

spending process, it does not have to be that way. We can also use this appropriations process to enact further spending reductions, and I think we should.

So we have three bites at the apple, at the spending apple: rescission, reconciliation—the Big Beautiful Bill—and then appropriations. I hope the House and Senate will take full advantage of each of these three opportunities to begin the process of reducing our deficit and debt because, as former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mike Mullen said maybe about 10 years ago or so, “The biggest threat to our national security is our national debt.” That prediction at the time has come true when we are spending more money on interest on the national debt than we are on defense.

There is no better time than the present to begin to remedy this situation, and it is up to Congress. We can’t look over our shoulder or look around the room and say: Who else will protect us and save us from this unsustainable trajectory? It is up to us.

While the formal Department of Government Efficiency Task Force may have concluded, the work of DOGE lives on. As a founding member of the DOGE Caucus, I will keep doing my part, along with all of my colleagues, to bend the spending curve. I urge all of my colleagues to join us in that effort, particularly by passing this rescissions package and then eventually, in the coming weeks, the Big Beautiful Bill.

I yield the floor.

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

WAIVING QUORUM CALLS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum calls with respect to the Bowman and Walsh nominations.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Thank you.

My apologies to my colleague from Massachusetts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

NOMINATION OF MICHELLE BOWMAN

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the nomination of Michelle Bowman to be the Federal Reserve Board’s Vice Chair for Supervision.

Governor Bowman has served on the Federal Reserve Board since 2018 when she was confirmed as the first Governor required to have community bank experience, but during her tenure, she has consistently prioritized Wall Street over Main Street. She has weakened safeguards on the largest banks in the country and has opposed common-sense rules to promote financial stability, to protect consumers, and to drive investment in communities across this country.

Just yesterday, in another Wall Street giveaway, she voted to lift the asset cap that was placed on Wells Fargo in an effort to rein in Wells’ dec-

ades-long track record of customer abuses. She did this despite the fact that there is no public evidence that Wells Fargo has substantially changed its approach to banking.

Governor Bowman’s actions have already imposed serious costs on small businesses and families. It would be especially dangerous to put her in charge of further deregulating Wall Street now just as President Trump has pushed the economy to the edge of a cliff.

Democrats on the Banking Committee unanimously oppose her nomination as Vice Chair for Supervision, and I urge all of my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, to do the same now.

In the years leading up to the 2008 financial crisis, the Federal Reserve Board effectively abdicated its statutory role as a financial regulator and supervisor. As a result, the Agency was asleep at the wheel as dangerous risks built up in the financial system, especially in the subprime mortgage market. When the economy tumbled, families, small businesses, and even community banks suffered the consequences of the Fed’s negligence.

Congress established the Vice Chair for Supervision position after the 2008 financial crisis in order to ensure that the Fed never again ignored its financial regulation and supervision responsibilities, but in her 6 years on the Federal Reserve Board, Governor Bowman has hacked away bit by bit at the safeguards put in place after the 2008 financial crisis. Let’s take a look at her record.

Governor Bowman has weakened critical safeguards for the largest Wall Street banks. She has voted to reduce big banks’ loss-absorbing capital requirements, and she has voted to undermine the stress testing framework, both of which have left big banks more vulnerable to collapse. She has also voted to allow big banks to gamble with people’s deposits in financial markets, including through increased investments in hedge funds and private equity funds. These actions have allowed Wall Street banks to take on riskier bets and juice their dividends, boost their buybacks, and pump up executive compensation—all at the expense of financial stability.

Bowman also voted to deregulate massive banks with \$100 billion to \$250 billion in assets. That particular error in judgment came back to bite our country quickly, causing the second, third, and fourth largest bank failures in U.S. history just a few years later when these three deregulated banks—First Republic Bank, Silicon Valley Bank, and Signature Bank—all failed within weeks of each other in 2023. For a while, the entire banking system teetered on the edge of collapse.

Now, instead of learning from that near catastrophe, Governor Bowman has refused to take any responsibility for her votes that led to this banking turmoil, and she has opposed common-

sense rules to strengthen the resilience of large banks even after those failures.

