

for those who needed a voice. It is a commonsense, bipartisan solution that provides an easy fix for those who depend on ABLE accounts.

I yield the floor.

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 bill 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. 706, Michelle Williams Court, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Alex Padilla, Laphonza R. Butler, Peter Welch, Gary C. Peters, Chris Van Hollen, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tina Smith, Jack Reed, Christopher Murphy, Richard Blumenthal, Christopher A. Coons, Tim Kaine, Catherine Cortez Masto, Tammy Duckworth, Sheldon Whitehouse.

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 Michelle Williams Court, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent; the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 244 Ex.]

YEAS—51

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

NAYS—44

Barrasso	Cotton	Hawley
Blackburn	Cramer	Hoeben
Boozman	Crapo	Hyde-Smith
Braun	Cruz	Johnson
Britt	Daines	Kennedy
Budd	Ernst	Lankford
Capito	Fischer	Lee
Cassidy	Grassley	Lummis
Cornyn	Hagerty	Marshall

McConnell	Risch	Sullivan
Moran	Romney	Thune
Mullin	Rubio	Tuberville
Murkowski	Schmitt	Wicker
Paul	Scott (FL)	Young
Ricketts	Scott (SC)	

NOT VOTING—5

Graham	Tillis	Wyden
Rounds	Vance	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 44.

The motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

FARM BILL

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I come from a State not exactly like yours, but we share the fact that we provide the energy, the fiber, and the food for this country and much of the world.

There is a crisis that is with us, and that crisis is growing, and the consequences are dire.

I was in my State of Kansas, as many of my colleagues were at home during the month of August. I traveled the State from corner to corner, putting 5,600 miles on my truck. I talked to lots of people, and I listened to even more.

In addition to those conversations, last week, farm groups, commodity groups, and farm organizations made a call on Washington, DC, to highlight what I am highlighting today. Included in those visits were those who sell farm equipment in Kansas and across the country.

Yesterday morning, before coming to Washington, DC, I spoke to an agricultural outlook conference in Kansas City. Today, I just walked across the street from visiting with bankers from the Kansas Bankers Association who are in the Nation's Capital as well today.

The message I bring to my colleagues is that agriculture is in serious condition. Input costs have risen dramatically. The things that farmers buy in order to put a crop in the ground and to harvest that crop have escalated amazingly in a way that is so damaging, while the price they receive for what they grow has diminished. So the cost of seed, fertilizer, diesel fuel, natural gas, interest costs—all of which are significant components of the farmers in Kansas and the country—they are at a point in which there is no profitability in most circumstances for agriculture today.

I would add that my couple of visits in Kansas with farm equipment manufacturers—we manufacture lots of farm equipment—and in places like Salina and Abilene, the circumstances of those businesses are in dire shape because farmers no longer can afford to buy the equipment they manufacture.

The issue here is the farm bill. We neared expiration of the 2018 farm bill. It was clear we needed to write a new farm bill and get it completed. It hasn't happened. It is past due. That is not unusual, but in this circumstance this year, it is significant.

Decisions not to get a farm bill done have come home to roost, and the fami-

lies of farmers and those farmers and ranchers and the communities in which they live, work, and provide the economic viability of the community and at the same time produce the food, fuel, and fiber that America and the world need—those days of the capability of doing that are waning because of input costs, and you add to that the drought that has been suffered by many parts of my State. Farm income has declined 43 percent over the past 5 years, and net farm income is expected to be 27 percent lower this year than it was in 2022.

Our agricultural trade deficit—something we always were proud about, as we exported more than we imported in agriculture—is a \$42.5 billion deficit. We import more than we export. It puts our farmers even more at risk, and it threatens the stability and security of our national economy.

So my plea to my colleagues is this: There aren't many weeks left between now and when Congress recesses for the month of October. We return in November and December, and we ought to use this opportunity to pass at least an extension of the current farm bill and at the same time, make certain that assistance is provided to the farmers to get them through the circumstance they are in. By the time we get a farm bill passed and by the time we get that assistance—that safety net that comes in title I of the farm bill—actually to farmers, it will be too late to address the challenges Kansas and American farmers face today.

The goal in my remarks today is to bring the awareness of this issue to my colleagues and indicate that the direction we need to go is two-prong: pass an extension of the farm bill, which provides certainty and the ability for lenders and borrowers, bankers and farmers to come together and make long-term decisions. It is time for farmers to renew their credit line, and without the passage or extension of the current farm bill, the ability for a banker to make that decision to benefit the farmer begins to disappear.

So we need a farm bill in place even if it is the current one, but the current one is insufficient to meet the needs of the disaster that is occurring in the incomes of farmers across the country.

Last week—I think it was Thursday afternoon—Senator STABENOW and I visited here on the Senate floor—I point in that direction over there—and we had a conversation. Senator STABENOW indicated that she recognizes the challenge that farmers—the dire circumstances they are in today.

Subsequent to that, I have met with and had conversations with Senator BOOZMAN from Arkansas, my colleague who is the ranking Republican on the Agriculture Committee, and with JOHN HOEVEN, the ranking member of our Ag Appropriations Subcommittee. I want all of us to work together to accomplish what I just described: long-term extension and a shorter term disaster assistance plan. Those conversations have begun, and I

am hopeful that before year's end, we will be able to do our work.

Sometimes I get complimented—not very often, but sometimes I get complimented, and when I do, it is often for my efforts. While I am willing to do all the efforts that are necessary, in this case, efforts are woefully inadequate, and results are critically important.

