

catastrophic situation was contained in a matter of minutes, and countless innocent lives were spared.

Today, we honor the memories of Detective Gibson and Officer Chestnut, and we thank all of our Capitol Police for doing the work they do day in and day out to keep the Capitol Complex safe and secure.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the appropriations process is well underway here in the Senate. The Senate Appropriations Committee, under Chair COLLINS, released four bipartisan appropriations bills.

This week, we are doing something a bit unusual. We are bringing appropriations legislation to the floor. Why do I say that is unusual? Because last year, despite the fact that the Senate Appropriations Committee approved 11 out of the 12 yearly appropriations bills with bipartisan support, the Democratic leader never brought a single one of those bills to the floor—not one.

One of the things that I have been determined to do as leader is to restore us as much as possible to a regular-order appropriations process, to have bills move through the committees and then come to the Senate floor for debate and amendment.

That is what we are doing this week with consideration of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations bill for fiscal year 2026. This legislation was approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee in a robustly bipartisan vote of 26 to 3. I hope it will receive equally robust bipartisan support on the Senate floor.

The MILCON-VA appropriations bill provides critical funding for veterans' healthcare, veterans' benefits, and construction projects at military bases and installations around the globe.

As a resident of a rural State, I am particularly pleased by the bill's funding for telehealth services as well as for the Office of Rural Health at the Department of Veterans Affairs. This funding will help reduce barriers to care for rural veterans, as will the bill's provision preventing the VA from closing hospitals—something I worked to include.

I am also pleased to see that the bill continues to fund modernization of veterans' healthcare records by providing funding to triple the number of VA sites that use electronic health records.

On the military construction front, I am happy to announce that the bill

contains funding for a number of key facilities for the new B-21 bomber—the future of our long-range bomber fleet—which will have its first home at Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota. National Guard facilities in South Dakota, like National Guard facilities around the country, will also see funding for essential construction projects thanks to this legislation.

Mr. President, considering the Military Construction-VA bill on the floor is a big step in the right direction appropriations-wise. And our work this week doesn't have to end there. As I said, the Appropriations Committee has reported a total of four appropriations bills so far. All of them have been bipartisan.

I know that the fiscal year 2026 Agriculture appropriations bill is a major priority for all of us—Democrat or Republican—who live in States that depend on agriculture. Whether it is funding for agricultural research programs, resources for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, assistance to ranchers to comply with animal disease traceability requirements, the \$223 million for the Agricultural Marketing Service to expand markets for American agriculture products, or resources for the Farm Service Agency to ensure that farmers have access to necessary capital, this year's Agriculture appropriations bill will be a key resource for farmers and ranchers.

Then there is the Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill, which, among other things, provides essential funding for Federal law enforcement officers as well as support for State and local law enforcement.

There is the fiscal year 2026 Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, which funds the work we do here in Washington for our constituents and, this year, also adds additional funding to confront growing threats to Member security.

Mr. President, I am very grateful to Chair COLLINS, Vice Chair MURRAY, and all the members of the Senate Appropriations Committee for all their work on these bills. I hope we will be able to consider some of these alongside the MILCON-VA appropriations bill this week and next.

Democrats have indicated they want a bipartisan appropriations process, and we are giving it to them. I hope we will see bipartisan passage of appropriations bills on the Senate floor.

It was disturbing to see the Democratic leader implicitly threatening to shut down the government in his July "Dear Colleague" letter, but I am hopeful he does not represent the views of Senate Democrats as a whole. Members of both parties should have a strong interest in a regular-order, bipartisan appropriations process, and I am pleased that we managed to begin on a bipartisan basis this week. I hope the process will continue in a bipartisan way as we move toward September's deadline.

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

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

NOMINATIONS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to mark an important milestone in this new administration. Senate Republicans have now confirmed more than 100 nominees in President Trump's second term.

