

Alaskan, Lydia Jacoby, to win a gold medal in swimming, where we don't even have an Olympic-size swimming pool. She won the breaststroke in an amazing race. She did such a great job that she is the first person in U.S. Senate history to be Alaskan of the Week twice—not sure that is ever going to happen again.

We have the first Alaskan woman, Deniz Burnham, chosen to be a NASA astronaut. Another woman, Nichole Ayers, who was stationed at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, was also picked to be an astronaut.

I don't know. It is something about breathing the air.

And, as usual, we have winter olympians going to the Winter Olympics again this year, like we almost always do—strong, very strong, in that area: Rosie Brennan, Vicky Persinger.

And there is Quannah Chasinghorse, an Alaskan Native—a young Alaskan Native woman who was featured recently on the cover of *Vogue*.

So it has been a great year for strong Alaskan women. And to Emma, I just want to say: You make us all proud. Congratulations on your incredible win: Miss America, first Alaskan ever. You have been an inspiration to us. Thank you for your courage, your willingness to speak out on tough issues and take up great causes like our Special Olympic athletes. And, of course, congratulations on being our Alaskan of the Week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from Ohio.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, 10 minutes ago there was a different Nevada Senator sitting at the Presiding Officer's chair. Welcome.

I was at a roundtable this morning with a group of Ohio county commissioners from conservative counties like Warren and Medina and more progressive counties like Lucas and Hamilton—Republicans and Democrats alike; male, female; a good cross section of Ohio leaders—talking about the projects we are going to build and the good-paying jobs we are going to create—jobs that will not be off-shored this time because we came together to pass the bipartisan infrastructure bill.

Yesterday, I was on a media call with the Republican mayor of Findlay, OH, about the I-75 bridge project that they need in Hancock County.

The day before, I was at another roundtable with western Ohio leaders, talking with them about how we can leverage these investments. It is some of the most important work I am going to be doing over the coming months, working with local and Federal officials to make sure this investment translates into Ohio jobs.

The Presiding Officer understands this, that we pass legislation here. With it, sometimes, comes a good bit of money, like with infrastructure. But it is also up to us, as representing our States, to make sure those dollars are

spent efficiently and effectively and quickly, frankly.

The infrastructure bill is some of the most important work we have done in the Senate in a long time. We are investing in our country.

For years, mayors and businesses and workers have been telling us, as their representatives, as their Senators, about the need to upgrade infrastructure, but we have noticed over the years that candidates of both parties have promised infrastructure. “We are going to pass an infrastructure bill when I am elected,” they say. Plenty talk about it, but now, with a new President and a new majority in the Senate and the House, we are finally getting it done with this bipartisan infrastructure bill.

Over the past few months, I have heard from communities about the projects that this is going to allow them to accomplish.

In Toledo, with the mayor, talking about the city's plans to replace lead pipes—my State has the dubious distinction of being the second leading State, if you will. Our State has the second-most lead-contaminated pipes from main water lines and the pipes going into people's homes. We have 600,000 pipes like that going into people's homes that have high levels of lead.

And science has known, paint companies have known, lead manufacturers have known that infants, babies ingest lead. It affects their brain development for the rest of their lives. So one of our goals, working with the mayor of Toledo, is over the next several years to replace those pipes.

Ohio will get someone \$1 billion in new funding to improve water infrastructure.

The Western Hills Viaduct in Cincinnati, the Patterson Avenue Bridge in Dayton—Ohio has some 3,200 bridges eligible for upgrades. Some of them, like the Brent Spence, unbelievably, across the Ohio River, carries 3 percent of GDP every day across that river.

Some of those bridges are—when I grew up working the family farm, driving a tractor with a hay wagon crossing little culvert bridges that dot our countryside and all over my State, many of those are in states of disrepair.

We have seen the new pollution-free buses that communities like Akron and Canton, Columbus, and Lake County are rolling out through Laketrans, their transit system. We have heard about how they are going to expand service so people can get to work and school.

We have some 60,000 buses—big city buses—and another 50 or 60,000 small transit, more rural buses, that need to be replaced. They are fossil fuel, mostly diesel engines, and we are going to replace those over the next several years with low-emission or zero-emission buses.

From the Port of Ashtabula, the community my wife grew up in, we are hearing about how upgrades to our

ports will increase investment and help speed up and grow Ohio supply chains.

As the Presiding Officer knows, this Congress, this Senate and the House, frankly, over the years, at the behest of corporate lobbyists, sold us out on trade agreements, sold us out on tax policy, so that so many jobs left our country. The industrial Midwest was hit the hardest, but every State was hit by that job loss because of bad government policy, again, lobbied by some of the largest corporations in the world—the tech companies, the drug companies, the oil industry.

We now have a President who wants to get it right and bring those supply chains closer to home.

Now this, we also see how Ohio needs better rail infrastructure—new rail cars for Cleveland RTA, better Amtrak service, safer rail crossings.

But, fundamentally, this bill—the infrastructure bill—is a jobs bill. It will create construction jobs, to be sure. It will create jobs—union jobs: carpenters, millwrights, electricians, plumbers and pipe fitters, sheet metal workers, laborers. It will create those kinds of jobs but also create manufacturing jobs through the supply chain.

Senator PORTMAN and I worked to make sure this bill has the strongest “Buy America” requirements ever in an infrastructure bill with our Build America, Buy America Act.