Governor Bowman also voted to approve more than 800 bank merger applications, including Morgan Stanley’s major acquisition of E*TRADE and Capital One’s recent acquisition of Discover, which created the largest credit card company in America. Her lax approach to bank mergers undermines competition and increases concentration in the banking sector. That, in turn, inflicts costs on consumers and threatens the stability of the entire banking system. It also poses a direct risk to the future of community banks in this Nation.

In addition, Governor Bowman opposed even modest improvements to the Community Reinvestment Act. This is a 50-year-old law that was created to prevent racist lending practices by big banks and to ensure that all communities have access to critical financial services.

Last year, she was the only Fed Governor—the only one—to vote against a rule that would have updated the CRA regulations for the first time in nearly 30 years and would have increased banks’ investments in communities of color, in rural and Native communities, and in other low- and moderate-income areas.

Beyond her deeply troubling policy record, Governor Bowman also demonstrated a worrisome lack of independence from the White House during her nomination process. For example, at her hearing, she refused to acknowledge any economic uncertainty created by President Trump’s tariff policies, and she refused to concede any potential financial impact of those policies on U.S. financial stability. That refusal puts her at odds with Chair Powell, with the Fed staff, and with economic experts across the political spectrum. It was clear that Governor Bowman did not want to be seen even indirectly criticizing President Trump.

Ms. Bowman also stated that she plans to submit regulatory actions to the White House for review, which undermines the Fed’s independence and all but guarantees a new deregulatory bonanza for these Wall Street banks.

She has refused to answer questions about whether she met with then-President Elect Trump or his transition team while on an official Federal Reserve-funded trip to West Palm Beach in November 2024.

Look, our economy is in a precarious moment. President Trump’s disastrous mismanagement of this economy is raising costs for families, is putting jobs at risk, and is threatening to decimate small businesses across this country. Deregulating Wall Street right now would throw gasoline on Trump’s economic fire. The last thing families and small businesses need is another massive financial crash.

I urge my colleagues to oppose Michelle Bowman’s nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE
CALENDAR

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today concerned that the Senate's advice and consent role is being undermined. It is being undermined by obstruction from Senate Democrats that threaten to keep the Justice Department from functioning as the American people expect and the American people deserve.

The Office of Legislative Affairs serves as the crucial bridge between the Justice Department and this Congress. This relationship is essential not only for the legislative process, but for maintaining constitutional oversight and accountability.

The Office of Legislative Affairs ensures that we, as lawmakers, have the timely information needed to craft legislation, conduct oversight, and fulfill our constitutional duties.

When we seek answers, whether it is on criminal justice or immigration or national security, it is the Office of Legislative Affairs that takes our questions and returns the responses. This function can't run on autopilot.

Yet, today, the Office of Legislative Affairs is hobbled. It lacks a Senate-confirmed Assistant Attorney General to lead that office. Why? Because Senate Democrats have decided to impede the confirmation of all justice nominees without exception. That is not the constitutional role of advice and consent. That is obstruction.

Every Senator has the right to raise concerns about nominees. That is our constitutional role. That is our duty. And holds of specific nominees for specific reasons at times is very appropriate. It is an appropriate tool for any Senator to use.

I have even used that tool, and I have also done it on nominees. But the process demands fairness; it demands common sense. We should weigh each nominee individually, not slam the brakes on an entire Agency, especially one for keeping Americans safe.

So I am here at the floor because the nomination of Patrick Davis has been pending on the Senate Calendar now for 2 months. This is regrettable because he is an exceptionally qualified nominee. And this Senator should know because he worked for this Senator.

Mr. Davis brings a strong record of public service and a deep understanding of the legislative process gained from his time working for me on the Senate Judiciary Committee. I am confident he will lead the Office of Legislative Affairs with diligence, with fairness, and with integrity. He should be confirmed today, and I am here to ask my colleagues to do just that.

