

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant executive 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. 41, Christopher Landau, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of State.

John Thune, Katie Britt, Bernie Moreno, Mike Rounds, Tom Cotton, Markwayne Mullin, John Barrasso, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Rick Scott of Florida, John Hoeven, Roger Marshall, Thom Tillis, Jim Justice, Tim Sheehy, James Lankford, Joni Ernst, John R. Curtis.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of William Pulte, of Florida, to be Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency for a term of five years.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday, it was reported that Elon Musk and DOGE have been pressuring the Social Security Administration to cut phone services—phone services—that millions of Americans rely on to help get their benefits from Social Security.

DOGE knows that all their claims of massive fraud within Social Security are nonsense. So what do they do? They are trying to cut telephone services that help the elderly and disabled people get their benefits. How cruel. How mean. Why? So some billionaires can get another tax break. That is appalling.

What DOGE is doing to Social Security is not government efficiency; it is cruelty—cruelty. It is a direct attack on some of our most vulnerable people—seniors and the disabled.

Social Security support lines are vital for seniors who struggle to get out of the house. Many seniors don't have the ability to drive themselves to an in-person local office, many of which are closing. If they can visit an office in person, guess what. DOGE is working on closing the local offices too. It is almost as if cruelty is the point for DOGE.

Elon Musk and DOGE are trying to drive Social Security into the ground, to make it so dysfunctional, so they can scream about fraud and justify cutting benefits. And for what? Giving billionaires another tax break.

Remember what Elon Musk said a few days ago:

Most of the federal [government's] spending is entitlements. So that's the big one to eliminate.

Imagine the cruelty of the richest man in the world—he is trying to sell his Teslas on the White House lawn—telling tens of millions of seniors that he wants to eliminate their benefits, that their checks are part of one big scam.

Elon Musk is utterly clueless—clueless—about what it means to rely on that \$1,100 check that seniors need for their food or their medicines. He has no empathy, and that lack of empathy will create immense suffering for people who aren't as fortunate as he has been.

That is why DOGE has already pushed to close Social Security offices. They are getting ready to fire 7,000 Social Security employees, and this is just the beginning. If DOGE keeps going, people could see their benefits disappear.

Are my Republican colleagues fine with these attacks against Social Security? Do they support closing Social Security offices? Do they agree with Elon Musk that Social Security is a scam? Why are they silent as Elon Musk and DOGE try to take Social Security apart?

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. 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 Republican whip.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor, the minority leader has just spoken on the floor of the U.S. Senate, and I would like to begin today's comments by quoting the Senator from New York.

Here is a quote, Senator SCHUMER says:

Shutting down the government over a policy difference is self-defeating.

He went on to say:

It accomplishes nothing but pain and suffering for the country and incurs an enormous political cost to the party shutting it down.

When did he say those things? Well, he said them in 2019. Well, they are as true today as they were then. Apparently, he has forgotten those things. He has forgotten the enormous suffering for the country that is caused and the political cost to the party shutting it down.

So who would be the party shutting down the government if we shut down at midnight tomorrow night? Well, according to this morning's—and as the Presiding Officer knows, I come to the floor often with a newspaper article. Today's Washington Post: "Democrats Prepare to Reject a Bill to Avert a Shutdown."

It is the Democrats who would be shutting down the government. Now, that is the Washington Post, clearly someone that so often sides with the Democrats.

What about the liberal New York Times, what are they saying this morning?

"Specter of Shutdown is Growing As Democrats Resist Funding Bill."

They resist funding the government. It is the Democrats who are doing this.

And then there is a picture of Senator SCHUMER in today's Wall Street Journal. So we see the Washington Post, the New York Times, and now the Wall Street Journal: "Schumer Signals Block of Funding Bill."

Let me go back, "It accomplishes nothing," he said in 2019, "but pain and suffering for the country."

That is what the Democrats want: the American people to suffer now, pain and suffering, because they don't want to fund the government. They want to shut it down.

