

Kim	Padilla	Slotkin
King	Peters	Smith
Klobuchar	Reed	Van Hollen
Luján	Rosen	Warner
Markey	Sanders	Warnock
Merkley	Schatz	Warren
Murphy	Schiff	Welch
Murray	Schumer	Whitehouse
Ossoff	Shaheen	Wyden

NOT VOTING—3

Crapo	Gallego	Kelly
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). 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.

The Senator from Iowa.

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, my remarks were written 3 days ago, and the purpose of writing those remarks 3 days ago was to come to the floor and tell you about a person that I think should not be working for the Federal Government. Then the next day, I found out somebody in government was smart enough to see that this guy was fired. But I would like to now tell the Senate why I think people like this shouldn't be working for the Federal Government and why I obviously thought he should be fired.

This refers to Dr. Vinay Prasad. Recently, the Wall Street Journal published an article on this person.

Until Tuesday, Dr. Prasad served as the Food and Drug Administration's—FDA—Chief Medical and Scientific Officer and as the Director of the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research.

I wonder how he got the job in the first place, and you will understand through my remarks why I wonder how he got that job.

He was appointed by the FDA Commissioner to this position.

According to media reports, Dr. Prasad left the Agency. The Wall Street Journal said the position he held at FDA was "one of the most powerful officials in the federal government," and gets to determine "whether patients get access to many life-saving medicines. Or not."

Sadly, Dr. Prasad believes the Federal Government should restrict access to new treatments that could extend your life.

Dr. Prasad wrote a 2016 article entitled "The case for rationing: Why we should limit public spending on cancer drugs." Dr. Prasad says that "among 71 new drugs approved for solid tumors between 2002 and 2014, the median improvement in survival is just 2.1 months." He believes that when costs are large and the benefits are small, the government should restrict access. He thinks patients don't have the right to extend their lives.

Dr. Prasad is a proponent of what we call government rationing of care that we see in socialized healthcare systems such as the United Kingdom and Canada.

Dr. Prasad sounds like another physician, Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel, who at one

time wielded a lot of power in the Federal Government. Dr. Emanuel is considered the "architect" of Obamacare and served as Special Advisor for Health Policy to President Obama. In 2014, this architect of Obamacare wrote in *The Atlantic*: "Why I Hope to Die At 75." He argues that people should just check out once they reach 75 years.

Dr. Emanuel has long argued for rationing healthcare and treating the elderly differently because they "already had more life-years." You can even take an online course titled "Rationing Care" at the University of Pennsylvania, taught by Dr. Emanuel.

The government rationing care goes by another name that we throw around, but I have talked about examples of it so you know that it is real, called socialized medicine. Socialized medicine results in longer wait times and delayed care.

Here are some recent examples of outcomes of socialized medicine:

In January, hundreds of Canadian residents in Walkerton, Ontario, began forming a line at 2 a.m. in the dead of winter just to be put on a waiting list to see the town's new family doctor. Some residents have waited more than a decade to have a doctor in that town.

In 2023, 7.1 million people in England were stuck on a waiting list for non-emergency hospital treatment like hip replacements. Today, that waiting list is 200,000 more at 7.3 million people.

Now, you wonder why people come to the United States for medical care, from other countries. That is one of the reasons why.

Of all new medicines launched between 2012 and 2021, 85 percent were available in the United States compared to less than 40 percent in Europe.

We are also No. 1 in medical advances and discoveries. For all these reasons and even more, I don't understand why Dr. Prasad and Dr. Emmanuel believe in government health rationing healthcare.

In 2023, I joined with my Republican colleagues expressing serious concern about the Biden administration's potential use of what is called quality-adjusted life years and other discriminatory metrics when it came to prescription drug programs.

Places like the United Kingdom use quality-adjusted life years to determine drug coverage. If the government decides a drug won't extend a person's life long enough, it will restrict access. Dr. Prasad has applauded the United Kingdom for restricting access to new treatment and said that quality-adjusted life years is "a good way to judge drugs."

The National Council on Disability disagrees with Dr. Prasad, stating that "quality-adjusted life years place a lower value on treatments which extend the lives of people with chronic illnesses and disabilities."

When the government gets to dictate which treatments patients can and cannot access, we devalue people living with rare diseases, we devalue older

Americans, and we devalue individuals with disabilities.

The government should use every opportunity to promote a potential miracle cure or breakthrough treatment. The Food and Drug Administration should determine if a drug is safe and effective. However, it shouldn't limit access because a government bureaucrat believes the costs outweigh the benefits.

