

naval ships is a long and proud naval tradition that goes back to America's first frigates commissioned by Congress. Then, as now, the naming of a ship is not just a top-down affair. It demands the input and consideration of the journey men and women who constructed her, as well as her prospective crew and captain, right down to the lowest ranking sailor.

Those individuals are known in naval tradition as plank owners, and that title brings with it an honor that they were the first to sail aboard a ship that will serve our country for generations. That is an honor that transcends political partisanship and differences of opinion, and it belongs to the sailors.

It is no secret that the last administration took a top-down approach to the naming of our newest class of USNS oilers. In doing so, they broke with important naval customs and traditions and robbed the USNS plank owners of the chance to name these vessels after what mattered most to them.

It is true that civilian leaders in Congress and the White House have always had a say in ship naming as well. George Washington selected the names of our first six frigates, but he did so from a list provided by the plank owners—the ships' crews and captains.

Navy tradition, like the name of a ship, lives in the hearts and minds of every sailor, and these traditions are vital to preserving the morale and fighting spirit of our forces. Resetting the stage is not a political issue. It is bringing things back in line with naval custom and tradition. It will allow the Secretary of the Navy to consider the input of new ship plank owners so that he can name this class of ships after the things that matter most to America's sailors.

For these reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from California.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of my colleague.

Past Presidents and Secretaries of the Navy have named these ships. They have named them after civil rights leaders: John Lewis, Thurgood Marshall.

Joshua Goldberg, who lived from 1896 to 1994, was drafted into the Russian Army in World War I, emigrated to the United States, and became the first Jewish rabbi to volunteer for naval service in World War II, rising to the rank of captain.

Thomas Parham, who lived from 1920 to 2007, was ordained in 1944 and served in shore assignments during World War II and then returned to Active Duty as a chaplain during the Korean war, serving in Japan, and becoming the Navy's first African-American sailor promoted to captain.

These are inspiring people. Honoring them by naming ships after them tells young people that the United States welcomes them—all of them.

Naming ships may fall to the executive branch, but I think Congress, with

its constitutional duty to raise armies and navies, has an important role to play.

All this resolution does is express approval of the existing names. It does not force the Navy to keep them. But it says that the individuals that have been named are worthy of that honor and distinction, and I would urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

MIDDLE EAST

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I wanted to just give a quick update on a project I was working on last week to my fellow Senators.

I spent the last week, during Memorial Day week, in the Middle East. ANGUS KING and I actually traveled to Baghdad, Erbil, Beirut, and Oman. And then Angus left out for Türkiye, and I left out for Jerusalem.

It is exceptionally helpful to be able to walk through the different countries of the region right now. Obviously, there is a tremendous amount of instability around Syria. We had the opportunity to be able to ask leaders in every single one of those countries about the future of Syria and the options that are there and what could happen.

It is to America's best interest to be able to have a stable Middle East and a functioning relationship in all of those countries.

Just a quick walk-through of a couple things that I think are important there: In Baghdad, they are actively working to be able to reach out to American companies. There is a real interest there and, quite frankly, a growth in Baghdad's economy, in Iraq's economy. They are trying to be able to stabilize, though they are still very close to Iran and to Tehran.

As chilling as it is, when I went in to meet with the Prime Minister, you can't go to the Prime Minister's office without going through the large traffic circle right outside his office, where he has a giant depiction of the martyr Soleimani in front of his office. That is the Iranian head of the IRGC that actively worked to kill as many Americans as possible. It was a reminder that there are still challenges in this region, while they are still welcoming to American businesses.

In Erbil, in the Kurdish Regional Government, they truly love America, and there is a true Western feel when you get to Erbil. They are open for commerce. They are open for capitalism.

They are still a part of Iraq, but they are very interested in turning their attention toward the Western world and toward engaging in a great deal of American business. In fact, one of the most prideful moments of the conversation were on the American businesses that are coming through and engaging in the Kurdish Regional Government, in that area. To be able to see—I counted 15 cranes across Erbil,

with the construction that is happening there. It is remarkable to be able to see the investment that is coming into that area.

