

NOT VOTING—9

Bennet
Graham
Marshall

Moran
Portman
Rubio

Scott (SC)
Shelby
Toomey

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VAN HOLLEN). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately informed of the Senate's actions.

The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

(The remarks of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO pertaining to the introduction of S. Res. 620 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. I yield the floor.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. 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. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Executive Calendar No. 708.

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 Ann Claire Phillips, of Virginia, to be Administrator of the Maritime Administration.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. 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 Executive Calendar No. 708, Ann Claire Phillips, of Virginia, to be Administrator of the Maritime Administration.

Charles E. Schumer, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mark Kelly, Jack Reed, Catherine Cortez Masto, Patty Murray, Margaret Wood Hassan, Mazie Hirono, Tim Kaine, Tammy Baldwin, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Kirsten E. Gilli-

brand, Patrick J. Leahy, Ron Wyden, Amy Klobuchar, Richard J. Durbin, Jeff Merkley.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. 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. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Executive Calendar No. 773.

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 Asmeret Asefaw Berhe, of California, to be Director of the Office of Science, Department of Energy.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. 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 Executive Calendar No. 773, Asmeret Asefaw Berhe, of California, to be Director of the Office of Science, Department of Energy.

Charles E. Schumer, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mark Kelly, Jack Reed, Catherine Cortez Masto, Patty Murray, Margaret Wood Hassan, Mazie K. Hirono, Tim Kaine, Tammy Baldwin, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Patrick J. Leahy, Ron Wyden, Amy Klobuchar, Richard J. Durbin, Jeff Merkley.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions filed today, May 5, be waived.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO ALISON KEAR

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, it is Thursday, and it is my favorite time of the week. And I can see the pages

are getting all excited about another edition of the "Alaskan of the Week." We get to talk about someone who is making a big difference in Alaska, someone whose spirit is helping others.

We always like to end the week on a positive note here in the U.S. Senate, usually with an "Alaskan of the Week" speech. So before I get to talk about our special Alaskan, an incredible woman named Alison Kear, I am going to give a little update about what is going on in Alaska.

So, as I mentioned last week, winter is no longer coming; winter is on the run. The sun is out longer and longer every day. Let me give you a real cool example. In Utqiagvik, known as Barrow—the northernmost city, community, in North America at Point Barrow—the sun is getting out longer and longer each day.

Now, remember, just 3 months ago, Utqiagvik had no sun—zero, zilch. Utqiagvik gained more than 17 minutes of daylight from yesterday. Isn't that cool? It is kind of amazing. The sun rose at 4 a.m. and will set tonight after midnight. Four months ago there was no sun. So a lot going on.

In Anchorage, the home of Alison, our Alaskan of the Week, it is in the 50s, balmy this weekend. So it is a great time to be in Alaska. There isn't a person who doesn't long to visit the great State and join us up there. So please come and join us.

So let me go back to Alison Kear, who is doing a great job in Alaska, our Alaskan of the Week. She runs a very special organization called Covenant House, one of 33 Covenant Houses in the United States, Canada, and Latin America.

Covenant House's mission is to help with youth homelessness. That means, of course, helping provide short- and long-term housing for young people who are experiencing homelessness. But to really help our young people—all people—get into a stable situation, whether that means to reunite with family or get into a permanent home, what Covenant House does involves so much more.

At Covenant House Alaska, they offer so much more, and that has been Alison's incredible legacy. So let me talk about Alison, who started with Covenant House in 1997. So she is celebrating 25 years with the organization, a silver anniversary. Way to go, Alison. We are so proud of her.

She was born and raised in Florida. She went to college in Texas. She arrived in Alaska in 1994 armed with a graduate degree in healthcare management, a job at a local hospital in Alaska, and big ideas about where her life would lead her. Initially, at least, those plans did not involve Covenant House. In fact, according to Alison, they didn't involve Alaska for too long. She arrived—as she said recently to some of my team as we were putting this together—in the last frontier with big hair, a couple of fancy suits, and a plan: If she spent 3 years in Alaska

working at a hospital, she would probably get transferred to a big city of her choice in the lower 48 to run a hospital of her own.

