

of our great Nation back into a mighty whole.

This body is lesser, is lesser with this loss. When I heard the news that he wasn't running again, I wasn't happy for him and his family. And I know his values start with that core of faith and family, but I do worry about this body. I do worry about our Nation. The one thing that gives me hope is the light that he has shined into this place will endure. And perhaps many of us, as he departs, will try our best, despite the forces that pull us apart, to pick up the work that he has left behind to do more to affirm a principle that he clearly has kept centered in his eyes, as is in the center of the aisles of this great institution, which is those words from a dead language: "e pluribus unum."

MITT ROMNEY, thank you for being my friend. Thank you for being someone who has inspired me to be better. And thank you for being a great American patriot.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, my folks were wondering why I am sitting so close to MITT ROMNEY. He and I are seat mates. These are our assigned seats.

I told MITT that I had not prepared a single comment, but I did want to come down and say a few things about him.

I hope that we use this opportunity and remember it over the next 2 years. Here is a question we can all ask or we can all talk about and thank him for the incredible work that he has done. And to his staff, the problems he has caused for you by being so honest, so forthright, and so direct. Right?

How many times, MITT—you can't answer it because I think it is against the rules—but how many times have your staff gone: Boss, we wish sometimes you just weren't so forthright and honest?

But that is who this guy is. We have been battle buddies in a lot of the bipartisan efforts that have gone along. He is the reason why some of them passed, quite honestly. Without his support and the support of a handful of others, stuff that has enduring generational value would have never happened.

I would ask everybody here who is thanking MITT ROMNEY for his role model behavior in the times he has been in the Senate and the times that I have known him—the first time I met him was the December before his election, when I was a fairly newly minted legislator—and there is no reason why he would have known me or remembered that meeting. But I have been impressed with him since that moment in Charlotte, NC, when he was running for President—let us go forward and hopefully ask ourselves, as we come together as a nation, as we solve problems that can only be solved by people on both sides of the aisle coming together and taking the heat that comes

along with that, let's ask ourselves over the next 2 or 4 years what would MITT ROMNEY do and let that be a guiding post for those of us who are going to be here who may be put into those situations to do right by this country.

We are going to have one less person in MITT here, but I believe it is in all of us to emulate what MITT has done. I hope that that is a part of the legacy that we will honor as he is gone.

Finally, if you don't know about MITT—I am going to miss him for those reasons. Those are all legitimate reasons to miss MITT, but I am going to miss his fast wit and his ability to just call things quickly. Having a seat mate like that when you are in the middle of vote-arama is gold, folks. Nobody is going to know that except for the conversations we have had back here in the middle of the night.

He is a good man, a good father, a great grandfather.

I know I am not supposed to do this either, but by show of hands, who shares DNA with MITT ROMNEY up there in the Gallery? Yes. Well, congratulations to all of you and the dozens of other family members who have to be hugely proud of MITT ROMNEY. I am.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, we have a vote coming up real quick, so I am going to be very, very, very brief.

First of all, MITT, you have been an incredible U.S. Senator. We are losing some good ones this time around, but you are at the top of the list.

My father was born and raised in Utah, the State that you represent. My father and mother were both really good Democrats. But I am going to tell you that they would have loved MITT ROMNEY. The reason they would have loved MITT ROMNEY is because MITT ROMNEY is a realist, not an idealist; somebody who looks at issues and tries to solve them, tries to get to yes, not to get to no, without giving up his principles.

Your time here in the U.S. Senate, the gift that the good Lord gave to me to work with you and eight other folks besides us on that infrastructure bill, is something that I will never forget in this body. And you stood up time and time again and talked realism to all of us.

As you go out, just know that there is not a soul in here that doesn't know you are a man of faith, and I appreciate that because you exhibit that faith. You don't preach. You walk the walk.

I just want to say, as others have said before, because it is true, the U.S. Senate will be diminished because of your absence. And I appreciate the opportunity to get to know you and work with you and get some stuff done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The 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. 842, Anthony J. Brindisi, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of New York.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Tammy Duckworth, Ben Ray Lujan, Patty Murray, Alex Padilla, Peter Welch, Jeff Merkley, Richard Blumenthal, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher A. Coons, Debbie Stabenow, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Elizabeth Warren, Margaret Wood Hassan, Jack Reed, Tim Kaine.

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 J. Brindisi, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of New York, 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 Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 309 Ex.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—48

Barrasso	Fischer	Murkowski
Blackburn	Graham	Paul
Boozman	Grassley	Ricketts
Braun	Hagerty	Risch
Britt	Hawley	Romney
Budd	Hoeben	Rounds
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Collins	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Cramer	Lummis	Thune
Crapo	Marshall	Tillis
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Mullin	Young

NOT VOTING—2

Sinema Vance

(Mr. HEINRICH assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 48.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

NDAAs

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I rise today to highlight some of the major victories that were included in the Senate's version of the NDAA—the military budget—that passed out of the Senate Armed Services Committee almost 6 months ago.

The Senate's version of this year's NDAA includes some excellent provisions, including a 4.5-percent pay raise for America's military servicemembers. This is a pay raise for the boots on the ground, not the top brass at the Pentagon. We secured powerful, new security initiatives in the Indo-Pacific. We secured provisions that advance our counter unmanned aircraft systems technologies.

Among the Senate's NDAA victories, I also count my amendments, which will help focus the Pentagon on its stated mission of deterring war and ensuring our Nation's security. One of these amendments includes slashing all funding for the woke diversity, equity, and inclusion policies at the DOD. Another amendment prohibits the use of taxpayer dollars for any costs associated with funding gender transition surgeries.

