

well that that freedom includes the freedom to make personal, private decisions that others may disagree with.

Our commitment to putting freedom first is part of what makes America different. Indeed, that is what makes us exceptional. The American people understand freedom's importance. Their leaders should remember it too. The American people have not asked for the extreme agenda that this legislation represents. They haven't asked the majority to further restrict their freedom.

I urge my colleagues to listen to the American people, to put aside this partisan agenda, and to get to work on tackling the challenges that are facing our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to this deceptively named Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act.

Tomorrow is the 52nd anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the decision that guaranteed fundamental rights to choose abortion before that right was stripped away. Now reproductive freedom is under attack in multiple States. Over a dozen States have passed abortion bans, and several pregnant women in Georgia and Texas have died because they could not access safe abortions. In some States, patients don't have access to legal abortion care even after they have been raped. Multiple States are currently suing to restrict access to even medication for abortion.

We don't yet know how the new administration is going to handle Federal protections for pregnant women in medical emergencies. The new administration, yesterday, took down a government website that offered just information about reproductive care. This was one of the top priorities yesterday of this administration on day one—taking down that website.

Instead of working to resolve any of the serious, real challenges, my colleagues are trying to force a vote on something that is completely unnecessary. It is already illegal to kill a child who is born alive in this country. I was a Member of the Senate when we passed, in 2002, the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act to ensure that all infants have legal protections.

The so-called Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Act, as my colleague from New Hampshire just said, is legislation in search of a problem. It is deliberately misleading and offensive to pregnant people and to their healthcare providers.

It is incredibly heartbreaking—these scenarios—where a baby is born with a fatal diagnosis, and the baby's parents must want to spend those precious moments holding and saying goodbye to their child, but under these extreme ideas, doctors would have to perform aggressive medical care that would only prolong a family's suffering.

We need to honor that these are medical decisions left to the woman, her

physician, and to her family. We trust that doctors and nurses know how to carry this out. We want to honor these—not politicians, not lawyers—so I will be voting against this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to do so.

We also need to make sure that here in the Senate, as my colleague said, we are working to lower costs. We need to make sure that they don't try to cut Medicare or food assistance or the neediest of issues for young families who are being impacted. Healthcare in the United States needs to be strengthened; drug costs need to be lowered; and we need to help and protect working families.

I thank my colleagues for being here today.

I yield the floor.

CERTIFICATES OF ELECTION

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Chair lays before the Senate the certificate of appointment to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of former Senator J.D. VANCE of Ohio and the certificate of appointment to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of former Senator Marco Rubio of Florida.

The certificates, the Chair is advised, are in the forms suggested by the Senate. If there be no objection, the reading of the certificates will be waived, and they will be printed in full in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the certificates were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATE OF OHIO
CERTIFICATE OF APPOINTMENT

To the President of the Senate of the United States:

This is to certify that, pursuant to the power vested in me by the Constitution of the United States and the laws of the State of Ohio, I, Mike DeWine, the Governor of Ohio, do hereby appoint Jon Husted a Senator from Ohio to represent Ohio in the Senate of the United States until the vacancy therein, resulting from the resignation of JD Vance to assume the Vice Presidency of the United States, is filled by election as provided by law.

Witness: His excellency our Governor Mike DeWine, and our seal hereto affixed at Washington, D.C. this 18th day of January, in the year of our Lord 2025.

MIKE DEWINE,
Governor.
FRANK LAROSE,
Secretary of State.

[State Seal Affixed]

STATE OF FLORIDA
CERTIFICATE OF APPOINTMENT

To the President of the Senate of the United States:

This is to certify that, pursuant to the power vested in me by the Constitution of the United States and the laws of the State of Florida, I, Ron DeSantis, the Governor of Florida, do hereby appoint Ashley Moody a Senator to represent the State of Florida in the Senate of the United States until the vacancy therein caused by the resignation of the Honorable Marco Rubio, is filled by election as provided by law.

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the

State of Florida to be affixed at Tallahassee, this 21st day of January, 2025.

RONALD D. DESANTIS,
Governor.

Attest:

CORD BYRD,
Secretary of State.

[State Seal Affixed]

ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS OF OFFICE

The VICE PRESIDENT. If the Senators-designate will now present themselves at the desk, the Chair will administer the oaths of office.

The Senator Jon Husted, escorted by Mr. Moreno and Governor DeWine, and the Senator Ashley Moody, escorted by Mr. SCOTT of Florida, advanced to the desk of the Vice President; the oaths prescribed by law were administered by the Vice President of the United States; and they subscribed to the oaths in the Official Oath Book.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Great. Congratulations, Senators.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

(Mr. BUDD assumed the Chair.)

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CURTIS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

BORN-ALIVE ABORTION SURVIVORS PROTECTION ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, unfortunately, we were at the point of almost having a consent agreement to have a vote on the confirmation of John Ratcliffe to be CIA Director tomorrow—not today, not yesterday when it should have happened, but tomorrow—but the Senator from Connecticut has decided to object at the last minute.

I don't really understand the objection to Mr. Ratcliffe. He was confirmed by this Senate to be the Director of National Intelligence. He was fully vetted through the bipartisan process in the Senate Intelligence Committee. We voted him out yesterday on a 14-to-3 vote.