It is good for us to continue to be able to maintain relationships with that region, and they are grateful to be able to be a partner to the United States. But even they are saying to their Kurdish friends that are over on the eastern side of Syria that they should turn their attention toward Damascus in forming a unified Syrian Government.

In the broad diversity that is Syria, with Kurds, with Turks, with Alawites, with Sunnis, with Shias, with Christians that are all in Syria in multiple areas and then in the broad swath of the desert area in the south, to still see a stronghold for ISIS that remains in Syria—it was a reminder again of the challenges this new Syrian Government has.

It was interesting as well to me that every single one of the leaders that I met in the area all raised to me their gratitude for President Trump canceling the sanctions on Syria. They all said: We don't know exactly which way the Syrian Government is going to go. It is too early to be able to tell.

But American sanctions would have prevented them from ever being successful in the future. So they expressed their gratitude over and over again to the United States for giving Syria a shot to be able to form its own country and its own nation.

When we landed in Beirut, we landed on a Sunday. It was the Sunday before Memorial Day Monday. It was a sober reminder to wake up in Beirut at the Embassy compound and to just walk that half block from where I was staying there over to the memorial that is on the Embassy compound for the many, many lives that have been lost over the years in Beirut, including the 241 marines that died in the marine barracks in 1983. To be there on that ground on Memorial Day was sobering to say the least.

But I have to tell you, I have been to Lebanon multiple times. I have met with the Lebanese leaders multiple times and with the Lebanese Armed Forces. I have never left Lebanon more optimistic than when I left Lebanon, when I took off. The new leadership there—President Aoun, the new Prime Minister there—is focused on fixing the banking system in Lebanon, fixing the port, repairing the airport, and getting a new economic infrastructure in place.

They said over and over again: We are not looking for assistance coming to us; we are looking for investors to be able to be here. We want to be open for business and have people from all over the world to be able to come here to be able to do business, so we are going to get our systems right and get rid of corruption.

They also said something that was a pretty remarkable statement. They said they want to have a monopoly on military weapons. Now, that may not

seem like a big deal to us as Americans, but there have been two militaries in Lebanon for decades: Hezbollah's military and the Lebanese Armed Forces. The places where Hezbollah's military stands, the Lebanese Armed Forces don't go—until now.

With Israel's bombardment of Hezbollah in the south, what is south of the Litani River, the Lebanese Armed Forces have moved into that area, and now the Lebanese Army is actually defending Lebanon—not some terrorist organization trying to be able to defend southern Lebanon; the Lebanese Armed Forces are actually stepping up to be able to do that. They are taking the lead in those areas, setting up posts.

The government there is very focused on getting weapons out of the Palestinian refugee camps that are there in Lebanon and defanging Hezbollah in the south and Hezbollah in the Beqaa Valley bordering with Syria. They are serious about taking on drug interdictions along their border with Syria. They are serious about trying to be able to balance things out.

I have to give kudos to Morgan Ortagus. She has done a phenomenal job there, and her name came up over and over again in my meetings with the Lebanese leaders as they saw her as a straight shooter and a good negotiator between Israel and Lebanon to be able to establish a lasting border and a lasting peace and relationships.

There are American leaders—what they call the mechanism—there as well.

That mechanism is helping monitor the cease-fire between Israel and Lebanon, and they have become a trusted partner to both sides of that border.

We as the United States do make a difference when we engage in different parts of the world. Lebanon and Israel would not be experiencing the peace they are experiencing right now if it was not for American engagement.

No other country in the world walks in and has the reputation that the United States of America does, so it allows us to be able to step in and help provide stability by just our presence and our engagement to be able to be there.

There are not large numbers of Americans that are there, but it is to America's benefit to see peace between Lebanon and Israel, not just because of two countries far away in the Middle East, but in Israel—there are 700,000 Americans in Israel right now—right now. If we want to be able to stand with those Americans that are right now in Israel, we don't want to see Hezbollah's rockets coming at our citizens from the north. We also have hundreds of thousands of Lebanese Americans and their families and Americans living in Lebanon.