This is significant progress in filling critical government positions. It took relentless procedural battles to accomplish this. It included full days and long nights. Why? Because Democrats are waging a coordinated campaign of obstruction.

Under the Constitution, the Senate is meant to provide advice and consent. We do it on Presidential nominations. We do it on a number of things. Specifically, with regard to nominations, this means an honest evaluation of qualifications, and it means a vote in the U.S. Senate. Now, for more than 6 months, Senate Democrats have turned advice and consent into automatic opposition. It doesn't just delay President Trump; it damages the country.

Democrats have filibustered all but one of President Trump's nominees, and he was the very first nominee, Marco Rubio to be Secretary of State. He was confirmed on day one of the administration. Since then, it has been a wall of obstruction. Democrats have filibustered positions requiring confirmation that have never before even had a rollcall vote in the U.S. Senate; they have gone by unanimous consent. Democrats filibustered the Chief of Protocol for the State Department—the Chief of Protocol. Democrats filibustered the Under Secretary of Commerce for Industry and Security. They filibustered the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering. Today, 138 nominees who have already been approved by a full vote in the Senate committees are caught here—in Senate floor purgatory.

Democrats in the Senate seem to have a new litmus test: If President Trump nominates you, Democrats are against you—period, end of story. Yesterday, the Senate confirmed four nominees: the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information, the Under Secretary of Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Crimes, a district judge for the Eastern District of Missouri, and the Assistant Administrator at the Environmental Protection Agency—all qualified, all vetted, all experienced. Each and every one was filibustered. The Democrats forced the Senate to burn every minute of available time before the Senate was permitted to vote.

When Democrats delay nominations and nominees—people specifically

charged to fight drug trafficking, to protect the environment, to track terrorists—it delays justice, and it makes our Nation weaker and less safe. It tells Americans that Democrats care more about politics than they do about problem-solving.

Now Democrats are targeting President Trump's nominee to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. We just heard the Senate minority leader talk about that nominee. By any objective measure, Mr. Bove is qualified—Georgetown law, in the top 5 percent of his class, a decorated former prosecutor, someone who took on and took down violent criminals, drug traffickers, and terrorists—but because he worked for President Trump, he is now a target—a target of a politically motivated hit job.

During his confirmation, he said this under oath:

I have never advised a Department of Justice attorney to violate a court order.

The facts support his testimony.

So, today, Senator SCHUMER came to the floor and said of Mr. Bove that he was “as extreme as anyone we have considered in this Chamber.” Let me recall for the body some of the people who were nominated under the Biden administration and were supported by CHUCK SCHUMER when he makes an attack on such a qualified nominee as we are debating and discussing and voting on today.

The Democrats confirmed as U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts someone who released a list of charges that she would refuse to prosecute if she were confirmed. She said: I refuse to prosecute shoplifting and drug possession with an intent to distribute—which was OK under the Democrats. They wanted her confirmed as a U.S. attorney, and they did that for Massachusetts.

They also confirmed in 2021, under Joe Biden, an Assistant Attorney General who supported efforts to “defund the police”—an Attorney General wanting to defund the police.

Then they supported and nominated and confirmed a judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, a judge who worked for a leftwing organization who—listen to this, Democrats—repeatedly called for a complete reimagining of policing in this country.

That is what they are for. That is who they are. That is the Democrats today.

The kicker of all of this is that the Democrats' radical nominee for the Third Circuit in 2024—this same position opposed by more than 20 police groups—20 police groups—served on the board of advisers of a group that called cop killers freedom fighters. The Democrats came to support a nominee by then-President Joe Biden who was a member of a board of advisers for a group that called cop killers freedom fighters and advocated for their release. Nevertheless, Democrats strongly supported the confirmation. They

relented only after President Trump won the election.

Republicans are working hard to get America back on track.

NATIONAL DAY OF THE COWBOY

On another matter, Mr. President, this Saturday marks the day of the American cowboy.

