

until 5 o'clock every single day that has been serving America for generations.

When we talk about eliminating funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, we talk about cuts that are going to imperil the survival of many public stations in rural and underserved areas, which often rely on the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for more than half of their budgets.

We should be finding ways to strengthen these stations, not eliminate the modest Federal support that keeps their doors open and their transmitters running. And I urge my colleagues to protect local public broadcasting, protect the signal that reaches the farmhouse, the mountain top, the Tribal land, the city block. Protect the station that covers your community when no one else does.

I thank each of you for your consideration on that issue.

#### NOMINATION OF WILLIAM BRIGGS

Mr. President, on a second subject, as ranking member of the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee, I rise today to oppose the nomination of William Briggs to be Deputy Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

On April 2, the committee reported out the Briggs nomination by a vote of 10 to 9—not one Democrat voted in support. So why, you are asking? Why? Well, because the Trump administration is causing chaos and cuts and confusion at SBA.

Its leadership has failed to be open and transparent with Congress about their activities, despite promises from Administrator Loeffler that she would be responsive to all members of the committee.

But because of this administration's utter contempt for accountability and their shameless lack of transparency, this SBA has failed to provide us with the information necessary to hold them accountable and ensure small businesses are being supported.

We still do not know if SBA has sufficient staff on hand to carry out its core programs, including disaster assistance and access to capital. But that hasn't stopped them from proposing to cut the Agency by 33 percent.

We still don't know what grants and contracts have been terminated because of President Trump's Executive order eliminating programs to promote diversity and equity and inclusion.

We still don't know the extent to which DOGE staffers gained access to confidential small business data at SBA. We still do not know which SBA regional and district offices will be relocated or remain open to serve small business owners, including our Springfield district office in Massachusetts.

And we still do not know the justification for eliminating congressionally authorized programs aimed at helping women and veterans and small businessowners.

The SBA and Administrator Loeffler have been unable to provide sufficient

answers to any of these questions or requests. And those questions are important because Congress must know whether our small businesses are getting the support they need and deserve. This is the only way to know whether the program is working before it is too late.

Unfortunately, I don't expect Mr. Briggs to stand up to this administration and put small businesses first. In written responses to committee Democrats, Mr. Briggs was very evasive. He consistently deferred to the classic Trump talking points: I am not an SBA employee. I will follow the law.

Well, we all know that this administration does anything but follow the law, so let us be clear: If Mr. Briggs is unwilling to be forthcoming with Democrats on the Small Business Committee during the confirmation hearing process, how can we bet that he will be unwilling to be transparent, and how can we not bet that he is going to become unwilling to stand up for small businesses once he has that job?

So as a result, I urge my colleagues to vote no on this nomination and to demand that the Trump administration provide Congress with the information we need to hold them accountable and ensure that they are serving our 34 million small business owners.

I can promise the American people that as the ranking member of the Small Business Committee and the members of the committee, we will stand—we will continue to stand and ask questions that are not being answered by this SBA.

Mr. President, with that, I urge a "no" vote on the nomination that is pending before this body.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote to advance the nomination of Mr. William Briggs to be the Deputy Administrator of the Small Business Administration. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote yes in support of his nomination.

As chair of the Small Business Committee, I have had the honor of getting to know Mr. Briggs and have seen firsthand what he is bringing to the table. He is sharp; he is steady; and he is the right person for the job.

Throughout the committee's rigorous nomination process, Mr. Briggs showed up prepared. He was respectful and ready to engage. The professionalism and seriousness with which he approached the committee made it clear that he would be ready to lead on day one.

In fact, Mr. Briggs is no stranger to the responsibilities of SBA leadership, having previously served as the Acting Administrator of the Office of Capital Access.

During his nomination hearing, he emphasized how his previous work rolling out the Paycheck Protection Program equipped him with practical knowledge and the necessary experience to effectively root out fraud and waste throughout the SBA.

As we continue to uncover and pursue fraud, it is critical that we have a Deputy Administrator who can identify and evade those pitfalls while simultaneously ensuring the Agency's day-to-day operations are running smoothly.

Mr. Briggs has also committed to working hand in hand with SBA's field offices to ensure that small businesses from any community, instead of just certain demographics, can access the support that they deserve.

This position isn't just professional for Mr. Briggs, but it is also personal. As a former entrepreneur who ran two small businesses, he knows what it is like to balance the books, tackle red-tape, and manage employees.

He also understands the pressures and uncertainty that so many small business owners face every single day. The one-two punch of his government experience and private sector entrepreneurship makes Mr. Briggs the perfect candidate to help Administrator Loeffler make the SBA more accountable, more efficient, more transparent, and more focused on its core mission, which is helping America's job creators succeed.

