

[Rollcall Vote No. 15 Ex.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—50

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

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any Senators in the Chamber who wish to vote or change a vote?

If not, on this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 50. The Senate being equally divided, the Vice President votes in the affirmative.

The nomination is confirmed.

(Applause.)

The majority leader.

MR. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the Hegseth nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; further, that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Noem nomination be waived.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The VICE PRESIDENT. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

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.

The VICE PRESIDENT. 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 Kristi Noem, of South Dakota, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 61, nays 39, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 16 Ex.]

YEAS—61

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

NAYS—39

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (MR. ROUNDS). On this vote, the yeas are 61, the nays are 39.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Kristi Noem, of South Dakota, to be Secretary of Homeland Security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from California.

NOMINATION OF KRISTI NOEM

MR. PADILLA. Mr. President, colleagues, I rise today to address the nomination of Governor Kristi Noem to serve as the next Secretary of Homeland Security.

I think we will all agree that there are very few jobs more important to the safety and security of American lives than that of Secretary of Homeland Security.

Created in 2002 in the wake of the terrorist attacks on 9/11, the DHS Secretary and the Offices and Agencies under its purview are responsible for some critical things, including our national security, working to protect us against terrorism. DHS implements our Nation's immigration policy. DHS directs disaster responses to States and Territories across the country. And, of course, they are responsible for cyber security and election security.

It is a role that I believe requires complete and total commitment to the safety of the American people above all else—above politics, above personal ambition, and above loyalty to one man or movement—because for whom-ever is Secretary, American lives are literally on the line.

Unfortunately, in the months and years prior to Governor Noem's nomination, and certainly over the course of her nomination process, it has become clear to me that she is not fit for the job. Time and again, she has demonstrated her loyalty lies more with President Trump than it does with the American people, and it is my belief that, when pressed, we cannot count on a potential Secretary Noem to make decisions that are in the best interest of the people and of the values that we hold as a nation over doing the President's bidding.

So, today, I want to take a few minutes to explain my thinking—both to the nominee and to the Nation—about why I believe she is unfit to lead a Department of this importance.

To begin with, leading DHS is so much more than about providing fodder for FOX News. In recent weeks, the people in my home State of California have seen just how vital this Department and its Agencies can be. As of today, multiple wildfires across Southern California have burnt over 55,000 acres. They have destroyed more than 16,000 structures, and they have taken the lives of at least 28 Californians.

Even as firefighters continue to fight massive blazes like the Palisades and the Eaton fires that have raged for weeks, red flag conditions persist, and new fires continue to ignite. Northwest of Los Angeles, for example, the Hughes fire grew to more than 10,000 acres in just 2 days.

But while the fight still rages on, we know that, in the months and years to come, Los Angeles will rebuild. But we are going to need the rest of the country to support Los Angeles in its recovery, just as Los Angeles has always been there for the rest of the country.

This is now Los Angeles's time of need, and we are going to need all of you. We are going to need Federal disaster aid, and it will require a non-partisan effort from FEMA.

Whether it is wildfires in Los Angeles; hurricanes in Florida, Louisiana, the Carolinas; or ice storms in Texas, Mother Nature does not distinguish between red States and blue States, and neither should our disaster response efforts. Yet, even as we speak, President Trump is floating reckless ideas like eliminating FEMA, suggesting that States take care of their own problems.

President Trump wants to impose conditions on aid to California while thousands of families have lost their homes and businesses. In a situation like this, when lives are on the line, we need a DHS Secretary who will do right for all Americans. We need a DHS Secretary who will speak truth to power. But based on her testimony before this

body, I don't believe Governor Noem is capable or willing to do that.

So, yes, Southern California has a long road back to rebuilding our communities, and, as I said, we are going to need all hands on deck, which brings me to my next point.

Immigrants in Los Angeles will, no doubt, be critical in the rebuilding of our communities. Over 40 percent of construction workers in California are immigrants. But more than that, our national economy relies on immigrants too.

