

Now, whether you want it to be minibuses or individual appropriations bills, my cup of tea is to have individual appropriations bills. But the fact of the matter is, I have been in the Senate now for almost 13 months—a year and a month—and we have spent exactly 8 hours—8 hours—that whole time dealing with appropriations bills.

The facts are damning. We have an overall debt of \$34 trillion. Before you blink an eye, it will be \$40 trillion.

This Senate, which is supposed to be the most deliberative body in the world—a unique place where 100 people come together, with unlimited debate—to debate the important issues of our time. But nothing could be more important about setting our priorities than what our annual budget is—how we spend, literally, trillions of tax dollars.

And for me, my perspective on this is that I know how hard people work back home. I know many other Senators do. My dad worked 7 days a week on the midnight shift. There are a lot of people out there who work hard, and money is taken out of their paycheck every single week—or every other week or every month—and sent here. And I think people are of the belief that we spend time here talking about priorities—how that money should be spent, how it should be saved. Can it be sent back to them? What about military spending? What about transportation?

We don't do any of that. We don't do any of it. What we do is, a couple of people get in a room and decide how we are going to do that. And then it is unveiled, with no time to read it, and you either vote on this or you are in favor of shutting down the government.

I am sorry. That is a false choice. There is a better way to do it.

And, I can tell you, I have had conversations, not just among Republicans but among Democrats—rank-and-file Senators—who are begging for reform, thirsty for reform, a process where you can come out here and say, “I have got an idea; I have got an amendment,” and have it voted on, Republican or Democrat, and let the chips fall where they may. But we have got to get away from this deadline politics. It is killing us—financially, by way of trust with voters. This is not the way.

And, by the way, we haven't debated any of those appropriations bills, really, and we are getting ready to talk about a supplemental request now, which is being negotiated in secret, that will, at some point, be foisted upon us. My guess is—I hope I am wrong—that the Democratic leader isn't going to send it to a committee.

All this language that we are told has taken months to parse out because it is complicated, for this Senate—Republican or Democrat—the message to individual Senators is: Yes, vote on it, tomorrow.

This is nuts. You know, no legislature does this. But this is where we are at. As I have talked to people, maybe it is a lack of muscle memory of voting

on hard things. Maybe it is just an unwillingness. But I think it has to do with control.

Senator SCHUMER wants to control this process and have as little public viewing of all of this as possible, whether it is normal appropriations or supplemental appropriations. And, again, I might win some votes; I might lose some votes. But something is getting lost here, and I think it is time for Senators to come together and demand something better.

This can't be the way. When you run for office and getting around Missouri—Missouri is a big State. I like to say that Kennett, MO, in the Bootheel, is closer to the Gulf of Mexico, as the crow flies, than from the northwest of Missouri. It is a big State. You work hard. You want to listen to your constituents. You want to come up here and advocate for the positions that they care about. We don't do any of that.

So we have got another test. You know, the CR thing was kicked again to March. We have a supplemental budget request now coming. Let's just try it. Let's give people time to review things, to ask questions, to offer amendments.

Maybe we get to a conference committee. I mean, with the NDAA, at least we were able to do that, and I am proud to serve on the Armed Services Committee.

But I just wanted to take this opportunity to just point out that it feels like the only time we have these conversations is when we approach a deadline, and then it goes away. And it really disempowers everyone in this Chamber, except for a few people. And I don't think that is the best way to run a railroad, and it certainly isn't the best way to run a country.

So, Mr. President, I am just hoping for something better. I have been discouraged, again, the first 13 months. We spent 8 hours on perhaps the most important thing we can do around here every year, and we are in desperate need of reform.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON KOOS NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Koos nomination?

Mr. SCHATZ. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The result was announced—yeas 91, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 14 Ex.]

YEAS—91

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Barrasso	Graham	Reed
Bennet	Grassley	Ricketts
Blackburn	Hagerty	Risch
Blumenthal	Hassan	Romney
Booker	Heinrich	Rosen
Boozman	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Britt	Hirono	Rubio
Brown	Hoeven	Sanders
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Butler	Johnson	Schumer
Cantwell	Kaine	Shaheen
Capito	Kennedy	Sinema
Cardin	King	Smith
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Lankford	Sullivan
Cassidy	Lujan	Tester
Collins	Lummis	Thune
Coons	Manchin	Tillis
Cornyn	Markey	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Marshall	Vance
Cotton	McConnell	Warner
Cramer	Menendez	Warnock
Crapo	Merkley	Warren
Cruz	Moran	Welch
Daines	Mullin	Whitehouse
Duckworth	Murkowski	Wicker
Durbin	Murphy	Wyden
Ernst	Murray	Young
Fetterman	Ossoff	
Fischer	Padilla	

NAYS—7

Braun	Paul	Tuberville
Hawley	Schmitt	
Lee	Scott (FL)	

NOT VOTING—2

Kelly	Scott (SC)
-------	------------

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). 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 Minnesota.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture motion with respect to the Szabat nomination be withdrawn and that following disposition of the Coscia nomination, the Senate immediately vote on confirmation of the Szabat nomination, with all provisions of the previous order remaining in effect.