So that was the initial plan, Madam President. But like so many before her, her plans started to change. And like so many before her, the change of heart toward Alaska started making her think: Hmm, maybe I am going to stay here. Maybe I have a great life ahead of me in the great State of Alaska.

Now, it happened a bit slowly. Alaska grew on her, as it does for so many people. She moved into a house with a great group of people her age. She began to ski, enjoy the great outdoors, have fun, make friends, friends who eventually turned into her extended family.

Slowly, Alison began to question that earlier plan she had that she was so committed to, and that started to lead to her thinking: I think I am going to have a great life here in Alaska. Her best friend was the executive director of Covenant House Alaska. Then—25 years ago—it was a crisis shelter that offered few services and, to be honest, was struggling to actually stay open.

Her friend asked Alison if she could volunteer a few hours of her time helping with grant writing. So Alison said: Sure. I will do that, a little bit of time.

And when her 3 years were up, that same friend said to her: You know, Alison, I think you should stay. I think you need a mission right here at Covenant House.

Something about that rang true for Alison. So in 1997, she started work at Covenant House in development for \$9 an hour—with no health insurance, by the way. So she started kind of at the lower levels of Covenant House and started to work her way up.

And then the mission that she never knew she needed found Alison. She tells a story about a Thanksgiving celebration they were having at Covenant House. There was a boy sharing the meal with them, someone whose own story was filled with unspeakable trauma, even horror. He talked about his family: "I don't think my mom ever loved me," he told the group, "but I am glad that she had me because you guys here at Covenant House love me."

That is powerful. That is very powerful. That simple statement hit Alison. She called her mother, Mary Whittemore, that evening, crying to her mom. You always loved me, Alison told her mom. When she internalized that and realized how important that love is, the concept of who she was and what she could be changed forever.

And I would say it changed Covenant House forever. Because of the love her mom gave her, she realized, too, that she had a big enough heart for love, especially at that wonderful organization. And Alison has spread that love, that devotion and commitment to thousands of Alaska's youth since that time, she and her team—her "rock stars," as she calls them—at Covenant House.

When she started—get this in terms of progress—Covenant House, as I mentioned, was a crisis shelter with a budget of about \$900,000. Under Alison's leadership and the hard work of so many others, it is now an organization with a budget of about \$15 million, with a new job training center and more education and employment services than ever before.

Great job, Alison.

And it has also become a nationwide model for helping youth. Through sheer tenacity, determination, and grit and through deep partnerships throughout the communities—not just in Anchorage but even beyond—Alison has led that effort. Roughly 200 kids a day from all over our State—thousands a year—are served by Covenant House Alaska.

So how do they do it? Let's say you are a teen. I know our pages can't imagine being a teen. Let's say you are a teen and you can't stay at home any longer. Maybe there is abuse or family addiction or you have aged out of foster care, and you don't have a place to sleep. Think about that. Unfortunately, a lot of teens have that problem in America.

And in Alaska, remember how cold it is—often below zero in the winter—and how horrible it is to sleep outside. So many of these kids are from rural parts of our State and have had to travel hundreds of miles to get to Anchorage. So now they are in the big city. They are likely to be traumatized, confused, lonely. It is bitterly cold outside. They have no place to go.

These are children, and it is heart-breaking whether you are in Alaska or anywhere else in the lower 48. So imagine that.

Now imagine this. Enter Covenant House Alaska. Covenant House has an outreach program, an incredible team of dedicated employees and servants to the people, to the kids, who walk the streets, go to malls, to homeless camps, wherever the kids might be. They give them some food, basic essentials, and tell them about Covenant House. That is what Alison's team does. They begin developing a relationship of trust because most of these youth have actually never had a trusting, stable adult in their lives.

What do the youth find when they get to Covenant House? First, there are people who welcome them, who smile at them, who treat them with kindness, who treat them with respect. If they are hungry, they get a warm meal, and they get shelter. And if they are dealing with trauma, they get counseling.

Eventually, if they decide they need to finish school or earn their GED, there is a classroom there. If they are pregnant or already have a baby, they will learn positive parenting skills.

Covenant House Alaska partners with several other amazing Alaskan organizations onsite—this is a big deal—what they call wraparound services, so the kids don't need to go back on the

streets. These different partners who work with Covenant House offer everything a teen needs to learn about in terms of life skills that so many of us take for granted.

