

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jerry Edwards, Jr., of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Louisiana.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today, negotiators from the White House, Senate Democrats, and Senate Republicans will continue negotiations on a national security supplemental package. Yesterday, we had another round of productive conversations, and there was more progress. But of course, there is more work to do, and we are going to keep at it and keep at it.

Last night, I filed cloture on a couple of nominations to the Federal bench and the Department of Justice, with possible votes on these nominees as soon as tomorrow.

To my Republican colleagues who have said action on the border is urgent: Let's keep working to find a solution instead of rushing for the exits. If Republicans are serious about getting something done, they should not be so eager to go home. This may be our last best chance to get this legislation done.

After weeks of deadlock, we have seen significant progress over the past few days, and we should take advantage of the opportunity because we may not get one for quite a while. It is not easy to reach an agreement on something this complicated. But so much hangs on our success, so we need to try with everything we have.

The world is watching what Congress does right now. Our friends are watching. Our adversaries are watching even more closely. And most of all, Vladimir Putin is watching closely. He is eager to see us abandon Ukraine and thinks he is getting that done, working, in part, through Donald Trump.

Here is what Putin said a few hours ago about American aid to the Ukraine:

[T]he free stuff is going to run out someday, and it seems it already is.

That, Mr. President, is Vladimir Putin taunting the Senate, taunting America. While Congress is mired in gridlock, Putin is on the other side of the world mocking our resolve.

In generations past, this would have been a no-brainer. Democrats and Republicans would have bent Heaven and Earth to stand up to Russian dictators. We spent half a century, spent billions and billions and billions of dollars, lost

lives to safeguard the free world against the malicious spread of communism, against tyranny, and against those who undermine our values. Now we find ourselves at another moment in history when democracy is under siege.

We heard directly from President Zelenskyy 2 days ago about what is at stake if we fail. So fail we must not. There is too much on the line for Ukraine, for America, for Western democracy to throw in the towel right now. We must keep talking. We must keep working.

Our Republican friends must be reasonable. They must show they are serious about getting something done, and we have had serious discussions in the last few days. Democrats are willing to keep trying. I urge my Republican colleagues to do just the same.

SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. President, now, on NDAA, last night, for the 62nd year running, the Senate passed our annual Defense Authorization Act with a strong bipartisan vote, 87 to 13. The Senate's bipartisan package of the Defense bill stands in glaring contrast with the partisan race to the bottom we are seeing in the House.

Just look at the difference between these two bodies. While the Senate is strengthening America's national security, House Republicans are wasting time on a clown-car impeachment inquiry that will get nowhere. The House Republican impeachment inquiry is the definition of "unserious."

The House should be looking at the Senate right now for an example of how both sides can work together in a meaningful way to pass serious legislation to improve the lives of the American people.

Now, as I have said repeatedly, we began the month of December with three major goals here in the Senate before the end of the year. First, we had to end the blockade of hundreds of military nominees. We have done that. Second, we needed to pass the NDAA. We did that last night. And finally and, of course, hardest of all, we must reach an agreement on a national security supplemental.

Democrats are still trying to reach an agreement. We have had productive talks with Republicans today, but of course we have a lot of work left to do. We are going to keep working. This is too important not to.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it has been nearly 8 weeks since President Biden submitted his supplemental funding request and identified four key national security priorities. For 8 weeks, Senate Republicans have been working hard to produce legislation that takes appropriate action on all

four fronts: helping Ukraine defeat Putin in Europe, helping Israel fight Iranian terror in the Middle East, helping Asian partners deter Chinese aggression, and helping the men and women of Border Patrol get the crisis at our southern border under control.

At the same time, we have had to spend several weeks now trying to convince some of our Democratic colleagues not to tank the entire effort just because they wish a Democratic President had not put border security in his request.

A number of Senate Republicans have been working in good faith to make sure that supplemental legislation makes substantive policy changes at the border, instead of just throwing money at the problem.

Meanwhile, we have had to explain to Members of President Biden's own party why the border security issue he included in his proposal was not extraneous to America's national security.

So here we are. Some very important conversations are ongoing. And here is the bottom line: The Senate cannot claim to address major national security challenges without a solution to the one we are facing on the southern border. We can't pretend to be serious about threats facing America and our allies without fixing the broken system that lets 10,000 illegal aliens cross our border in a single day.

I am serious. Senate Republicans are serious, and I hope our colleagues are as well.

ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. President, on another matter, the events of the past 2 months have underscored that something is rotten in the state of America's most elite universities, and there aren't many more glaring examples than Harvard.

Last week, of course, Harvard's president refused to say whether calls for Jewish genocide would constitute harassment on her campus. Two months ago, in the immediate aftermath of the October 7 terrorist attack, she declined to condemn the Harvard student groups who openly declared that the murder of innocent Jews that day was Israel's own fault.

Under her leadership, radical "Students for Justice in Palestine" have organized to spin terrorist propaganda and mostly succeeded in getting Harvard graduates blackballed by major corporations and Federal judges.

One Jewish student at Harvard Business School was even assaulted on his way to study.

And yet despite her abysmal record on combating anti-Semitism and mounting allegations of plagiarism in her own scholarship, the cadre of left-wing financiers and university administrators who make up the governing Harvard Corporation has affirmed their "confidence that President Gay is the right leader to help our community heal."

Well, when you look at Harvard's history, this embarrassing lack of moral clarity is hardly a surprise. A century

ago, Harvard President Abbott Lowell proposed a numerical quota on Jewish students. His reasoning?

The anti-Semitic feeling among the students is increasing, and it grows in proportion to the increase in the number of Jews.

