

President Trump. Now, that is quite a law firm, isn't it? Just because you are taking business in, they don't like it. So then he put his reputation on the line and he put his career on the line to fight against Jack Smith's and District Attorney Bragg's rampant lawfare, and he handled these cases with professional excellence.

We need good people like Todd Blanche in the Justice Department. We need lawyers who will do justice even when it is unpopular or comes at a personal cost, as it did to Mr. Blanche. We need people leading the Department who will end the abuses of the past and make the Agency live up to the ideals of our Constitution.

I am not the only one who thinks Mr. Blanche is the right man for the job. He has received support from some of the people who understand the Justice Department best. Over 100 alumni of the Southern District of New York who worked alongside Mr. Blanche wrote to say this:

Todd's experience, character, intellect, openness to dialogue, and longstanding love of and belief in the mission of the Department of Justice make him eminently qualified to serve as Deputy Attorney General.

Another communication. Seventy former DOJ officials wrote to say:

Mr. Blanche is a special nominee in that he brings decades of experience both as a prosecutor and defense attorney to the role of Deputy Attorney General.

Another one. Law enforcement groups representing tens of thousands of officers wrote to support Mr. Blanche because of his history working alongside of law enforcement and prosecuting violent crime.

Between his record, his presentation in committee, and his extensive support, I am convinced that Mr. Blanche is the best person to serve as Deputy Attorney General. I am proud to support this nomination, and I look forward to voting for him. I know that he will work with President Trump and Attorney General Bondi to restore faith in the Justice Department.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we are considering the nomination of Todd Blanche, President Trump's nominee for Deputy Attorney General.

How important is this job? It is the No. 2 job in the Department of Justice. Traditionally, it has been given major responsibilities and has been treated very seriously, as it should be, and we should consider that when we consider this nomination.

I am not going to go into the background already outlined by Chairman GRASSLEY about Mr. Blanche's legal representation of Donald Trump, which he did on repeated occasions. There is nothing to suggest that what he did was unethical in that capacity or unprofessional, so I am not going to raise a question about it.

As to whether or not he has any bias one way or another in dealing with the President in the future is speculative, but it is important.

The thing I would like to raise is January 6, 2021. That is the day a solemn constitutional proceeding was disrupted here in this Capitol, in this Senate Chamber, by a mob of thugs who were egged on by President Trump to attack and trash the U.S. Capitol in an attempt to overturn the Presidential election. I lived through that, as many of us did.

The insurrection led to the death of 5 law enforcement officers and injuries to approximately 140 others, many of whom are still paying that price today.

In a rally before the attack on the Capitol, President Trump said:

If you don't fight like hell, you are not going to have a country anymore.

Yet, in a court filing, Mr. Blanche argued:

Not a shred of evidence suggests President Trump called for any violence. In fact, President Trump clearly and repeatedly called for "peaceful and patriotic" assembly.

There was nothing peaceful or patriotic about President Trump's conduct that day, and the same goes for his supporters. Did it seem peaceful or patriotic when this crowd assaulted police officers who were doing their job and protecting us then, as they do to this day?

One of President Trump's first moves in office—not the very first but one of the first things he did—was to issue blanket pardons for all of the violent January 6 insurrectionists. When Mr. Blanche was asked at his hearing to condemn these actions, he repeatedly refused to do so.

In fact, it appears he buys into the conspiracy theory that the FBI is actually responsible for the insurrection. In response to our question, Mr. Blanche said he does not believe the inspector general's finding that the FBI did not have any undercover employees in the Capitol on that day.

I am especially disappointed—especially—that Mr. Blanche refused to commit to me and the committee that he would not disclose the names of the FBI agents who worked on the case of the January 6 rioters even though some of the rioters are already calling for retribution against these men and women who were simply doing their duty. This is extremely dangerous. We have seen these violent individuals, and we know that they are willing to dole out their own form of justice. They believe they are above the law because of the Presidential pardon, and President Trump validated that belief with the pardons full and unconditional.

Instead of accepting the legitimacy of cases brought against the President, Mr. Blanche has repeatedly used the word "lawfare" to describe these investigations.

I have been around this Chamber for a long time and around Washington for even longer, but I don't know what this word "lawfare" means. And to use it as your explanation of what you are going to do in the No. 2 position at the Department of Justice is mind-boggling.

After the hush money convictions came down, Mr. Blanche was asked if he accepted that the President had his day in court and a jury of his peers made the decision to convict him. In response, Mr. Blanche undermined our justice system by saying, "No, not at all."

Since the President has taken office, we have already witnessed the weaponization of the justice system. Mr. Blanche will not provide the necessary independence to avoid that. His response to questions was not satisfying in this regard.

His record and his undying loyalty to the President notwithstanding, I don't believe he is the right person for this job. I ask my colleagues to join me in opposing the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHMITT). The Senator from Nebraska.

S.J. RES. 28

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues who yesterday voted to proceed on my Congressional Review Act to undo the eleventh-hour regulation that the Biden administration put through the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau that would have greatly expanded the powers of the CFPB to start regulating payment systems as opposed to just the banking system that it was really designed to do.

I appreciate some of my colleagues' votes and encourage them to vote again as we vote on it here again later today.