Every one of these projects will come with the strongest ever “Buy America” rules. No more bridges—no more bay bridges in Northern California—made entirely with Chinese steel.

We introduced the “Build America, Buy America” bill on President Trump's inauguration day. Unfortunately, nothing moved because everything got crowded out of President Trump's agenda so they could give a huge tax cut to the richest people in the country.

We worked with other leaders now, 4 years later, with a new President, to get it right.

With “Buy America” particularly, I call out Senator BALDWIN from Wisconsin, Senator PETERS from Michigan and their work.

We are putting in place a clear, permanent standard: If American tax dollars are involved, American workers should be getting the jobs. It is going to mean more contracts for Ohio businesses.

Cleveland Cliffs' new plant in Toledo, talking about what we are doing there, it is the cleanest steel making, I believe, in the entire world at that new plant.

Owens Corning in Toledo; Gradall Industries in New Philadelphia, OH, on the edge of Appalachia.

We have the potential for hundreds more bridge projects around the State using American rebar, American steel, American iron.

It is an investment in Ohio that will pay off, creating jobs now, both during construction and up and down the supply chain. It will help attract new businesses. It will help keep the existing

ones. It will connect people with their jobs and businesses.

I will spend pretty much every day, and my staff will too, making sure that our State gets its fair share of this investment and these jobs.

If you believe in the dignity of work, you fight for the people who make this country work. We are seeing results.

On Wednesday, the mayor of Findlay and I were talking about the Biden administration's announcement of \$100 million in initial bridge funding already on the way to Ohio. That focus will continue.

We are doing roundtables. We are doing briefings with Federal officials, with local township trustees and county officials and mayors and city officials and State officials, talking about how they can apply for Federal funding, and to make sure communities are best positioned to make the most of this infrastructure.

Our goal is to leverage this investment to create jobs in every city, in every county, in every township across my great State.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 638, Joseph Donnelly, of Indiana, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Holy See; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Joseph Donnelly, of Indiana, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Holy See?

The nomination was confirmed.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nominations: All nominations placed on the Secretary's desk in the Foreign Service; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

#### NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

##### IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE

PN480-2 FOREIGN SERVICE nomination of Leon Skarshinski, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 27, 2021.

PN903 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (2) beginning John Breidenstine, and ending Michael Lally, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 19, 2021.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

##### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in 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.

#### NOTICE OF A TIE VOTE UNDER S. RES. 27

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print the following letters in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,  
Washington, DC.

*To the Secretary of the Senate:*

PN1501, the nomination of Dale E. Ho, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York, having been referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee, with a quorum present, has voted on the nomination as follows—

(1) on the question of reporting the nomination favorably with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed, 11 ayes to 11 noes; and

In accordance with section 3, paragraph (1)(A) of S. Res. 27 of the 117th Congress, I hereby give notice that the Committee has not reported the nomination because of a tie vote, and ask that this notice be printed in the Record pursuant to the resolution.

RICHARD J. DURBIN.

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,  
Washington, DC.

*To the Secretary of the Senate:*

PN1509, the nomination of Charlotte N. Sweeney, of Colorado, to be United States District Judge for the District of Colorado, having been referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee, with a quorum present, has voted on the nomination as follows—

(1) on the question of reporting the nomination favorably with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed, 11 ayes to 11 noes; and

In accordance with section 3, paragraph (1)(A) of S. Res. 27 of the 117th Congress, I hereby give notice that the Committee has not reported the nomination because of a tie vote, and ask that this notice be printed in the Record pursuant to the resolution.

RICHARD J. DURBIN.

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,  
Washington, DC.

*To the Secretary of the Senate:*

PN1512, the nomination of Hernan D. Vera, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California, having been referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee, with a quorum present, has voted on the nomination as follows—

(1) on the question of reporting the nomination favorably with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed, 11 ayes to 11 noes; and

In accordance with section 3, paragraph (1)(A) of S. Res. 27 of the 117th Congress, I hereby give notice that the Committee has not reported the nomination because of a tie vote, and ask that this notice be printed in the Record pursuant to the resolution.

RICHARD J. DURBIN.

(At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, had I been present when the Senate voted on vote No. 11 on confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 635 Holly A. Thomas, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, I would have voted aye. •

#### COVID-19 VACCINES

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, as our Nation battles another wave of COVID-19, I want to detail my efforts to lower barriers for Americans to access lifesaving vaccinations against this terrible disease.

The Special Committee on Aging's investigation forced the largest commercial health insurer in the United States to reverse course and make whole providers who were paid far below the market rate for administering COVID-19 vaccines. These efforts will help ensure that every provider who can administer COVID-19 vaccines is doing so, helping get more shots in arms.

Last year, news reports detailed how UnitedHealth had been shortchanging pediatricians who were vaccinating children against COVID-19. In short, Medicare set reimbursement rates for participating providers at \$40 per dose in mid-March 2021. The Federal Government strongly recommended that private carriers do the same and most appear to have done so within weeks, but UnitedHealth did not.

The committee's investigation found that UnitedHealth paid in-network providers roughly 40 percent below the Medicare rate until July 1, 2021. Further, the company delayed action to make providers whole. During the investigation, pediatricians in Pennsylvania and beyond raised concerns that UnitedHealth's original reimbursement rate could dissuade providers from administering the vaccine.

UnitedHealth covers 26 million people in employer and individual market health insurance plans, with 1.4 million