So one Harvard president says that the presence of Jews causes anti-Semitism. A hundred years later, another says that calls for Jewish genocide really depend on the context in which they are made. Frankly, you would be forgiven for wondering whether anti-Semitism isn't just business as usual at Harvard.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. President, now on one final matter, this week, the United Nations wrapped up its latest conference on climate change. World leaders took private jets to Dubai, and the Biden administration's Special Climate Envoy, John Kerry, returned triumphant with a joint statement condemning the evils of coal power.

Elite liberals sure are obsessed with killing jobs in places like Kentucky. But that is only the half of it.

Yet again, the maximum hardships the Biden administration is happy to heap on American workers and consumers are producing no meaningful benefits on the world stage. The past 3 years have been an endless parade of canceled permits and new regulations that make it harder than ever to produce affordable and reliable American energy.

By canceling the Keystone XL Pipeline on day one, President Biden also canceled as many as 59,000 jobs that were needed to build it. And, now, the President's envoy has returned with another meaningless pledge that doesn't even compel the world's biggest emitters of carbon.

Just look at the numbers. U.S. emissions are projected to fall by 4 percent this year. Meanwhile, China's are projected to increase by twice as much. Last year, Beijing green-lit four times as much new coal power as they did the year before, but the Biden administration apparently wants us to believe it is American producers and job creators and workers who aren't pulling their weight.

So the U.N. climate conference is a good reminder that the elite leftwing obsession with self-inflicted climate penance is not just an American problem.

Canada's Liberal government, for its part, has a bold new plan: paying farmers to make sure their cattle don't burp so much. Apparently, Canada's plan is to build around a carbon credit—the nebulous commodity that supposedly negates carbon emissions from activities like flying private jets, except, in this case, the subjects aren't elites looking to ease their conscience on the way to a conference in Dubai. They are the workers who put food on the table.

Canada's so-called "Reducing Enteric Emissions from Beef Cattle" proposal would grant carbon credits to farmers

who feed their cows special diets to reduce burping.

Well, it sounds an awful lot like the way Washington bureaucrats like to tell middle-class Americans what kind of car to drive and what kind of stove to use. It also sounds entirely ridiculous.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Kansas.

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, the list of things that we can do but haven't done is extensive. It is long.

We need to chip away at that list and get our work done as 2023 comes to a close. Today, I want to highlight the urgent need to pass a long-term—a long-term—not a continuation of little, short extensions but a long-term FAA reauthorization legislation.

The current FAA reauthorization expired on September 30, in which a subsequent extension was passed until the end of this year—that is not many days away.

Congress is now progressing toward another short-term extension until mid-March 2024.

I serve as the lead Republican and ranking member of the Aviation Subcommittee on the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, and I stated at the very beginning of my tenure in that position the importance of passing a long-term reauthorization. And I am here today to continue to beat that drum.

Continuous short-term extensions are detrimental to the Agency, the industry, and the flying public. This is about public safety. We have been genuinely and rightfully concerned about the flying public, and reauthorization of the FAA bill, as we have developed it, is an important component of making people safer as they fly.

Multiple-year reauthorization is necessary for long-term planning and growth of the civil aviation industry.

I come from the air capital of the world, Kansas, and we know the importance of this piece of legislation in our ability to compete globally and to defend our Nation in this time of national security needs.

Multiple-year reauthorization allows for planning and growth, including the maintenance and modernization of aviation infrastructure and technologies. If the United States is to remain a leader in the aerospace domain, it is critical that we provide the FAA the resources and the tools they require.

We spent months working on the legislation. It is designed to and will improve the capabilities of the Federal

Aviation Administration. The U.S. House of Representatives has passed an FAA reauthorization, and they did so last July. Unfortunately, the Senate has yet to move a bill out of the committee.

In November, the Aviation Subcommittee convened once again to address the close calls and near misses that have recently plagued our Nation's air space—incidents that indicate, now more than ever, that our aviation system needs certainty and stability provided, in part, by long-term authorization by Congress.

While I was pleased to see my colleagues come together this past October in a vote of 98 to 0—98 to nothing—in the Senate to confirm Mr. Mike Whitaker as the FAA Administrator, I implore—I request—my colleagues to once again find that collaborative spirit, that way forward, to address FAA reauthorization.

Our colleague in the House, the House Transportation chairman, SAM GRAVES, recently held a hearing on the consequences of a failure to pass a long-term FAA reauthorization bill. While the hearing touched on a myriad of issues that continued FAA extensions would present, the witnesses particularly highlighted these items: airport programs and project delivery impacts due to uncertainty in planning; the inability of the FAA to adjust to emerging technologies; and workforce issues for the entire aviation system, particularly air traffic control staffing, which has led to continued delays and cancellations for the flying public.

Mr. Rich Santa, president of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, summarized it this way—and I am quoting him:

The single most important action Congress can take for the safety of the national airspace system would be to pass a long-term, comprehensive FAA Reauthorization bill [and put it] into law before the end of the year.

Our aviation system cannot make needed advancements and improvements if we continue to allow the status quo, which has near-term and long-term implications.

So, once again, I stand ready to work with my colleagues, the chairman and the ranking Member of the full committee; my colleague Senator DUCKWORTH from Illinois, my chairman of the subcommittee that I am the ranking member of. I stand here ready to not only encourage my colleagues but to put my work where my mouth is and make sure that we take every step possible to find that sweet spot, that needle—which I don't think is that small of a needle hole—to get us FAA reauthorized long term. Our aviation system depends upon it and, most importantly, my Kansas constituents and all Americans depend upon, for their safety, this piece of legislation.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

ISRAEL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak on two issues, but, first, I would