Obstructing his nomination serves absolutely no one. Many Senators—myself included—have outstanding requests to the Justice Department that we expect answers to. I understand that some Senators may complain that they haven't received a response to their own outstanding request. I have

made such complaints myself over the years under both Republican and Democrat administrations.

But I don't believe that obstructing this particular qualified nominee who can help get the responses we need will address their concerns.

I also understand that some Senators are unhappy with the current administration and are using Justice Department nominees to make their displeasure known. To these colleagues, I will simply say that the obstruction of qualified nominees to lead the Office of Legislative Affairs makes it harder for the Department of Justice to engage with Congress and harder for Congress to do its job.

This, ultimately, ends up hurting the American people. I am asking this body to uphold a fair confirmation process so that the Justice Department can effectively engage with Congress. Blocking the confirmation of Patrick Davis does not serve the Senate; it does not serve the interest of justice; and it does not serve the American people.

Mr. President, I am here to ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 92, Patrick Davis, to be Assistant Attorney General; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Reserving the right to object, I will object for two reasons.

First, a few weeks ago, I announced I am placing holds on all DOJ political nominations because the Attorney General refuses to answer fundamental questions about Donald Trump seeking a luxury plane from Qatar to use as Air Force One. This is a grave national security threat, as everyone knows.

The bottom line is very simple on this plane: The President of the United States accepted a luxury jet from a foreign government to use as his personal Air Force One. It wasn't just unethical. It reeked of corruption, of bribery, and threatened our national security.

That whole plane will have to be taken apart piece by piece to make sure listening devices aren't in it and be even more expensive. And yet the Justice Department didn't just look the other way; they approved it. That is so typical of this Justice Department and something that I think if a Democratic President did it, the Senator from Iowa would be the first on the floor to stand here and object.

Now we hear silence—silence. They won't even answer serious questions about this. This plane should be withdrawn, and I have introduced legislation to do that.

But that is not the only reason. Donald Trump has turned the Justice Department upside down. It is politicized.

It is weaponized. It is hollowed out. Donald Trump and his acolytes in the Justice Department are less interested in prosecuting criminals and more interested in prosecuting Trump's perceived political opponents.

This is an absolute disgrace. Both sides in past administrations, Democrat and Republican, have worked together to uphold the rule of law at DOJ. But now, the rule of law has been replaced by loyalty tests. Career public servants who have dedicated years to prosecuting criminals are just shoved aside because when Donald Trump asks them to break the law, to undo the law, to set aside rule of law, they refuse.

Investigations and prosecutions are dictated by political convenience and not justice. And now Republicans want the Senate to quietly rubberstamp a political nominee for the DOJ by unanimous consent—no hearing, no debate, no scrutiny.

On an important position like this, this should happen regularly that there should be debate. But with this Justice Department, as horrible as it is, as political as it is, as destructive of American values as it has been—no way.

The nominee is a former staffer for the very same Senator making the request. Now, as my colleague noted, in the past he has been up there when other administrations made ethical violations and did the wrong thing in his judgment. But now there is just silence from my colleague and from all of the Republican Senators.

And they know what is going on. They know what is going on. But blind obedience to Donald Trump is wrong when it comes to something as sacred as this: rule of law and a Justice Department that seeks to enforce the law, not just go after political enemies.

If Donald Trump and Republicans want to poison and politicize our justice system, I am not participating. I object.

I add one more point with deep regret. What is happening to the Judiciary Committee and the Justice Department is shameful. Inspectors general have been dismissed with no accountability. Again, my colleague who used to uphold the inspectors general and praised them—tons of them are dismissed now.

The American Bar Association has been sidelined. And today, up in the Justice Department, unqualified judicial nominees—some barely out of law school—are being rushed through confirmation. This is not how the Senate should work.

It didn't work that way when there was a Democratic President and my friend was chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

There should be no special treatment—none; not for political allies; not for former staffers; not for anyone. What Trump and Bondi are doing to the Justice Department and the rule of law is dangerous. It undermines the public trust and erodes the rule of law.