

project, and activity level; (2) public law making such funds available; and (3) period of availability: Provided further, That such reports shall be transmitted to the Committees monthly thereafter, on the fifteenth of each such month, during the period of availability of the relevant funds.

(b) The term "reporting period" as used in this section means the month that precedes the date on which the department or agency transmits the report to the Committees.

This Act may be cited as the "Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2026".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

WAIVING QUORUM CALLS

Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum calls with respect to the Bluestone, Szabo, Lohmeier, and Topping nominations; further, that if any of the nominations are confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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 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. 259, Zachary M. Bluestone, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri.

John Thune, Lindsey Graham, Katie Boyd Britt, Eric Schmitt, Tommy Tuberville, Marsha Blackburn, Mike Crapo, John Barrasso, Rick Scott of Florida, Chuck Grassley, Cindy Hyde-Smith, John Cornyn, Kevin Cramer, Ron Johnson, Ashley B. Moody, Mike Lee, Josh Hawley.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the mandatory quorum call under rule XXII has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Zachary M. Bluestone, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

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 Kentucky (Mr. McCONNELL), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 49, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 429 Leg.]

YEAS—49

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

NAYS—47

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

NOT VOTING—4

McConnell	Paul
Mullin	Tuberville

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 49, the nays are 47, and the motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Zachary M. Bluestone, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

OREGON

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to highlight a true example of what we at home call the Oregon Way. At a recent open-to-all townhall meeting—I have held more than 1,100 of them—and this one was in Union County, and I was pleased to run into my friend Tim Cook. He is the president of Clackamas Community College, over 250 miles away on the other side of our State from my hometown in Portland.

I was glad to see him, and still my curiosity got the better of me. I had to ask why he was so far from home. Here is Tim's story.

He has been in the process of running to every one of Oregon's 17 community colleges to raise awareness for community college students about how challenging it is for them to meet the basic needs that they have to address as students.

Tim kicked off his "Running for Oregon Community College Students" campaign at Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario on the Idaho border. He plans to run 32 miles each day to reach each community college in our State.

He is on track to complete this 1,500 mile—let me repeat that—1,500 mile journey by August 11.

Tim told me he was inspired by so many students that have shared their stories with him about the hardships—particularly the financial hardships—they have endured while attending school.

That includes William Morehead, a Portland Community College student who said he has had virtually no family support, and he had no help as a young adult yearning for an education.

So there he was with zero support, and William decided he could make a better life for himself through training and education. He signed up for welding classes and attended regularly. He did that while living in his car.

Despite these roadblocks, he persevered and graduated with an associate's degree in welding and had a 3.9 GPA. He was nominated to serve as the student commencement speaker at graduation.

Now William is learning AI ethics, and he said recently:

In welding you use metal and fire, and in computing you do the same thing but in a digital realm. I want to apply this degree to evaluating Artificial Intelligence systems that interface with the public and make sure it does it in a way that's beneficial and not harmful.

The story I tell about William isn't unique. Many young, promising Americans are not living up to their best potential and not for a lack of trying, but there has really been a lack of support.

When adults lecture young people to "pull yourself up by your bootstraps," they often miss the point that some students were never even provided with the boots. They didn't have the boots to yank themselves up.

Getting any degree is expensive enough, but it is even further out of reach for so many young people when you factor in everything a student needs to succeed beyond tuition—things like transportation, housing, food, books, access to technology, and an array of other necessities.

Many talented and promising students can't fulfill their potential and suffer in a system that lacks the potential to see that and see it and get them the opportunity for them to get ahead.

And now, with deep cuts to programs like SNAP and Medicaid under the Republicans' disastrous recent budget bill, coupled with high housing costs and rising prices from the Trump tariffs, the safety nets for students who fly solo are being slashed.

Donald Trump and DOGE are even trying to take a sledgehammer to funding for key programs like JobCorps, which help young people get the resources they need to secure a degree and a good-paying job.

So President Tim Cook is running not for office, but he is running for his students. He is pounding the pavement in the summer heat to highlight that when students' basic needs are met, they can focus on their education and create a brighter future for themselves, their families, and their communities.

That is why I am here on the floor today. I want to be part of sending Tim a powerful message that Congress agrees with him and must not leave students behind. The world's next Einstein—and I say this to all my colleagues—may be in your town, scraping together a way to earn an education and make a positive impact on the community and the world.

Let's help light the beacon of opportunity for those students. For America to be great, we have got to make sure that everybody in our country gets a fair shot. So I will close by saying I am gratified by the passion and insight that Tim Cook and other Oregonians are bringing to this cause.

They understand the importance of investing in our kids because that draws a map to a brighter future for all of us. It may not be possible for everybody to run 32 miles a day for nearly 2 months, but as Senators, we can certainly make a difference.

This country needs more common-sense policies that put students first and prepare us all for a brighter tomorrow. That is what Tim Cook is bringing us.