We need a military that is 100-percent focused on protecting our country and enhancing our national security, not implementing a woke agenda. Our military is not a social experiment. It should be a lethal fighting force, feared by our enemies and made up of our best and brightest in this country, which is why I applaud the work of the Senate Armed Services Committee and Ranking Member WICKER's leadership for putting together this excellent piece of legislation. The Senate's version of the NDAA received bipartisan support in committee, getting 22 of the 25 votes. You seldom see Republicans and Democrats come together like this.

So I ask: Why has Senator SCHUMER not brought this to the floor for the past 6 months? Why has the Senator from New York put a stop to good-faith efforts on setting our military up for success in the future? If Senator SCHUMER really cared about our military, he would have brought the NDAA up for a vote almost 6 months ago, but instead, we have been prioritizing liberal judges for the final weeks he has left as majority leader. Senate Democrats are more interested in burning taxpayer dollars on an unwinnable war in Ukraine than passing our military's budget.

Sadly, we have seen this time and time again: leadership that would rather cater to the woke administration than ensure our military is a lethal fighting force. But putting a woke agenda over our national security is nothing new to this administration. No institutions, not even our great military, are safe from being taken over by the Biden regime's radical woke policies.

Immediately after taking the White House, President Biden began to weaponize the DOD, using it as another tool in the administration's arsenal to further its progressive agenda. One of the Biden administration's first moves was to mandate the divisive diversity, equity, and inclusion training at the DOD—picking up right where Barack Obama left off 4 years earlier.

On day 1, the Biden administration announced that the military would begin conducting training to “have knowledge of systemic and institutional racism and bias against underserved communities.” This hateful ideology has no place in the United States, let alone the U.S. military.

This is supposed to be the No. 1 fighting force in the world. It is dangerous and insulting to waste our troops' valuable time on political indoctrination such as this. We need a lethal killing machine to deter aggression from our adversaries. I want our military focused on protecting Americans and our national security in an increasingly dangerous world, not on all of these woke DEI initiatives. There is no place for it, and Americans want to fund the military to achieve this objective. That is what our taxpayers pay money for, which is why on November 5, nearly 77 million Americans joined me in taking a stand to say: Enough of this nonsense.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Madam President, the American people gave President Trump a mandate to get Washington working for the people again. We chose President Trump because he isn't interested in the same ol', same ol' in this town—a breath of fresh air, no more business as usual. President Trump is returning to the White House and has nominated Pete Hegseth to serve as Secretary of Defense.

I just met with Pete on Monday. I have known him for a long time. He is the man we need leading our military. Pete is smart. He is battle-tested, and he is prepared to lead. Pete has actually had a real job in the military—on the battlefield—not pushing papers in some stuffy room in the Pentagon.

Just this morning, Pete posted on X that he is in this for the warfighters and not for the warmongers—an excellent quote.

That is exactly why the military-industrial complex is losing its mind. If confirmed, Pete will focus on rebuilding peace through strength, putting America first, and prioritizing America's military readiness. He will focus on lethality and maintaining our competitive edge, not to mention getting our recruitment problems straightened out—and, boy, do we have problems.

With military recruitment tanking, what better way to inspire young men and women to join the most lethal fighting force in the world than by nominating a decorated veteran who served in two wars and is closer to their age. Pete is someone who relates to them and looks like them. Who is

more likely to inspire confidence in 18- to 21-year-olds in the military—old, out-of-touch, and arrogant military higher-ups or a younger guy who has been on the battlefield, shoulder to shoulder in the mud with the infantry? I am willing to bet young people would rather sign up to follow the fellow who is the second man on this list.

We need a drill sergeant, someone who has been in the trenches. That man is Pete Hegseth. This is perfectly in line with President Trump's effort to get the Federal Government's house in order. Pete will prioritize building an effective, streamlined Pentagon that can actually pass an audit, which they haven't done in 7 years. He will target waste, fraud, abuse, and refocus the DOD's workforce on its core mission.

And this can't come soon enough. Under this administration, Russia has invaded Ukraine. Iran-backed Hamas brutally attacked Israel. Syria faces a revolution, and China is threatening to invade Taiwan and spread its influence across Africa and South America.

We live in a dangerous world. America can't afford this outdated type of leadership at the DOD to continue any longer. It could result in even more devastating consequences, especially as the outgoing administration has the United States teetering—teetering—on the brink of World War III.

I look forward to beginning a new chapter in January of next year. We will finally turn the page on one of the most criminally bad administrations in the history of our country. More importantly, we will be entering into a new era, a new golden age of America; but in the meantime, I will continue to demand that Senator SCHUMER prioritize our troops and national security over partisan judges and funding foreign wars.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

REMEMBERING JEANNE LUCKEY

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Madam President, I rise today with a deep sense of respect, admiration, and sadness to honor the remarkable life of Jeanne Luckey. Her legacy of service, strength, and compassion will leave a lasting impact on Mississippi, our Nation, and beyond.

A proud daughter of Biloxi, MS, Jeanne was a woman of extraordinary character—dedicated to her family, her community, and her country. She was a tireless leader and key figure in Mississippi's Republican Party, serving in the roles such as president of the Mississippi Federation of Republican Women, as the cochair of the State Republican Party, and as the Republican National Committeewoman. Her voice and influence over the decades shaped the party at the State and national levels, and her work touched the lives of countless individuals across our State.

She faced extraordinary challenges with unmatched grace. Even after a car