And what is so amazing is that someone at Covenant House will stay with you for as long as you need it. They provide those services, even—this is really important—even after you leave the shelter, to help these teens navigate the system, apply for jobs, get an apartment, get transportation, get them through a crisis that they might be having.

All the things that we as parents do for our own kids, Covenant House does in so many ways for these kids—almost everything they might need to have a chance, an opportunity, a bright future.

Now, of course, Madam President, it is not that easy. It sounds easy, but it is not easy at all. Some of these youth have experienced unspeakable trauma. And I am going to talk a little bit about a tough subject, but it needs to be spoken about. For far too many of these youth, especially the young women and even some of the young men, they have been trafficked by bad people.

And the statistics are horrific. A 2017 study from Loyola University found that 28 percent of the young people being served at Covenant House Alaska identified themselves as survivors of human trafficking—28 percent. A disproportionate number of these teenagers are Alaskan Native—young women, many of whom who have been lured out of their villages with a promise of a better life, and they have been lured into trafficking.

At Covenant House, the leadership has not shied away from these statistics, and I think that is a testament to Alison and her leadership. Instead, they talk openly about it. They have studied it. They work tirelessly and diligently with law enforcement and other agencies in Alaska to address this scourge, which, of course, we have in Alaska, and we have throughout America.

Importantly, they make these survivors—and all the young people who come to Covenant House—feel safe. They call it "creating sanctuary" for the youth at Covenant House, and it works. It works. Alison said there are countless stories of young people who walked into Covenant House Alaska in crisis—traumatized, scared, lonely, very hurt—who are now happy high school and college graduates, working, with their own families, doing great things for the State. Some have even come back to be staff at Covenant House. I have had the honor of meeting a number of these young Alaskans who are contributing so much.

Alison is the key reason why this has all happened successfully. She is tenacious. She is smart, stubborn—that is not my language, by the way; that was

her own language—ambitious and loving for her kids. Joe Hemphill, Covenant House Alaska's chief development officer, calls Alison a "visionary for kids." He has known her for 25 years, and Joe said this about Alison:

One thing . . . hasn't changed [in over 25 years]: she has never taken "no" for an answer and she still doesn't.

But her heart leads. When you talk to her, she will tell you that love is truly the answer for all that ails our communities and certainly for all that ails our young people in them.

"How great it is to create a space where someone can . . . feel love," Alison said, "to take it and to give it." She continued:

It's the only thing that has truly changed communities [when you think about it]. Homelessness is not a singular experience. It's about a void in relationships, it's about a void of love.

Again, Alison credits her mother—that is very sweet, especially as we are approaching Mother's Day—for helping her understand what love means and how she can give it to others and how it can make a huge difference in all of our communities.

So I want to thank all the staff at Covenant House Alaska for doing such great work, day in, day out, 24/7, 365 days a year. As I mentioned, I want to thank you. My wife Julie also wants to thank you. Julie has had the honor of working at Covenant House for several years as staff and on the board and she has seen firsthand all the great work that Alison and her team have done for our youth in Alaska.

Again, to all of Covenant House, thank you for walking alongside our youth who have not had love in their lives and yet who are resilient and working hard to find a positive path in life. The Covenant House team is making that happen.

And, of course, thank you to Alison for leading this exceptional team. By the way, Alison, I know your birthday is coming up, so happy birthday. And most importantly, thank you, again, for being our Alaskan of the Week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon is recognized.

REMEMBERING ORRIN G. HATCH

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I come to the Senate floor today to speak about Senator Orrin Hatch, and I think it is very fitting that the distinguished Senator from Nevada be in the chair because she has been doing very good work on the Senate Finance Committee. And as she knows, Senator Hatch was my partner in leading the Senate Finance Committee for 5 years.

The Senate greatly mourns his passing, and I am going to take a few minutes to reflect on the important work he did serving the people of Utah and all Americans, particularly with respect to the Finance Committee.

It is no secret that Senator Hatch and I did not always agree 100 percent of the time. We had differences on taxes. We had differences on asylum

and immigration. We had differences on the environment. One thing that the two of us did agree on was the value of showing up every day and searching for bipartisanship and for common ground.

