisle continue to have good discussions, and I hope on the funding of the government that the final agreement can be announced soon.

Now, the other two priorities, unfortunately, are a bit murkier. Yesterday, President Trump issued over Twitter a renewed threat on the annual Defense bill. Previously, the President threatened to veto this important legislation over a provision to rename military installations named after Confederate traitors.

Now President Trump has issued a veto threat by tweet over a policy concerning social media companies, section 230, which is in neither version of the NDAA already passed by both Houses of Congress.

President Trump must have realized that vetoing a pay raise for our troops in order to defend the honor of Confederate traitors wasn't the best message to send, so he has found a new complaint. After 4 years of ignoring the President's most vitriolic, conspiracy-fueled, and absurd comments on social media, I wonder if our Republican colleagues would say that they didn't see this particular tweet.

The truth is, section 230 may actually need some reform, but that is a serious undertaking that should be done in a regular order and can be left for another day, and it is certainly not an acceptable reason to veto the annual Defense bill, which includes policies to keep our military prepared, well-resourced, and equipped to do a difficult and vital job.

Nevertheless, it is silly season at the White House. The President seems intent on filling each of his remaining days in office with petulance, grievance, and self-interest.

The President is reportedly asking his staff about whether he can issue preemptive pardons for himself, his family members, and Rudy Giuliani. There is a simple answer: No. No, Mr. President, that would be a gross abuse of the Presidential pardon authority. But I have a more important question: Just how long are our Republican colleagues going to indulge the President in this nonsense?

Many of our Republican colleagues gave the President space to contest the validity of our elections, poisoning Americans' faith in our democracy. Now he is threatening to veto a pay raise for our troops and considering preemptively pardoning the entire Trump family. When are our Republican colleagues in the Senate going to say "Enough already"?

At the very least, with respect to the Defense bill, Senate Republicans ought to find the courage to ignore the President's eleventh hour ramblings and pass the NDAA.

CORONAVIRUS RELIEF

Madam President, now, regarding another COVID bill, we seem to be caught in a familiar pattern. We all know that successfully passing legislation through Congress means that a bill

must get through the Democratic House and get Democratic votes in the Senate.

Passing the law takes a measure of bipartisanship and compromise. That is why Speaker PELOSI and I sent the Republican leader a new offer on the COVID bill. It was an effort to jumpstart serious negotiations, but, yesterday, Leader MCCONNELL announced that rather than respond to our offer or the bipartisan offer of the so-called Gang of 8, he will pursue another partisan proposal before the end of the year. He said he was going to talk to the Republican leader in the House, the Republican President, and that is it—not a word with Democrats.

From early reports in the press, the latest Republican offer will be even more insufficient than the previous two attempts—so insufficient, that according to one press report, a Republican Senator said it was "offensive"—his word—to struggling Americans for the Republican majority to focus on another messaging bill.

Apparently, the latest Republican proposal will not include another dime of unemployment assistance because, according to the Republican whip, it was likely something the President wouldn't sign.

Let's be clear. The latest Republican offer on COVID will include immunity for corporations that put their workers at risk of COVID-19 but not a dime for workers who lost their jobs because of the pandemic.

The Republican leader should not waste the Senate's time on another inadequate, partisan proposal and, instead, sit down with Democrats to begin a true bipartisan effort to quickly meet the needs of the country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

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

Mr. BARRASSO. 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 (Mrs. LOEFFLER) and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 56, nays 39, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 245 Ex.]

YEAS—56

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

NAYS—39

Baldwin	Feinstein	Peters
Bennet	Gillibrand	Reed
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Rosen
Booker	Hirono	Schumer
Brown	Kaine	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Cardin	Leahy	Stabenow
Carper	Manchin	Tester
Casey	Markey	Udall
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warren
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murray	Wyden

NOT VOTING—5

Harris	McSally	Schatz
Loeffler	Sanders	

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 Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The 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 C. Davis, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

Mitch McConnell, Roy Blunt, Mike Rounds, Todd Young, Pat Roberts, Cindy Hyde-Smith, John Thune, Kevin Cramer, Thom Tillis, Michael B. Enzi, James Lankford, John Barrasso, Joni Ernst, Lamar Alexander, Rob Portman, Tim Scott, Steve Daines.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Kathryn C. Davis, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years, shall be brought to a close?