Let me remind folks that during President Trump's first term, his administration—the Trump administration—designated workers in the healthcare, food and agriculture, education, public works, and other sectors as essential workers during the pandemic. And those sectors include millions of immigrants, both documented and undocumented. That is right, colleagues. Undocumented immigrants are and have been, for a long time, a critical part of our healthcare workforce, of our hospital industry, of our tourism sector, of our transportation systems. And they make up around 42 percent of our agricultural workforce. Think about that the next time you are in the produce section of your grocery store.

If tomorrow President Trump could snap his fingers and deport all undocumented immigrants from this country, as he has threatened to do, our annual GDP would drop by 6.8 percent.

So let's be clear. Do the math. Mass deportations would lead to mass inflation. Businesses would shutter. Crops would rot in the fields. Prices would rise for all Americans.

Even in the face of political headwinds, we need a DHS Secretary who will tell the truth—and not just to the President but to the American people—tell the truth about how the vast majority of undocumented immigrants are not violent criminals but they are critical to our economy.

Instead, during her confirmation hearing, Governor Noem repeatedly made false claims about undocumented immigrants. Under oath, she repeated lies that misrepresent noncitizens as security threats. She even denied the well-documented existence of family separations that occurred during the first Trump administration.

We can agree or disagree on policy, but don't lie about the facts. Because if a nominee can so easily lie about a verifiable fact just to curry favor with President Trump, how can we trust him or her to tell the truth to the American people during a crisis?

And between a potential Secretary Noem, a Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller, and the Border Czar Tom Homan all competing for President Trump's attention with hard-line immigration enforcements, the Department of Homeland Security will suffer.

Other Agencies and responsibilities within the Department will falter. Roles like critical investigations into

theft or into child exploitation would take a back seat to their political priorities, areas like cyber security and election security—agencies like CISA, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, which is a critical resource in an age of misinformation and disinformation and attacks on our elections. And I speak from experience. You may recall that I served as California Secretary of State, the chief elections officer for California, prior to me coming to the Senate.

But rather than rise to the occasion, to meet the real threats that we are confronting, Governor Noem has stated that she wants to downsize CISA and cut back on our election security efforts, and I don't take those threats lightly.

So from national security to immigration to disaster response to election security, we face serious challenges, colleagues. Not one of those challenges will be solved by prioritizing loyalty to one man over loyalty to our country and to our Constitution.

So given her clear, unwavering allegiance to one man over country, for her willingness to push falsehoods over facts, I will oppose her confirmation and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

TRIBUTE TO U.S. CAPITOL POLICE OFFICER MARK GAZELLE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I join my colleagues in celebrating the career of U.S. Capitol Police Officer Mark Gazelle, who is retiring in January after 34 years of service with the force.

Joining the U.S. Capitol Police in 1991, Officer Gazelle was first assigned to the Capitol Division, First Responders Specialty Unit, before he joined the Mountain Bike Unit. He joined the Senate Chamber Section in 1995 as a plainclothes officer, where he served the remainder of his career on the section. Officer Gazelle has taken command during multiple events as the

Senate floor officer and has been instrumental in training and mentoring newer officers and staff around the Chamber.

Officer Gazelle has served in the U.S. Capitol Police Ceremonial Unit, where he rose through the ranks to become the assistant commander of the unit. The Ceremonial Unit is activated in high-profile congressional events, to include Presidential inaugurations, Congressional Gold Medal ceremonies, statue dedications, and lying in state ceremonies.

Officer Gazelle showed an unwavering commitment to keeping others safe, and these Halls undoubtedly remained safer because of his service. Officer Gazelle represents everything that is great about our country, and we are all better off for his selfless sense of duty and his tireless commitment to our safety. I thank Officer Gazelle for his years of service, and I wish him all the best in his retirement.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:03 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 21. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion.

H.R. 375. An act to require the Secretary of the Interior to partner and collaborate with the Secretary of Agriculture and the State of Hawaii to address Rapid Ohia Death, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 21. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 375. An act to require the Secretary of the Interior to partner and collaborate with the Secretary of Agriculture and the State of Hawaii to address Rapid Ohia Death, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-151. A communication from the President of the United States officially notifying the Congress of the United States of the death of former President James Earl Carter, Jr., the thirty-ninth President of the United States; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-152. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Addition of American