

Our national debt now exceeds \$28 trillion. It is now at 128 percent of our GDP. And we are asked by the Democratic Party to add \$48 billion without so much as a—could we have a debate in committee?—so much as even a word spoken over this. We are just going to add \$48 billion with no discussion. It is a huge mistake.

Now, it has been alleged that, well, the thing is that the restaurants are suffering because of COVID. No. They are suffering because Democrat Governors locked them down. This is a manmade phenomenon. The economic disaster that we are in, that restaurants are in, is completely and entirely caused by Democrat Governors.

In my State, they are suing the Democrat Governor because he won't let them open up. This is a manmade phenomenon. So if you reward a manmade phenomenon, you will get more of it.

You reward Democrat Governors who shut these restaurants down, guess what, they will shut them down longer. The longer you give money to Democrat Governors for their lockdown policies, the more lockdowns you will get.

We need to open up the country. We need to learn to live with this disease. As tragic as it has been, we need to learn to live with it.

But the lockdowns have not worked. Closing the restaurants did not work, did not change the trajectory of this virus one iota. The only thing that is changing the trajectory of this virus now is the vaccine, plus natural immunity. Closing the restaurants did nothing and is doing nothing, except for devastating the bottom line of restaurants.

So with that, I would object to the unanimous consent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I regret the decision of my colleague from Kentucky.

I just really want to point out, we have had hearings in our committee—Small Business Committee—in which the Restaurant Revitalization Act was very much brought up during the hearing.

We have been receiving timely information about this program and how it has been implemented and the need for additional funds. So our committee has had ample opportunity to question how the program was being administered and the need for different funds.

I also regret that my colleague is holding the restaurants pretty much hostage and saying it is all right for us to give money to some but not others, when the administration of this was compromised because of a court case, and certain restaurants are now desperate as a result of not having adequate funds.

I am encouraged by the comments of the majority leader, Senator SCHUMER, that we will continue to focus on this

issue. I can tell you, it is urgent. We really need to deal with this immediately, and we will be looking for every available opportunity to treat our restaurants equitably and fairly and provide the money that is needed to implement the Restaurant Revitalization Program.

I regret that we are not able to act today because of the Senator's objection.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I just would like to add a word and thank the Senator from Maryland for his leadership, and the Senator from New York for supporting this, and to reflect for a moment on the comments of the objector, the Senator from Kentucky.

His exact words were: We have got to learn to live with this.

Unfortunately, people are not living with this; they are getting infected and dying. And to accept the status quo and somehow make it a partisan issue—that it is the Democratic Governors who are responsible for what is going on here—is a sad oversimplification. In fact, it is tragic.

We know what is happening. We have a new variant of this COVID-19 virus that has emerged because it is still on the loose and it is changing by the day. We think the Delta variant is dangerous, maybe dramatically more contagious than the original virus.

We know that even people who have been vaccinated can unknowingly transmit this disease, the new Delta variant, and we know that it has taken a deadly toll on 90 percent of the patients who were not vaccinated and were subjected to the illness that came about.

I just want to say, in general, I couldn't agree more with Senator SCHUMER and Senator CARDIN that restaurants in our cities are really the lifeblood. Whether it is my hometown of Springfield, IL, or Chicago, which I am honored to represent, I will tell you that these restaurants are still struggling, and as they struggle, our cities struggle.

And people that I know really measure where we are, as an American nation, recovering by the vibrancy of these restaurant businesses, the ones that are our favorites and bring us together.

They have done their part. We should do our part to give them a helping hand. Let's get through this pandemic together. We are certainly not going to do it by saying that we have to accept the Delta variant and that whatever else follows is just the natural course of things.

We have it within our power to change that. More vaccinations and more careful use of masks and social distancing will make a difference—can make a real difference in this country. Until we come to grips with that reality, we are going to continue to face these devastating disappointments.

Again, I thank the Senator from Maryland for bringing this before us. I hope he will continue to offer it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NOMINATION OF EUNICE C. LEE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, in a minute, I am going to ask to vote on confirmation for Eunice Lee to be a U.S. circuit judge on the Second Circuit. She is an amazing person. I interviewed her and recommended her to the President. She will be the only public defender on the Second Circuit. We have had very, very few public defenders on that circuit and largely on our Federal bench. They tend to be prosecutors, partners in big law firms. We are changing all of that and getting people who have different walks of life—like public defenders, like people from the ACLU, like people from different organizations—so we have a new perspective on the bench. She is a phenomenal person. I am so proud that she will now get on the bench.

I ask that the Senate now vote on confirmation of the Lee nomination to be a U.S. circuit judge.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Eunice C. Lee, of New York, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. 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.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from South Carolina, (Mr. GRAHAM), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 310 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Rosen
Blumenthal	Kaine	Sanders
Booker	Kelly	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Sinema
Carper	Lujan	Smith
Casey	Manchin	Stabenow
Coons	Markey	Tester
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warnock
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Padilla	Wyden
Heinrich	Peters	

NAYS—47

Barrasso	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Hagerty	Risch
Boozman	Hawley	Romney
Braun	Hoeben	Rounds
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Collins	Kennedy	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lummis	Tillis
Crapo	Marshall	Toomey
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Paul	

NOT VOTING—3

Blackburn	Graham	Rubio
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). 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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Illinois.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 3684

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time during any recess, adjournment, or period of morning business count postclosure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. For the information of all Senators, the Senate will convene at noon tomorrow and resume consideration of the infrastructure bill.

We have been working hard all day on amendments, and, hopefully, we can

come to some agreement tomorrow, but time is burning as we go forward.

So for the information of Members, keep working, and we will resume at 12 noon.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 249, 271, and 166; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that any statements related to nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate resume legislative session.

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 Bryan Todd Newland, of Michigan, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Interior; Carlos Del Toro, of Virginia, to be Secretary of the Navy; Christopher Paul Maier, of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Newland, Del Toro, and Maier nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE MAURICE ROBERT GRAVEL, FORMER SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF ALASKA

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 343, submitted earlier today.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 343) relative to the death of the Honorable Maurice Robert Gravel, former Senator from the State of Alaska.

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

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 343) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MORNING BUSINESS

RESIDENTIAL SATELLITE BROADBAND SERVICE

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, my State of Maryland has a proud history of innovation in satellite technology and space exploration. Greenbelt, MD, is home to Goddard, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's first Space Flight Center Space Flight Center. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which operates a fleet of weather satellites, has its headquarters in Silver Spring. Additionally, the largest provider of residential satellite broadband service, Hughes Network Systems, is headquartered in Germantown. Hughes serves consumers in some of the most rural, hard-to-reach areas of the country.

As the Senate considers the bipartisan infrastructure bill, I believe there is broad agreement that the broadband deployment grants established by the bill and administered by the Department of Commerce would help bring broadband service to unserved and underserved households in some of the most rural areas in the U.S. I also believe that satellite technology can and should be one of the technological options for achieving our broadband deployment goals. Because a geostationary satellite orbits at 22,500 miles above earth, however, even signals traveling at the speed of light take a split-second longer to reach their destination, causing "latency"—or delay—in real-time broadband applications. Fortunately, satellite innovators in Maryland and elsewhere have designed measures to reduce latency by using a mix of communications platforms, including low-earth orbit satellites and fixed wireless networks.

I believe that where the broadband grants provision in division F, title I of the infrastructure bill establishes a "real-time, interactive" standard for permissible latency, residential satellite broadband service providers may meet this standard by offering a hybrid mix of geostationary and nongeostationary satellite networks or fixed