This national celebration began 20 years ago. It started by my predecessor, Senator Craig Thomas, and I am proud to continue it with Senator CYNTHIA LUMMIS today. By celebrating the American cowboy, we celebrate the men and women who transformed a vast frontier into vibrant communities. The people who paved the way for the American dream from the saddle of a horse made America great. The people who continue to believe that freedom is a gift—a gift from God, not from the government—is who cowboys are. The American cowboy represents the grit and the values that America is built on.

Now, I am from Wyoming, and in Wyoming, we believe in the cowboy code, and we live it each and every day. It says: Live each day with courage. Take pride in your work. Do what needs to be done.

That is what we do in the West. We need these values more than ever in America and especially in Washington, DC, because cowboys will tell you: It is not about the boots on your feet. It is not about the hat on your head. It is about the values you embrace, the values that cowboys truly represent, which is that character matters more than the credentials; that actions speak louder than words; that the best government is the government that trusts the people to govern themselves.

The American frontier spirit is alive and well today. President Ronald Reagan said of the American West when he was in Cheyenne, WY, that the thing he loved about Wyoming and the West was that people here still believed the future was ours to shape. The people in the West continue to create and shape that future each and every day.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

MAIDEN SPEECH

Mr. MCCORMICK. Mr. President, I am honored to be here on the Senate floor for the first time. Each time I enter the Senate Chamber, I am humbled to walk in the footsteps of the Pennsylvanians who came before me, from founding father Robert Morris to Simon Cameron, from Joseph Clark to John Heinz.

It was the namesake of the Commonwealth, William Penn, who said:

Patience and diligence, like faith, remove mountains.

In my short time here in the Senate, I have found these words to be of comfort. At this moment, our circumstances and fellow countrymen require us to remove mountains and to do so with great haste.

I would also not be here today without the patience, love, and example of my parents Jim and Maryan. I am also so grateful for the love and encouragement and belief in me by my incredible wife Dina, who is in the Gallery today. She believed in me when few others did. Finally, Dina and I are both so grateful for the love and support of our amazing six daughters through two hard-fought campaigns.

I chose to rise today for the first time because something miraculous happened last week in Pittsburgh, the city that Dina and I are proud to call our home. In the middle of the so-called rust belt, President Trump, members of the Cabinet, the CEOs of the world's leading energy, technology, and investment companies, labor leaders, and political leaders from both parties came together at Carnegie Mellon University to commit over \$90 billion in new investments—investments that affirm Pennsylvania's central role at the crossroads of America's energy and AI revolutions.

These projects announced at the inaugural Pennsylvania Energy and Innovation Summit will bring enormous benefits to communities across our great Commonwealth: new data centers and powerplants in Northeastern Pennsylvania, data centers and hydroelectric power in York and Lancaster Counties, new natural gas power capacity and production in Western Pennsylvania, and plans by Pittsburgh's iconic Westinghouse to begin constructing 10 large nuclear reactors by 2030.

For Pennsylvania workers, this will result in tens of thousands of jobs for skilled labor, including electricians and welders, steamfitters, machinists, and countless other trades, and many, many more indirect jobs supporting these projects will come to Pennsylvania's communities.

Perhaps most important, the significant media focus on the summit allowed Pennsylvania to tell its unique and compelling story to the world.

Last year, President Trump and I promised to make America energy dominant and to secure our Nation's AI leadership and to create jobs and opportunity for working families in Pennsylvania and across America during our campaigns. Last Tuesday, it was clear to all that we were delivering on all those promises.

These investments come at a defining moment not only for Pennsylvania but also for the future of our great Nation. Embracing the AI revolution and achieving energy dominance will require us to do something very special: once again build in the United States. In this process, we can revitalize the American dream for all Pennsylvanians and for all Americans by training and deploying workers across our economy, from the trades, to engineers, to our very finest scientists.

The stakes could not be higher. If the United States does not rise to this challenge, we risk putting our future in the hands of the Chinese Communist