Earlier today, some of my Democratic colleagues expressed some objections—and, again, in the interest of time, my colleague from Illinois pointed out, people are waiting to vote. I do have to hit upon one, though. The Senator from Massachusetts seemed to indicate—and she has done so many times in the past—that somehow the CFPB is the only cop on the beat there. That is simply not true. These payment systems are regulated at the State and Federal level. There are other organizations out there that do regulation, like the FDIC, the FTC, the Office of Comptroller, and, of course, State banking regulators, which I used to manage as a former Governor. These organizations all look out for protection of the consumer. She phrased this as somehow we are going to be opening the doors to bad actors, and that is simply not the case.

It is a complete misapprehension of our regulatory structure that is stunning from somebody who is the ranking member on the Banking Committee.

So I encourage my colleagues to vote for the CRA. It will help roll back this unnecessary regulation. This is a regulation the CFPB put forward without even defining what market they were going to regulate. They gave misleading information that somehow, it would only cost \$25,000. In fact, consumers are generally very broadly pleased with these payment systems. The CFPB's own data shows that only 1 percent of the 1.3 million complaints

they received last year were on these payment systems. So this is a regulation in search of a reason.

We need to stop this expansion of the Federal bureaucracy. We will have the opportunity to do that today.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the CRA.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON BLANCHE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Blanche nomination?

Mr. DURBIN. 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) would have voted "yea."

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

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 105 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Banks	Graham	Mullin
Barrasso	Grassley	Murkowski
Blackburn	Hagerty	Paul
Boozman	Hawley	Ricketts
Britt	Hoeven	Risch
Budd	Husted	Rounds
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Justice	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sheehy
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Marshall	Tillis
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Curtis	McCormick	Wicker
Daines	Moody	Young
Ernst	Moran	Moreno
Fischer	Moreno	

NAYS—46

Alsobrooks	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Baldwin	Hirono	Schatz
Bennet	Kaine	Schiff
Blumenthal	Kim	Schumer
Blunt Rochester	King	Shaheen
Booker	Klobuchar	Slotkin
Cantwell	Lujan	Smith
Coons	Markey	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Fetterman	Ossoff	Welch
Gallo	Padilla	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Hassan	Reed	
Heinrich	Rosen	

NOT VOTING—2

Kelly	Lummis
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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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

DISAPPROVING THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION RELATING TO "DEFINING LARGER PARTICIPANTS OF A MARKET FOR GENERAL-USE DIGITAL CONSUMER PAYMENT APPLICATIONS"—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to legislative session and resume consideration of the following joint resolution, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 28) disapproving the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Defining Larger Participants of a Market for General-Use Digital Consumer Payment Applications".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all time has expired.

The clerk will read the title of the joint resolution for the third time.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

VOTE ON S.J. RES. 28

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

Mr. BENNET. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) would have voted "yea."

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

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 106 Leg.]

YEAS—51

Banks	Fischer	Moreno
Barrasso	Graham	Mullin
Blackburn	Grassley	Murkowski
Boozman	Hagerty	Paul
Britt	Hoeven	Ricketts
Budd	Husted	Risch
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Collins	Justice	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Sheehy
Cramer	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Marshall	Thune
Cruz	McConnell	Tillis
Curtis	McCormick	Tuberville
Daines	Moody	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young

NAYS—47

Alsobrooks	Blumenthal	Cantwell
Baldwin	Blunt Rochester	Coons
Bennet	Booker	Cortez Masto

Duckworth	Klobuchar	Schiff
Durbin	Lujan	Schumer
Fetterman	Markey	Shaheen
Gallo	Merkley	Slotkin
Gillibrand	Murphy	Smith
Hassan	Murray	Van Hollen
Hawley	Ossoff	Warner
Heinrich	Padilla	Warnock
Hickenlooper	Peters	Warren
Hirono	Reed	Welch
Kaine	Rosen	Whitehouse
Kim	Sanders	Wyden
King	Schatz	

NOT VOTING—2

Kelly	Lummis
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The joint resolution (S.J. Res. 28) was passed, as follows:

S.J. RES. 28

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress disapproves the final rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Defining Larger Participants of a Market for General-Use Digital Consumer Payment Applications" (89 Fed. Reg. 99582 (December 10, 2024)), and such rule shall have no force or effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). The Senator from Texas.

HALT ALL LETHAL TRAFFICKING OF FENTANYL ACT—Motion to Proceed

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 18, S. 331.

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

The clerk will report the motion to proceed.

The senior assistant executive clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 18, S. 331, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances, and for other purposes.

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2025

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, the U.S. Coast Guard is essential to protecting our Nation's maritime borders from threats like illegal drugs, illegal immigration, and transnational crime. The Coast Guard saves American lives and ensures that commerce flows smoothly at our ports.

The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025 is bipartisan legislation that Senator CANTWELL and I negotiated and agreed to with House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman SAM GRAVES and Ranking Member RICK LARSEN.

It authorizes funding to bolster the Coast Guard's critical missions for border security, facilitating maritime commerce, and enforcing the rule of law in domestic and international waters.

I want to draw attention to several key provisions in this bill. Last year, the Coast Guard seized over 106 metric tons of cocaine. Unfortunately, cartels are now using technology like miniaturized remote control drone ships to