

hours and does not restrict the number of amendments Senators can offer.

Here is how it actually works. And you know this quite well, Mr. President, as a new Member of the Senate. On the day of the amendment votes, Senators will sit around on the floor and in the Cloakrooms and in the ante-rooms of the Chamber and stare at each other all day, make offers and counteroffers. Then late in the day, usually in the early evening, we begin debate. We make brief 1-minute speeches, and we vote over and over and over into the wee hours of the morning.

One result is that the process is, by then, hidden, relegated to the darkness of nighttime. Most Americans are already asleep when we get down to business in the vote-arama. What they miss, though, is mostly political theater. In this production, the roles never change. I have been in the minority at times during my tenure in the Senate. I have been in the majority, as I am now. But the roles stay the same. The minority party has one job: to offer amendments—germane or not, pertinent or not—that put the majority in an uncomfortable position.

As a Member of the minority party, I have done that. The majority party has the job of defeating every amendment, if possible. It doesn't matter what the merit of the amendments are. The majority party often defeats each one. Why? Because otherwise, we would delay the important work of actually, finally, getting to passage of a budget reconciliation bill, which will come later.

The vote-arama hardly ever has any budgetary substance. The vote-arama is merely a messaging process. Every Member of the Senate, minority and majority, knows this. Americans at least deserve to hear this debate during the light of day. Both parties can achieve their goals without running this process into the wee hours of the morning, which is what we always do.

Over the last few weeks, I have talked with Members on both sides of the aisle, my Republican colleagues and our Democratic friends. I floated the idea of a unanimous consent agreement to conduct these votes during the light of day. I simply say, Mr. President, there is widespread support among the rank and file for getting this done during working hours.

So I would urge the leadership of both parties and all Members of both parties—because it takes unanimous consent—to adopt a unanimous consent agreement that avoids the political theater of a dead-of-night vote-arama. The American people deserve better. And I would like to think the U.S. Senate is better than the process we have come to practice.

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 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. 40, Matthew Whitaker, of Iowa, to be United States Permanent Representative on the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

John Thune, Katie Boyd 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.

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 Matthew Whitaker, of Iowa, to be United States Permanent Representative on the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS), and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) would have vote "yea" and the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) would have voted "yea".

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. SLOTKIN) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 49, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 156 Ex.]

YEAS—49

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

NAYS—42

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| Alsobrooks | Cantwell | Gillibrand |
| Baldwin | Cortez Masto | Hassan |
| Bennet | Duckworth | Heinrich |
| Blumenthal | Durbin | Hirono |
| Blunt Rochester | Fetterman | Kaine |
| Booker | Gallego | Kelly |

| | | |
|-----------|---------|------------|
| Kim | Ossoff | Smith |
| King | Padilla | Van Hollen |
| Klobuchar | Reed | Warner |
| Lujan | Rosen | Warnock |
| Markey | Sanders | Warren |
| Merkley | Schatz | Welch |
| Murphy | Schiff | Whitehouse |
| Murray | Schumer | Wyden |

NOT VOTING—9

| | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------|
| Barrasso | Hickenlooper | Murkowski |
| Capito | Hyde-Smith | Peters |
| Coons | Lummis | Slotkin |

(Mr. RICKETTS assumed the Chair.)
The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARSHALL). On this vote, the yeas are 49, the nays are 42.

The motion is agreed to.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 46.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Dean Sauer, of Missouri, to be Solicitor General of the United States.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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. 46, Dean Sauer, of Missouri, to be Solicitor General of the United States.

John Thune, Mike Crapo, Roger Marshall, Shelley Moore Capito, Tommy Tuberville, Jim Justice, James Lankford, John Barrasso, Markwayne Mullin, Tim Sheehy, Mike Rounds, Todd Young, Kevin Cramer, Ted Budd, Roger F. Wicker, Katie Boyd Britt, David McCormick.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 47.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Harmeet Dhillon, of California, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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. 47, Harmeet Dhillon, of California, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

John Thune, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Mike Crapo, Lindsey Graham, Tim Sheehy, John Kennedy, John Barrasso, Markwayne Mullin, Roger Marshall, Rick Scott of Florida, Mike Rounds, Tommy Tuberville, Steve Daines, Bernie Moreno, Eric Schmitt, Jon A. Husted, Roger F. Wicker.

MORNING BUSINESS

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO ETTA SMITH PERKINS

• Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, I wish to honor the life and legacy of Mrs. Etta Smith Perkins, an extraordinary Alabamian who has helped shape our State with courage and conviction.

Mrs. Perkins moved to Selma, AL, at the age of 4, and grew up on Selma University's campus where she attended elementary and secondary school through 12th grade. She was the fourth of ten children born to Henry Daniel Smith, Sr., and Rebecca Sanders Smith.