Senator SCHUMER stood here yesterday and talked about how we are going to cooperate on highly qualified, capable nominees with integrity, which John Ratcliffe is, but the only vote we got yesterday was Senator Rubio.

Now we are not going to have a vote today, and apparently we are not going to have a vote tomorrow, which means I hope nobody is making any plans for the weekend or the evenings because

we are going to get these nominees confirmed—starting with Mr. Ratcliffe and then moving on to Mr. Hegseth and moving on to Ms. Noem—the easy way or the hard way.

We tried to cooperate with the Democrats. The cooperation has not been forthcoming, so I guess it is going to be the hard way starting on Thursday.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that, at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Democratic leader, on January 22, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Executive Calendar No. 1, John Ratcliffe to be the Director of the CIA; that there be up to 2 hours of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees on the nomination; that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on the nomination; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, as the Senator knows, there are serious concerns that many of us have about John Ratcliffe's ability to distance himself from the political interests of President Trump in his work as CIA Director.

During his short 8 months as DNI in 2020, he repeatedly politicized intelligence in a way that does raise for many of us real questions about whether he is going to spin highly sensitive intelligence his Agency will gather for political purposes.

I don't think it is too much to ask to make sure that we have a full, real debate that lasts 2 days on the Senate floor given the serious questions that have arisen about his qualifications to do this job in an apolitical manner. I understand that we have differences about the qualifications of this nominee, but it is important for the American public to hear us have a debate here about the qualifications of folks who are going to be leading the most sensitive national security Agencies. If he has the votes, he can be on the job this weekend.

For that reason, I would object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. It is fine if the Democrats have legitimate concerns with this nominee or any other nominee. We had legitimate concerns with President Biden's nominees. Come down to the floor. Get it off your chest.

You talk about a full and real debate for 2 days. I hate to disappoint the people watching here. You are probably seeing more debate than we will have

on John Ratcliffe's nomination for the next 48 hours before we confirm him. That is what I predict.

We could have debated this anytime today. We debated it for 2 months in the Intelligence Committee. The Senator from Virginia, the vice chair of the committee, worked diligently and promptly with me—his team with my team—to process this nomination so it would be ready for confirmation yesterday. On a bipartisan basis, 14 to 3—not many other nominees are going to come out of committee with that kind of vote.

So I understand the Democrats are opposed to some of President Trump's nominees, and I understand they want to vote no, and I respect that. But should we be denying the country a Senate-confirmed CIA Director in such dangerous times for no good reason?

Again, maybe Senator MURPHY has more to say. I invite him to come down to the floor and speak again if there is a lot more to say. I predict, though, that once again this will be the longest debate we have about John Ratcliffe's nomination over the next 2 days.

What this is really about is trying to drag out all of these nominations, to play procedural games, as we are about to with Pete Hegseth's nomination, to try to deny President Trump his Cabinet in a prompt and timely fashion, just like the Democrats did in 2017. Yep, it happened in 2021 as well because around here, the shoe gets on the other foot pretty quickly. But it didn't happen in 2009. It didn't happen in 2001 and before that. We should get back to that practice. We should especially get back to that practice when it is a highly accomplished, well-qualified nominee of integrity like John Ratcliffe is.

So I regret that now we are going to spin our wheels for 2 days, but, as I said, don't make plans for the weekend, and don't have any dinner dates scheduled starting on Thursday night because we are going to get these nominees done the easy, collegial way or apparently the hard way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I was listening to the chair of the Intelligence Committee just a moment ago talking about this nominee, and I was curious.

I ask the Senator from Arkansas, the chairman of the Intelligence Committee, what was the vote coming out of committee for Mr. Ratcliffe?

Mr. COTTON. The vote was 14 to 3.

Mr. THUNE. OK. So 14 to 3 coming out of committee, and we have now wasted a whole day where we could have been acting on that nomination.

So, really, I think the question before the Senate is, Do we want to vote on these folks on Tuesday or vote on them on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday? Because that is what we are going to do. This can be easy or this can be hard.

This is a nominee that came out of the Intelligence Committee 14 to 3. It

is a bipartisan nomination to the Central Intelligence Agency. This is about America's national security interests, and we are stalling.

So that is not going to happen. We are going to file cloture on him. You can force us to hang around here, and we can vote on these things Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. But we are going to vote on him.

This one shouldn't be hard, folks. I understand there are some that are going to draw some opposition from the other side of the aisle. But Democrats and Republicans, in a very big bipartisan fashion, agree that he is very qualified for this job that is an important job to America's national security interests. And, frankly, I believe, we ought to fill it as soon as we possibly can. So it is going to be a big vote here on the floor.

Everything we are doing right now is just stalling. I don't know what that accomplishes for you, but we are going to be here voting on it.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 1.

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 legislative clerk read the nomination of John Ratcliffe, of Texas, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

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 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. 1, John Ratcliffe, of Texas, to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

John Thune, Steve Daines, John Kennedy, Jim Justice, James E. Risch, Mike Crapo, Tim Sheehy, Deb Fischer, Tommy Tuberville, Rick Scott of Florida, Pete Ricketts, Katie Britt, Ted Budd, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Rounds, Roger Marshall, Eric Schmitt.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION—MOTION TO PROCEED

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

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

VOTE ON MOTION TO PROCEED

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask for the yeas and nays.