

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.

The Senate should not be complicit. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am sorry to hear the objection. I would like to correct the one thing that Senator SCHUMER said, that Patrick Davis didn't have a hearing before the committee. We did hold a hearing on Patrick Davis.

I yield the floor.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I continue to object for the many reasons that I have listed.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

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 assistant 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. 119, Michelle Bowman, of Kansas, to be Vice Chairman for Supervision of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of four years.

John Thune, Dan Sullivan, John Barrasso, Mike Rounds, Todd Young, Cynthia M. Lummis, Tom Cotton, James Lankford, Bernie Moreno, John R. Curtis, Ted Budd, Mike Crapo, Katie Boyd Britt, Jim Banks, Markwayne Mullin, Jon A. Husted, Steve Daines.

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 Michelle Bowman, of Kansas, to be Vice Chairman for Supervision of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of four years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. SHEEHY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 288 Ex.]

YEAS—51

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

NAYS—46

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

NOT VOTING—3

Capito	Ossoff	Sheehy
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The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RICKETTS). On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 46.

The motion was agreed to.

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 assistant 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 Calendar No. 129, Edward Walsh, of New Jersey, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Ireland.

John Thune, Pete Ricketts, John Barrasso, Tim Sheehy, Bernie Moreno, Steve Daines, Eric Schmitt, Roger Marshall, Tommy Tuberville, John Hoeven, Marsha Blackburn, Bill Cassidy, John R. Curtis, Jim Justice, James E. Risch, Thom Tillis, Markwayne Mullin.

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 Edward Walsh, of New Jersey, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Ireland, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO)

and the Senator from Montana (Mr. SHEEHY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 60, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 289 Ex.]

YEAS—60

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

NAYS—37

Alsobrooks	Heinrich	Sanders
Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Schatz
Bennet	Hirono	Schiff
Blumenthal	Kelly	Schumer
Blunt Rochester	Kim	Slotkin
Booker	Lujan	Smith
Cantwell	Markley	Van Hollen
Coons	Merkley	Warnock
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warren
Duckworth	Murray	Whitehouse
Durbin	Padilla	Wyden
Gillibrand	Peters	
Hassan	Rosen	

NOT VOTING—3

Capito	Ossoff	Sheehy
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The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MULLIN). On this vote, the yeas are 60, the nays are 37.

The motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Edward Walsh, of New Jersey, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Ireland.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

BORDER SECURITY

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, what we have come to realize is, under the last administration, the American people really suffered from open borders, crime, and lawlessness. And they spoke out about this, and, in November, they issued a mandate to President Trump. And, of course, we talk a lot about the economic impact of that. We talk about the health, but we also focus on the "Make America Safe Again" provisions.

And I will say this. Since he was elected in November and sworn in, in January, President Trump has done exactly that. He has worked to make this country safe, to make our communities safer. And what we have seen in operations across the country is that the Trump administration has committed