As he said, it "incurs enormous political cost to the party shutting it down." And that cost should be imposed to the party shutting it down, and the party shutting it down are the Democrats in the U.S. Senate.

In less than 48 hours, government funding expires, and Senator SCHUMER and his party are on the verge of shutting down the Government of the United States. The deadline is looming. The Democrats now face a crucial choice: Pass the bill that has already passed the House of Representatives, fund the government, or shut it down. There is no magical third option for the Democrats or for the country.

We are on the brink of, once again, a Democrat shutdown of government. Why? Because they refuse to accept that President Trump and the Republicans won the election. They hate the fact.

Heard a lot of talk about how we got here. Let me set the record straight, because this shutdown has been driven and directed by the Democrats. The Presiding Officer remembers last year when the Democrats were in the majority. Senator SCHUMER was the majority leader, Joe Biden was in the White House, President. And last year, the Senate Appropriations Committee, chaired by a Democrat, passed 11 of 12 appropriations bills.

Like, I am so grateful for the work of Senator SUSAN COLLINS of Maine, vice chairman of that committee, worked hard, and led Republican efforts to get each of those bills done on time, through the committee, and they produced results.

Each of the bills passed the committee, bipartisan appropriations bills, strong bipartisan support, some unanimous; and these bills were all passed last summer. Last summer.

From the time they passed the final one of those bills—and let me just point out, I have the list of them: July 11, they passed Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, Agriculture,

food, legislative branch, unanimous, unanimous, unanimous, 27 to 0 in each of those, passed the committee.

On July 25, Commerce-Science, Justice and Science passed, Interior passed, oh, 28 to 1. State and Foreign Ops passed, and Transportation. And then on August 1, Energy and Water Development, 28 to 0. Defense, 28 to 0. Labor-Health and Human Services, Education, Financial Services, all of them passed the Appropriations Committee. Done, passed.

Senator SCHUMER had 224 days to bring up any one of those bills on the Senate floor. He absolutely categorically refused to bring a single appropriations bill to the floor of the U.S. Senate when he was the majority leader, even though the bills came out unanimously, and one of his own Members was chairman of that committee. He ignored her. She said: Take them to the floor. He refused. Refused to put a single one of those 11 appropriations bills that came out of the committee to the floor. He refused to govern, and now he wants to shut down the government.

His burn-the-house attitude is what we are dealing with—rule-or-ruin approach. It is irresponsible, it is reckless, and he is trying to lead the entire Democrats in the Senate over the cliff and hurt the American public in the process.

But the right thing to do is to keep the government open. It costs money to shut down the government. It costs taxpayer dollars, and it costs even more to reopen the government.

The government shutdown denies the American people services that they need, that they want, that they wait for. It forces our military and our border patrol to work without pay.

It is time to move on from the Democrats' failures. It is time to get this done. Time to govern. That is what the American people elected the Republicans to do.

The business of the Senate will not stop because of Democrats' made-for-TV and made-for-their-liberal-base temper tantrums. Senate Democrats want to grandstand, we are going to continue to move deliberately and decisively and continue to work to confirm more of President Trump's well-qualified nominees.

So it is the choice of the Democrats on the other side: govern or grandstand. The American people are watching.

You know, they watched a week or so ago when the President of the United States addressed this joint session of Congress. The American people watched. What they saw was immature antics by the Democrats sitting there in the House Chamber waving their little paddles, refusing to applaud a young man with brain cancer, refusing to applaud families that have gone through great tragedy.

It was juvenile; it was wrong. That is what the American people saw. People that were watching that presentation

by the President of the United States saw a strong leader and saw a Democrat Party in disarray, acting as juveniles. And now it appears the Senate wants to do exactly the same thing by shutting down the government.

The American people that watched the President address a week ago are watching today, and they know that if there is a government shutdown, like it looks like we are heading to tomorrow night, it is going to be at the deliberate direction of the Democrat Party.

