

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 Executive 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 9 Ex.]

YEAS—54

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

NAYS—46

Alsobrooks	Hirono	Sanders
Baldwin	Kaine	Schatz
Bennet	Kelly	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
Gallego	Ossoff	Welch
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden
Heinrich	Reed	
Hickenlooper	Rosen	

The motion was agreed to.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session. The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION—Motion to Proceed

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 3.

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

Mrs. MURRAY. 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 Kentucky (Mr. PAUL).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 10 Leg.]

YEAS—53

Banks	Blackburn	Britt
Barrasso	Boozman	Budd

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

NAYS—45

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

NOT VOTING—2

Markey Paul

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Peter Hegseth, of Tennessee, to be Secretary of Defense.

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. 3, Peter Hegseth, of Tennessee, to be Secretary of Defense.

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

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. 4.

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 Kristi Noem, of South Dakota, to be Secretary of Homeland Security.

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. 4, Kristi Noem, of South Dakota, to be Secretary of Homeland Security.

John Thune, Steve Daines, John Kennedy, Jim Justice, James E. Risch, Tim Sheehy, Mike Crapo, 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

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to resume legislative session.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CATFISH FARMERS OF ARKANSAS

● Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Catfish Farmers of Arkansas.

Established in 1975, members of the Catfish Farmers of Arkansas include producers, suppliers, businessowners, researchers, educators, and many other stakeholders. Together, they work to ensure the success of the catfish industry in both the Natural State and nationwide.

The Catfish Farmers of Arkansas has made enormous strides advancing its