As a young child, she was baptized at West Trinity Baptist Church, where she developed her love for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, serving others, and congregational singing. It was in church where she met the love of her life, James Perkins, Sr. Together, they shared an extraordinary 71 years of marriage, 4 children, 7 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren, and several godchildren who affectionately called her "Momma." Her favorite scripture, Proverbs 3:5, guided her extraordinary life of faith and service.

She began her professional nursing career at the Good Samaritan Hospital School of Practical Nurses. Her dedica-

tion to caring for others led her to further her education at Wallace Community College-Selma, where she graduated as a registered nurse in 1973. As a nurse during the civil rights movement, she fought to integrate waiting rooms in the segregated doctors' offices. Her efforts were later documented in the documentary film "Sisters of Selma: Bearing Witness for Change," which was broadcast nationwide.

Her commitment to service was not limited to her professional career. Mrs. Perkins truly inspired future generations of leaders when she became Selma-Dallas County's first African-American Girl Scout troop leader. She was also appointed as the first African-American board member of the Selma-Dallas County Public Library and a charter member of the National Council of Negro Women. Her leadership also extended to organizations like the American Red Cross, Head Start, the Vaughan Home Health Boards, and the Selma-Dallas County AARP.

Mrs. Perkins' remarkable contributions have been memorialized across the State of Alabama. Her story has been written in numerous publications, including "The Alabama Nurse" and "Advances of Nursing Science." Her 35 years of outstanding service were forever cemented in history when she was featured as one of four inaugural nurses in the book "Alabama Notable Nurses."

This Women's History Month, I am honored to recognize Mrs. Perkins on behalf of the people of Alabama as a truly trailblazing woman who made significant contributions to her community and our state. Her legacy serves as a powerful reminder that Alabama women don't just witness history; they make it.●

RECOGNIZING J&S FARM SUPPLY

• Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as chair of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to recognize J&S Farm Supply of Williamsburg, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

In 1955, Leighton Jones founded Jones Fertilizer with a mission to support local growers by providing farming services including shelling corn, filling silos, and making hay. In 1962, legendary corn seed grower Roland Holden, the founder of Holden Foundation Seeds—formerly the largest independent producer of foundation seed in the United States—approached the family business for help with fertilizing his crops. At that time, Leighton did not own a truck capable of helping fertilize Roland's farm, so an agreement was made to exchange work for a 1962 Chevy truck. Leighton not only paid Roland back but also established connections with local farmers

to expand his fertilizing business. Over time, Jones Fertilizer became a comprehensive resource for community members seeking to buy fertilizers, seeking crop input, or in need of agricultural services.

By 1972, Dick Schaefer joined the team, and J&S Farm Supply was born. More than two decades later, in 1999, Leighton's son Tim Jones, Sr., joined the business. After nearly 50 years of growing the business, Leighton passed in 2004, which marked a new chapter as Tim took on full ownership of the family business.

Today, Tim still leads J&S Farm Supply and has spearheaded transformative changes, expanding the company's reach and service offerings. Under Tim's leadership, the business has evolved into a full-service agricultural hub offering advanced agronomy services, expert soil consulting, and sustainable farming strategies. The company's team of eight community employees help Iowa growers with every step of the agriculture process, from maintaining soil quality to hauling grain. Tim's son Tim Jones, Jr.—a certified crop adviser and a graduate of Iowa State University—joined the J&S Farm Supply team, bringing cutting-edge agronomy perspectives to the company. Additionally, Tim's sons-in-law Ryan Sauser and Luke Williams have further grown the company's offerings by expanding the turf and fabrication divisions, respectively. Demonstrating its innovative spirit, J&S Farm Supply plans to introduce on-site research plots and studies, allowing for the evaluation of new products and strategies to better serve the evolving needs of Iowa's agricultural producers.

This family-owned business partners with the Williamsburg JR-SR High School Raiders, as well as the Williamsburg Performance Center. J&S Farm Supply is also a member of the Williamsburg Chamber of Commerce, sponsoring unique events like a donkey basketball fundraiser for the high school FFA. In their personal lives, Tim Sr. has coached the high school girls' soccer team since 2012, and Ryan currently coaches the boys' team. In 2018, Tim Jones, Sr., was awarded the Citizen of the Year by the Williamsburg Chamber of Commerce. With their strong presence in Williamsburg and a history of serving Iowa's agricultural economy, J&S Farm Supply has been a cornerstone of its community. Later this year, J&S Farm Supply looks forward to celebrating its 70th business anniversary in Iowa.

The entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to excellence demonstrated by J&S Farm Supply are clear. I want to congratulate the entire team at J&S Farm Supply for their hard work and dedication to providing exceptional products and services to agricultural producers across Iowa. I look forward to seeing their continued growth and success.●