We should continue to be able to have our relationships and our engagement there to be able to provide a stable, lasting peace, and there is a shot

for that like there has not been for decades between Lebanon and Israel.

When we left out from Lebanon, we went to be able to meet the King in Amman, Jordan. He is a trusted partner with the United States, and he is passionate about bringing a peaceful relationship with the entire region. He is somebody who actively wants to see stable relationships and a stable region, and he is doing the work that it takes, hard work in that region on things like water. It is not a simple thing everywhere in the world like it is in most places in the United States. When you are in Jordan, that is a tough challenge.

But the ability to be able to bring nations together, to be able to provide that kind of engagement with the country of Jordan and our friendship with the King there, matters.

We left out from Amman, and I drove to Jerusalem. Israel is facing very real risks. This body knows it well, and we have had plenty of conversations about it for a very long time.

The United States stands with our ally Israel. It was interesting for me to be able to see Israeli press there that has a whisper going out among the Israeli press that the United States is walking away from Israel. That is far from the truth. The United States continues to stand with our ally and friend Israel. But Israel is facing a multifront war. What they are dealing with day after day after day, we as Americans would never put up with.

We are now about 612 days past October 7 of last year. There are still hostages being held in Gaza today. Today, there are still hostages. There are still challenges being faced every single day.

The day that I arrived in Israel happened to be the first day that a new strategy for getting humanitarian aid into Gaza started—that day. It was a chaotic day of a brandnew plan of, how do we not have huge bags of flour and food be delivered and then Hamas scoops those up and then Hamas tries to be able to portion it out as they choose and instead deliver boxes of food to a family where they have a week's worth of food there, to a group of people who have no chance to be able to get to a grocery store, no chance to be able to get options for food?

So they experimented with a brandnew way to be able to do that—which was, by the way, an American-Israeli partnership—to be able to deliver that food into Gaza.

That first chaotic day, tens of thousands of boxes of food were delivered to Gazans who are desperate. That led to the second day, a little better; the next day, a little better; the next day, a little better. Each day, they tried to figure out how to maintain security, how to maintain order, how to register people, and to be able to make sure as many people as possible are getting as much food as possible and to be able to get that out to people who desperately need the help.

Each day, that humanitarian aid is getting better and better as they are learning how to be able to do it more effectively now. That is important to us because we care about all human life. We are Americans. We have people that we disagree with, people that we disagree with strongly, but we still care about the dignity of human life.

So we are watching that aid actually go into the country, and I am proud, actually, that we as the United States, as private citizens in the United States, are a part of delivering that aid that is desperately needed there.

But I will tell you, my conversation in Israel with key leadership there, including with the Prime Minister, always circles around the threat of Iran—always—because the rockets that are coming in from Gaza were paid for by Iran. The rockets and missiles and unmanned drones that were coming in from southern Lebanon were paid for by Iran. The missiles and rockets that are coming in from Yemen against Israel are paid for by Iran.

As they face all the challenges that are around them—and I could go on and on and on—as they face all the challenges that are around them, we cannot forget that the Iranian people live under the thumb of an oppressive Iranian regime that is not just oppressive to their own people, they are the destabilizing force in the entire region.

The one thing that is clear in this is that we have to make sure we strengthen our sanctions against the Iranian regime so that they cannot have more money to do more acts of terrorism.

They can never ever have a nuclear weapon. That means no enrichment. That means no centrifuges. That means no opportunity to be able to create a nuclear weapon. Iran has used their centrifuge technology to be able to enrich uranium up to 60 percent. There is zero purpose for highly enriched uranium other than a weapon. They cannot in one moment say they are not trying to weaponize and in the next moment brag about how much they have enriched uranium. Those two don't go together.

So we as Americans have to be vigilant because if you look at the flag of the Houthis in Yemen, the flag of the Houthis in Yemen has five phrases on it. Let me give you two of them: "Death to the Jews" and "Death to the Americans." That is not a banner; that is their national flag. They are serious about it, and I think we shouldn't just say: No, they are kidding. They are not.