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. President, before yielding the floor, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Pulte nomination.

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

Mr. BARRASSO. I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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. 30, William Pulte, of Florida, to be Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency for a term of five years.

John Thune, Tim Sheehy, Lindsey Graham, Cynthia M. Lummis, Dan Sullivan, Ashley B. Moody, Pete Ricketts, Bill Cassidy, Jon Husted, Mike Rounds, James Lankford, Todd Young, Joni Ernst, John R. Curtis, John Kennedy, Cindy Hyde-Smith, John Boozman.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 William Pulte, of Florida, to be Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency for a term of five years, 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 Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 57, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 120 Ex.]

YEAS—57

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| Alsobrooks | Curtis | Lankford |
| Banks | Daines | Lee |
| Barrasso | Ernst | Lummis |
| Blackburn | Fischer | Marshall |
| Boozman | Gallego | McConnell |
| Britt | Graham | McCormick |
| Budd | Grassley | Moody |
| Capito | Hagerty | Moran |
| Cassidy | Hawley | Moreno |
| Collins | Hoeven | Mullin |
| Cornyn | Husted | Murkowski |
| Cotton | Hyde-Smith | Paul |
| Cramer | Johnson | Peters |
| Crapo | Justice | Ricketts |
| Cruz | Kennedy | Risch |

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|------------|----------|------------|
| Rounds | Sheehy | Tillis |
| Schmitt | Slotkin | Tuberville |
| Scott (FL) | Sullivan | Wicker |
| Scott (SC) | Thune | Young |

NAYS—41

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|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| Baldwin | Hirono | Rosen |
| Bennet | Kaine | Schatz |
| Blumenthal | Kelly | Schiff |
| Blunt Rochester | Kim | Schumer |
| Booker | King | Shaheen |
| Cantwell | Klobuchar | Smith |
| Coons | Lujan | Van Hollen |
| Cortez Masto | Markey | Warner |
| Durbin | Merkley | Warmock |
| Fetterman | Murphy | Warren |
| Gillibrand | Murray | Welch |
| Hassan | Ossoff | Whitehouse |
| Heinrich | Padilla | Wyden |
| Hickenlooper | Reed | |

NOT VOTING—2

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|-----------|---------|
| Duckworth | Sanders |
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The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). On this vote, the yeas are 57, the nays are 41.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Missouri.

DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, I spoke on this topic last week, but there is just so much more to talk about this week. This is about the important work that President Trump and Elon Musk and the other folks at DOGE are doing to save taxpayer dollars.

Just this past week, DOGE canceled contracts within NIH, including \$75,000 for researching and studying structural racism; \$620,000 for an LGB+ teen pregnancy prevention program for transgender boys—let me repeat that because it is hard to follow: an LGB+ teen pregnancy prevention program for transgender boys—\$699,000 for studying cannabis use among sexual minority, gender-diverse individuals; \$740,000 for examining social networks among Black and Latino sexual minority men in New Jersey; \$50,000 for assessing sexual health among LGBTQ+ Latinx youth in an agricultural community.

The State Department, with Secretary of State Rubio, are canceling 83 percent of the programs under USAID. What is being cut: \$4 million for engineering services in Liberia, \$1.1 million for an online climate change tool, \$4 million for assessing primary education in Kenya, and much, much more.

And at the EPA, Secretary Zeldin canceled over 400 DEI and environmental justice grants across 9 grant programs that total \$1.7 billion, bringing the EPA's total savings to over \$2 billion.

And wait until you hear this: According to reports from the Daily Wire, \$2 billion in funding was directed toward a group called Power Forward Communities. Who runs Power Forward Communities? That would be Stacey Abrams.

And let me just opine, just for a second, on why my Democratic colleagues on the other side are so nervous about all this DOGE stuff. It is because of this racket that has been used to launder taxpayer dollars to their buddies and their leftwing, radical groups. The gravy train is stopping, and it is terrifying to them.