Mr. President, I look forward to my colleagues and I moving forward on farm bill legislation and disaster assistance short-term needs being met. I offer myself to work with Republicans and Democrats, rural and urban, to see that we get those goals accomplished.

In closing, the current farm bill is not adequate to provide the relief or safety net of our Nation's farmers, nor is it reflective of the current state of the farm economy. With financial pressures building across the agriculture industry due to increased production costs and weakened market prices, the overall financial situation of the farm economy is bleak. The status quo is unacceptable. We must pass a long-term farm bill this year, and we must also consider immediate relief for farmers with a supplement.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee and the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, of which I am a member and have been its chairman, as we continue the appropriations process and find a solution so that it can be included in our work before year's end.

Our farmers deserve and need better, and in the absence of successful farmers, the places that many of us call home—the future is bleak.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FETTERMAN). The Senator from Oregon.
UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time on the Court nomination be considered expired at 2:30 p.m. today.

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

The Senator from Alabama.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 332

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, a truly amazing thing is happening in our Nation right now. The sitting Vice President is actually running for election by running from her record. After 35 months in office, she is promising change from her own administration.

Her day one was actually January 2021, but she is trying to convince the American people that things are going to be different this time around. And it is not just that she is promising change for our country, it is that she says she herself has seemingly changed overnight. Just about every unpopular policy position imaginable that she has taken and been on the record supporting for years—well, now that she is up for election, she no longer believes those things.

Let's just look at a sampling of policy positions that the Vice President has held. Let's start with energy and

economic security. She supported enforcing an EV mandate that would take gas-powered vehicles off the road, ending offshore drilling, banning fracking, eliminating private health insurance, and raising taxes by trillions.

But it doesn't stop there, and it just gets worse for public safety and border security. She supported decreasing funding for the police, abolishing ICE, decriminalizing illegal border crossings, ending the detention of illegal border crossers, giving taxpayer-funded benefits to illegal border crossers, defending sanctuary city policies, vowing to block all border wall funding, and even using taxpayer funds for gender transition surgeries for illegal aliens and Federal prisoners. These are some of the most radical positions it is possible to take, and that is why she was actually ranked as the most far-left Senator when she was a Member of this body.

Now that she is President of the Senate, she is her party's nominee for President, and she is her party's leader. Again, she claims she has changed some of her own policy positions. So today we are going to give her party and the Chamber she leads an opportunity to prove whether that is true. To paraphrase the majority leader from his remarks yesterday, we are going to give our Democratic colleagues another chance to show the American people where they stand.

We will start today with a few bills related to energy and border security, and we can continue this every day the Senate is in session moving forward. The American people will be watching, and I look forward to seeing what happens today.

We are going to go ahead and start with the WALL Act. Last year, I introduced the WALL Act. This legislation is common sense and with a clear aim. It would appropriate funding needed to finish actually building a barrier on our southern border.

And it would accomplish that without raising taxes and without adding to our national debt. For all of you in the Gallery, we are \$35 trillion in debt. That is not just fiscally irresponsible, that is morally irresponsible.

And for the first time ever, we paid more money on the interest on our national debt than we did for our national defense. You can look, over time, in the moment that any nation does that, it begins to become a nation in decline.

So I wanted to make sure that we had something that had a common-sense approach, and through the WALL Act, construction of a border wall would be funded by eliminating taxpayer-funded entitlements and tax benefits for illegal border crossers.

The bill would also close loopholes that allow illegal border crossers to receive taxpayer-funded benefits intended for citizens and lawful residents.

Finally, this legislation would impose fines on individuals who illegally

enter the United States or overstay their visas. In 2018, the Joint Committee on Taxation estimated that the tax components of this bill alone would save \$33 billion over 10 years. Let's use these funds to build a border wall and to help keep Americans safe.

So, today, we are giving Senate Democrats a very clear choice. Now, watch what happens next very closely. Let's see how they answer these questions. Do they support building a border wall or will they block building a border wall? Do they want to spend taxpayer funds on keeping American citizens and legal residents safe or do they want to keep those taxpayer funds funding illegal border crossers? Where does the Vice President's party stand on these very different policy positions?

Well, we are about to find out.

As if in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be discharged from further consideration of S. 332 and the Senate proceed to immediate consideration. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The President pro tempore.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, Border Patrol has very serious needs that actually need funding; namely, new technology, and we should focus on how we get those done in a bipartisan way.

We have limited resources. We know a border wall is ineffective and really has no impact in preventing the cartels from bringing fentanyl into our country.

I, for one, would prefer we direct those resources toward stopping fentanyl from getting to our communities through our ports of entry along the southwest border.

No one should forget there was a bipartisan proposal on border policy changes earlier this year, one that Senate Republicans strongly endorsed, one that was, frankly, probably more conservative than I would have preferred.

But instead of voting to so much as take it up for consideration, Republicans decided then that instead they wanted to campaign on the border, as they are attempting to do with this proposal, because one man, Donald Trump, told them: Kill the bill. Trump told Senate Republicans he wanted to let a fire burn so he can campaign on the ashes, and Senate Republicans said, yes, Mr. Trump.

I think that history tells us how serious the effort before us today is, but just like when I built the bipartisan border funding bill with my ranking member Senator COLLINS, I do look forward to working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle on comprehensive immigration reform and serious solutions to the challenges we are facing at the border.