So we cannot allow the Iranians to continue to be able to arm the rest of the area and to be able to bring the fight to us and pretend that is never going to happen. We have learned the lesson of 2001. People that are far away will do what they can in their deep hatred to come to us. So we should make sure that the Iranian regime never gets a nuclear weapon and that we remain clear and concise on that.

There are a lot of things that we can continue to be able to talk about as we talk about multiple regions around the world, but as we focus on so many areas around the world, we cannot lose focus on the Middle East—the opportunities and the promise that are there but also the threats that still remain. So let's stay vigilant.

I yield the floor.

#### WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Shumate nomination.

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

#### VOTE ON EISENBERG NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Eisenberg nomination?

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, 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 executive clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Montana (Mr. SHEEHY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 43, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 295 Ex.]

##### YEAS—52

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

##### NAYS—43

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

##### NOT VOTING—5

|        |         |        |
|--------|---------|--------|
| Luján  | Padilla | Warren |
| Ossoff | Sheehy  |        |

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). Under the previous order, the

motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

#### 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 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. 111, Brett Shumate, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

John Thune, Tommy Tuberville, Rick Scott of Florida, Mike Lee, Jon Husted, Josh Hawley, Ashley Moody, Marsha Blackburn, David McCormick, Markwayne Mullin, James Lankford, Bernie Moreno, Steve Daines, Katie Boyd Britt, Lindsey Graham, John R. Curtis, Mike Rounds.

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 Brett Shumate, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, 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 Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), and the Senator from Montana (Mr. SHEEHY).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 49, nays 40, as follows:

#### [Rollcall Vote No. 296 Ex.]

##### YEAS—49

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

#### NAYS—40

|                 |              |            |
|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| Alsobrooks      | Hassan       | Rosen      |
| Baldwin         | Heinrich     | Schatz     |
| Bennet          | Hickenlooper | Schiff     |
| Blumenthal      | Hirono       | Schumer    |
| Blunt Rochester | Kaine        | Shaheen    |
| Booker          | Kelly        | Slotkin    |
| Cantwell        | Kim          | Van Hollen |
| Coons           | Klobuchar    | Warner     |
| Cortez Masto    | Markey       | Warnock    |
| Duckworth       | Merkley      | Welch      |
| Durbin          | Murphy       | Whitehouse |
| Fetterman       | Murray       | Wyden      |
| Galleo          | Peters       |            |
| Gillibrand      | Reed         |            |

#### NOT VOTING—11

|           |         |        |
|-----------|---------|--------|
| Blackburn | Moran   | Sheehy |
| Hagerty   | Ossoff  | Smith  |
| King      | Padilla | Warren |
| Luján     | Sanders |        |

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 49, the nays are 40. The motion is agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Brett Shumate, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### TRIBUTE TO THE SENATE PAGES

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today is the last session day for our spring pages, and I want to thank them for their service to the Senate and to our country over the last few months. The Senate could not do all that we do without their hard work—work that they do at all hours of the day, late at night, and while keeping up with schoolwork.

So to this year's pages, thank you for all that you have contributed to the Senate this session, and best of luck in all your future endeavors.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print the names of the spring 2025 page class into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Blake Baber, Max Bates, Victoria Bender, Mira Brearley, Jac DeCasper, Cy Flaherty, Belle Grooms, Iver Iverson, Nathan Neuhaus, Preston Neuhaus, Finn Peterson, Sophie Pilgrim, Jayla Roberts, Alex Van Osdol, Victoria Wahlig, O'Marie Barnes, Eilon Bober-Tsafrir, Maggie Driemeyer, Caroline Enrich, Yael Grinstein, Noah Leiva, Abhilash Patel, Gideon Ramirez, Ava Sophia Robinson, Megan Sims, Amalia Sparhawk, Laney Stoddard, Lucas Yang.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. 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. 49.