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

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, for the information of the Senate, Senators should expect two rollcall votes starting at 2:15 p.m. We do not expect additional votes this evening.

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 Executive Calendar No. 357, Anthony Rosario Coscia, of New Jersey, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of five years. (Reappointment)

Charles E. Schumer, Tim Kaine, Angus S. King, Jr., Robert P. Casey, Jr.,

Sherrod Brown, Jeanne Shaheen, Richard Blumenthal, Chris Van Hollen, Tammy Baldwin, Gary C. Peters, John W. Hickenlooper, Edward J. Markey, Mazie Hirono, Laphonza Butler, Richard J. Durbin, Margaret Wood Hassan, Jeff Merkley, Peter Welch.

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 Anthony Rosario Coscia, of New Jersey, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of five years (Reappointment), shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 79, nays 19, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 15 Ex.]

YEAS—79

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Barrasso	Graham	Reed
Bennet	Grassley	Ricketts
Blumenthal	Hassan	Romney
Booker	Heinrich	Rosen
Boozman	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Britt	Hirono	Sanders
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Butler	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	Kennedy	Shaheen
Capito	King	Sinema
Cardin	Klobuchar	Smith
Carper	Lankford	Stabenow
Casey	Lujan	Tester
Cassidy	Lummis	Thune
Collins	Manchin	Tillis
Coons	Markey	Van Hollen
Cornyn	McConnell	Warner
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Warnock
Cotton	Merkley	Warren
Cramer	Moran	Welch
Cruz	Mullin	Whitehouse
Duckworth	Murkowski	Wicker
Durbin	Murphy	Wyden
Ernst	Murray	Young
Fetterman	Ossoff	
Fischer	Padilla	

NAYS—19

Blackburn	Hoeven	Schmitt
Braun	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Budd	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	Paul	Vance
Hagerty	Risch	
Hawley	Rubio	

NOT VOTING—2

Kelly Scott (SC)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). On this vote, the yeas are 79, the nays are 19.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Anthony Rosario Coscia, of New Jersey, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of five years. (Reappointment)

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:18 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. LUJÁN).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

VOTE ON COSCIA NOMINATION.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Coscia nomination?

Ms. DUCKWORTH. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The result was announced—yeas 79, nays 18, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 16 Ex.]

YEAS—79

Baldwin	Graham	Reed
Barrasso	Grassley	Ricketts
Bennet	Hassan	Romney
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Rosen
Booker	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Boozman	Hirono	Sanders
Britt	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Brown	Kaine	Schumer
Butler	Kennedy	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Sinema
Capito	Klobuchar	Smith
Cardin	Lankford	Stabenow
Carper	Lujan	Sullivan
Casey	Lummis	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Thune
Coons	Markey	Tillis
Cornyn	McConnell	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Warner
Cotton	Merkley	Warnock
Cramer	Moran	Warren
Cruz	Mullin	Welch
Duckworth	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murphy	Wicker
Ernst	Murray	Wyden
Fetterman	Ossoff	Young
Fischer	Padilla	
Gillibrand	Peters	

NAYS—18

Blackburn	Hawley	Risch
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Crapo	Lee	Scott (FL)
Daines	Marshall	Tuberville
Hagerty	Paul	Vance

NOT VOTING—3

Budd Kelly Scott (SC)

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.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Joel Matthew Szabat, of Maryland, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of five years.

VOTE ON SZABAT NOMINATION

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

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "yea."

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 17 Ex.]

YEAS—96

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Padilla
Barrasso	Graham	Peters
Bennet	Grassley	Reed
Blackburn	Hagerty	Ricketts
Blumenthal	Hassan	Risch
Booker	Hawley	Romney
Boozman	Heinrich	Rosen
Braun	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Britt	Hirono	Rubio
Brown	Hoeven	Sanders
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Butler	Johnson	Schmitt
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Capito	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Sinema
Casey	Lankford	Smith
Cassidy	Lee	Stabenow
Collins	Lujan	Sullivan
Coons	Lummis	Tester
Cornyn	Manchin	Thune
Cortez Masto	Markey	Tuberville
Cotton	Marshall	Van Hollen
Cramer	McConnell	Vance
Crapo	Menendez	Warner
Cruz	Merkley	Warnock
Daines	Moran	Warren
Duckworth	Mullin	Welch
Durbin	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murphy	Wicker
Fetterman	Murray	Wyden
Fischer	Ossoff	Young

NAYS—1

Paul

NOT VOTING—3

Kelly Scott (SC) Tillis

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). 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 majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.