And we were able to do that, sometimes defying the odds on the Senate Finance Committee, and I am going to briefly recount some of those accomplishments in honor of his memory. First, the landmark reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program, for a decade, the longest ever commitment to children's health since the program was created.

And by the way, Senator Hatch was the coauthor of the original bill with his Democratic partner, the late Ted Kennedy. What a success CHIP has been shown to be. A wonderful State-Federal partnership. More than 9 million kids have affordable, quality healthcare thanks to CHIP. Within 2 years of becoming law, 47 States have set up a CHIP program, and today every State participates in CHIP.

As my friend from Nevada knows, sometimes it is hard to get the States to agree on whether you might buy a 7Up, all the States, but the CHIP program is a huge effort, and what a remarkable accomplishment, led by Senator Hatch, in keeping kids covered and healthy. In fact, just 5 years after the program was enacted, CHIP reduced the uninsurance rate for children by half.

Now, the road to a 10-year reauthorization was not exactly smooth. In fact, the authorization actually expired for nearly 4 months, but despite the setbacks and, as I say, taking on long odds, Chairman Hatch and I just kept at it, focusing on the impact that this historic legislation would have on the reason we all do public service, which is to make people's lives better. And it was clear that this was a real opportunity to make a lasting investment in the well-being of kids, and we were committed to doing that together.

So, now, thanks to the leadership of Chairman Hatch, the healthcare for millions of America's kids is secure until 2027. And I know because I remember looking over just a few desks away to Chairman Hatch and wondering if we were going to be able to keep this effort bipartisan, if we were going to actually get it done. He would smile, and he would look over at me in that kind of way, just sort of "Stick with me, colleague," because he so often treated me almost like a son. And it always made me feel that there was a chance, as I said, to show people that even in a very polarized and divisive time, we could get something really important accomplished like standing up for kids.

Now, the next item that I want to mention involves transforming the Medicare Program. As my friend from Nevada knows, my roots are with the Grey Panthers, a senior citizens group. When I was coming up, Medicare was a program for acute illness—if you broke your ankle, if you had a horrible case

of the flu, you went to a hospital, you saw your doctor—not Medicare today in Nevada and Oregon.

Today, Medicare is about chronic illness: cancer, diabetes, heart disease, strokes, COPD. That is overwhelmingly the Medicare Program today.

And when I briefly was chairman of the Finance Committee, I held the first hearing on updating Medicare to place the focus squarely on updating what we always have called the Medicare guarantee. Medicare isn't a slip of paper; it is a guarantee. And Chairman Hatch graciously agreed to continue that effort.

It began when I was the chair. And it took the better part of 2 years and a lot of guts for Chairman Hatch to take that on because the rule—the rule at that time—was you didn't even bring up fundamental Medicare reform because everybody went to opposite sides, and that was the end of the discussion. Chairman Hatch said: Not on my watch. We are going to do something very different.

And there were groundbreaking developments in that chronic care bill that make a difference today for Americans. Throughout the pandemic, it was clear that we needed to make bold reforms to increase the role and opportunity for telehealth to serve our people.

All our colleagues would come back from a visit home, do something about telehealth. Well, what happened was that the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services was trying to move quickly, and they were looking for a model. And I remember then-Secretary of Medicare and Medicaid Services Seema Verma called me up and said essentially: Would you mind if we used the model for expanding telehealth which Chairman Hatch and you led in the Finance Committee?

And we said: We are thrilled, all in, let's go.

And today that model continues to expand. As my colleague from Nevada knows, in the recent major budget bill, we expanded it to audio only because we had so many rural communities where they didn't have broadband, where there was a big senior population, and they wanted to expand telehealth. None of that was possible unless Chairman Hatch was willing to take on a big Medicare reform undertaking, updating the guarantee, recognizing that in the 21st century it wasn't like Medicare when it began, and it really is going to make a big, big difference.

And as I say, we are going to keep expanding telehealth. My colleague knows we are looking to have a major mental health reform effort in this session. A big part of it will be expanding telehealth in covering mental health services. Chairman Hatch did so much to make that debate possible.

Finally, a third area—and this was all in one Congress, three major bills—and I could take kind of another prism and talk about the chairman, but we