Let's give Main Street America someone who will fight with them and for them.

Again, I urge all of my colleagues to support Mr. Briggs' nomination for Deputy Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

I yield the floor.

#### VOTE ON KUPOR NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JUSTICE). Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Kupor nomination?

Ms. ERNST. 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) would have voted "yea", the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "yea".

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 379 Ex.]

#### YEAS—49

Banks	Cassidy	Curtis
Barrasso	Collins	Daines
Blackburn	Cornyn	Ernst
Boozman	Cotton	Fischer
Britt	Cramer	Grassley
Budd	Crapo	Hagerty
Capito	Cruz	Hawley

Hoeven	McConnell	Scott (FL)
Husted	McCormick	Scott (SC)
Hyde-Smith	Moody	Sheehy
Johnson	Moran	Sullivan
Justice	Moreno	Thune
Kennedy	Mullin	Tuberville
Lankford	Ricketts	Wicker
Lee	Risch	Young
Lummis	Rounds	
Marshall	Schmitt	

## NAYS—46

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

## NOT VOTING—5

Blumenthal	Murphy	Tillis
Graham	Paul	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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.

## VOTE ON BRIGGS NOMINATION

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

Mrs. MURRAY. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 380 Ex.]

## YEAS—49

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

Sheehy	Thune	Wicker
Sullivan	Tuberville	Young

## NAYS—45

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

## NOT VOTING—6

Blumenthal	Hawley	Scott (SC)
Graham	Murphy	Tillis

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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 actions.

The Senator from Alaska.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

## MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session and 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.

## CIVIC EDUCATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, non-partisan civic education and civic participation are critical for our constitutional and representative form of government.

Increasingly, however, civic knowledge is on the decline.

A recent survey by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce found that 70 percent fail a basic civic literacy test.

Another survey found that nearly 17 percent of Americans could not name any branch of government.

This should be concerning for all of us.

I would like to commend efforts in my home State of Iowa to promote civic education and participation in our colleges and universities. These include Cyclone Civics at Iowa State University, Hawk the Vote at the University of Iowa, and the Center for Civic Education at the University of Northern Iowa.

These programs are crucial in ensuring that the next generation of leaders understands our constitutional system of government and are ready to lead our Republic forward.

## GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, as ranking member of the Environment

and Public Works Committee, I wish to correct the record on one small piece of the big, terrible bill that the Senate barely passed last week and which the President signed into law on July 4. There are many things to say about that legislation, and I will continue to daylight concerning provisions buried in it over the coming weeks.

But today, I want to focus on section 60002 of the so-called "One Big Beautiful Bill Act," which repealed and rescinded all unobligated funds from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. There has been some spin put on this section, including in court filings. And so I aim to fix some misconceptions, with the help of the Congressional Budget Office and the relevant Republican House subcommittee chair.

I have spoken a lot about the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund over the past several months, on the floor and in the Judiciary and Environment and Public Works Committees. Most of the time, I have focused on the many red flags raised by outrageous behavior of top DOJ and EPA officials in their attempts to claw back nearly \$20 billion in grant funds that were awarded in April 2024 and fully dispersed into private bank accounts by August. After terrorizing grantees with false allegations of fraud and trying to open bogus criminal cases that went nowhere, EPA froze and then announced the termination of these fully obligated and dispersed grants. The grantees, rightfully, sued EPA for these arbitrary and capricious actions. The dispute is being actively litigated in the D.C. circuit.

The Justice Department continues its mischief. On July 3, 2025, DOJ ran to the court with news of the repeal and rescission of unobligated funds from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, claiming that this was Congress rescinding a full \$17 billion, including all of what EPA claimed to terminate on March 11, 2025. That simply is not so. The DOJ reads too much into the repeal of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund language. Two pieces of evidence support my contention here.

First, when this provision came up through the Environment and Public Works Committee, it was "scored" by the Congressional Budget Office. That means the Congressional Budget Office provided an estimate of the funds saved by rescinding unobligated funds. The CBO score for rescinding all unobligated funds from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, as provided to us by the majority on June 24, 2025, was \$19 million. That is 19 with an m, not a b. CBO confirmed, further, that the repeal of the program language did not create any additional savings. The repeal and rescission together only saved the \$19 million EPA had remaining to oversee the program. All of the grant funding was out the door, in private bank accounts, and in some cases, tied up in firm legal commitments with third parties. At no point in our discussions with the majority, directly or in our several conversations with the Parliamentarian, was this score disputed.