Mr. President, I urge all of my colleagues to support these educators and others for helping students.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

CRIME VICTIMS FUND STABILIZATION ACT OF 2025

Mr. OSSOFF. Mr. President, I want to urge my colleagues—and I know there is this temptation of the upcoming summer break, and folks want to get home to their families, but we have the opportunity and the obligation right now to pass this legislation for the Crime Victims Fund. Are we really going to miss this opportunity and this obligation when, in my State, a quarter of the victims of domestic violence were turned away from services last year?

These are the organizations—the child advocacy centers, the domestic violence agencies, the rape crisis centers—that respond to the needs of the most vulnerable, neglected, and abused people in our States.

We just spent last week defunding Big Bird. We spent an entire week defunding public television and public radio. And you mean to tell me that before we leave for the recess, we can't fund child advocacy centers, domestic violence agencies, and rape crisis centers? It is unacceptable. This has bipartisan support, and we should pass this legislation right now.

Here is what one organization in Georgia said if we fail to pass this bill. They said:

Our organization would have to lay off approximately 50% of essential staff. We would

not be able to support or meet the critical needs of victims in the community. The lack of support and services over time will negatively impact the community with an increase in crime and victimization.

Mr. President, another organization in Georgia said:

Without our centers, states will see an increase in domestic injuries, child abuse, sexual assault, and even death in many cases.

Child abuse. Sexual assault. Death.

In the State of Georgia, where hundreds of foster children have been trafficked by sexual predators, these are the organizations that support them and women facing domestic violence.

This is a bipartisan bill led by Senators DURBIN and MURKOWSKI. It should have bipartisan support on the Senate floor right now. We should pass it before we leave for the summer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

MAIDEN SPEECH

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. President, I rise today to deliver my maiden speech. This is a proud and personal moment for me to represent my home State of Michigan as a junior Senator, alongside GARY PETERS, and to follow in the footsteps of legendary Senators like Debbie Stabenow and Carl Levin.

This maiden speech has been a long-standing tradition in the Senate. Every junior Member gets to deliver in their freshman year their vision for their States and what they plan to do in their time in office.

Thank you to my colleagues from both sides of the aisle who have joined me and to my great staff and my interns, even my niece who came in. If you remember nothing else, I want you to remember two things: First, nothing is more important to me than the State of Michigan. I am a third generation Michigander. For me, Michigan is where it all started. Everything I have done in my life, everywhere I have gone, everything I have done, everyone I have met, it all started in Michigan.

It is where I learned the values that still shape me today: community, putting your head down and working hard, taking care of your neighbors when they are in need.

Nothing matters more than my home State, so this speech is my love letter to the State of Michigan. To stand here and represent the State that I love on the floor of the U.S. Senate is the greatest privilege of my life.

Second, my goal for my time in office is to address what I believe to be the existential threat of our time to my State and to all Americans: the threat of a shrinking middle class.

Now, I am a national security person by training. I am what is called a 9/11 baby. I happened to be in New York City on my second day of graduate school when 9/11 happened.

I was recruited into the CIA right out of grad school, and I served three tours in Iraq, alongside our military, before serving at the Pentagon.

I served proudly under Presidents both Democrat and Republican. I have

come face-to-face with some of the greatest threats facing our country, but I believe, in my bones, that the single greatest threat today to our national security is not coming from abroad but coming from the very real threats that come from that shrinking middle class.

So my goal as a Senator is to deliver for Michigan's middle class, to expand it, to secure it. That mission is personal. Michigan is where my family achieved that very American dream. My great-grandfather, at 13 years old, came through Ellis Island not speaking English. He ended up starting a meat company, moved to Michigan, and built an iconic hot dog that Michiganders have enjoyed for 60 years.

Michigan has been the place where hard work means something. It was where the middle class was literally invented, it was where you could work at an auto plant and afford the car that you were building. That was a revolutionary idea at the time; it shouldn't be revolutionary now.

So as a U.S. Senator, my highest priority is to help make Michigan a place where that American dream is achievable again. Today, too many Michiganders are falling out of that middle class; too many families can't get in at all. I lived on my family farm in Holly, MI. Growing up, I was surrounded by families whose path to the middle class ran through Michigan's factories, our farms, our small businesses.

We are people who build things and grow things; people proud of their role in manufacturing America's future, our cars, our tanks, our food; people who, like my great-grandfather, were prepared to work hard for success and often achieved it.

But over the years, I have watched younger generations of those same families live a very different story. Parents can't provide for their kids what was provided to them. That fishing cabin up north that dad had, the son can't have. A trip to Disneyland, can't do it.

Across Michigan, there are so many families who feel like hard work doesn't seem to be enough anymore. No matter what your political views are, it is just a fact that the middle class has shrunk over the last 40 years. And I have seen firsthand what happens next.

When people feel like they can't get ahead, when they can't provide for their kids what was provided for them, they feel anger, they feel shame. They lose their dignity, and they look for something or someone to blame.

In a multiracial, multi-ethnic experiment in democracy, people end up blaming people who don't look like them or speak like them or pray like them. I have seen this up close and personal how that kind of anger and suspicion can tear communities apart.

If you want to understand how we got to this moment in our politics—this angry, vitriolic, polarized moment in