The United States is a world leader in innovation and care. Why should the government shy away from testing limits of new treatments and miracle cures? The answer is, we should not.

We wouldn't see headlines like these if we had a different approach. *Time Magazine* says: "A Baby Receives the First Customized CRISPR Treatment."

The *New York Times* says: "From No Hope to a Potential Cure for a Deadly Blood Cancer."

In recent years, I have had constituents sit in my office pleading for the government to remove redtape so that they can access potentially life-changing, life-extending treatments for Alzheimer's, Lou Gehrig's disease, cancer, and other diseases.

I was proud to be a cosponsor in 2018 of the 2018 Right to Try law that President Trump advocated for and eventually signed. That law lets people with life-threatening conditions access unapproved treatments after they have tried all treatment options and are not eligible for clinical trials.

Dr. Prasad has said he is not in favor of the 2018 Right to Try law and that he "favor[s] a strong regulatory state." He has long criticized the FDA for approving too many treatments that, in his view, provide only marginal benefits.

After he took the job at FDA, Dr. Prasad said:

We will take action at the first sign of promise for rare diseases. We're not going to wait.

Given Dr. Prasad has left the FDA, we don't know if this was an empty promise. I hope that whoever takes on the role of FDA's Chief Medical and Scientific Officer and Director of the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research will support patients who face life-threatening illnesses, instead of using his or her power to restrict access to care, which, I think, is fairly certain we would presume that Dr. Prasad would do just the opposite.

The government shouldn't get to decide when its citizens are required to give up on their own life. This is true when a person turns 75 years old or when rare disease treatments may only extend a person's life by just a short period of time. If there is a cure or a treatment, you should be able to access it, regardless of what bureaucrats think.

Dr. Prasad is gone. It is good he is no longer on the government payroll. I don't know who decided to get rid of this person that shouldn't have been hired in the first place, but I want to thank them for doing that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I know all of my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats alike, are anxious to be able to go back home and talk to their constituents, perhaps have a long-delayed medical procedure or doctor visit, or simply take a family vacation during the traditional August recess.

My Republican colleagues and I are, likewise, eager to go back home and talk about the benefits of the One Big Beautiful Bill. I was in Amarillo, TX, in the Texas panhandle on Friday, and just in having a back-and-forth Q&A with the folks who were there, it is evident to me that there is so much in the bill that it takes a while to really explain the benefits.

We know we avoided a tax increase that would have totaled trillions of dollars, roughly benefiting \$3,000 per Texas family.

But there were other benefits that helped our agriculture community, things that, ordinarily, we would have put in a farm bill but made sure we strengthened the safety net for the folks who produce our food and fiber. And then there are other provisions, like the no tax on tips, no tax on Social Security, or overtime.

So there is so much in the bill that is hard to communicate, which means we need to get back home and talk about that and why it is a grand slam home run for our constituents.

But having said that, I don't believe that the Senate should leave town without ensuring that President Trump has his nominees and his team in place. We still have somewhere on the order of 140 backlogged nominees by this President that have been obstructed by the Democrats. We find ourselves really in an unprecedented situation where Democrats, rather than picking and choosing the nominees they choose to object to, have simply chosen to object to all of them, forcing us to burn a lot of valuable floor time that we could be using for other more constructive purposes and delaying President Trump who, after all, won the election last November, the team that he is entitled to help him govern and carry out his policies.

It is absolutely unprecedented, the sort of stonewalling that we are up against. Our Democratic colleagues, after all, are the ones who are holding up this process. I know some people listening may say: Well, isn't this sort of partisan grid lock normal?

The answer is no. We certainly have our fights here and that is OK, that is all well and good. But the reason why Republicans are complaining and the President is complaining about Democratic obstruction is that there is no precedent for objecting to nominees by a President by allowing either a voice vote, which is a nonrollcall vote, or unanimous consent when they are noncontroversial nominees.

This chart to my left indicates that civilian nominees, as opposed to military nominations—which the Senate also confirms—but nonmilitary nominees confirmed by voice vote or on an expedited basis or unanimous consent during a first term.

You see George Herbert Walker Bush. So 98 percent of his nominees to Senate-confirmed positions were confirmed by voice vote or unanimous consent. Again, Clinton, similar numbers, 98 percent. Then you get to George W. Bush and Barack Obama. That number dropped from 98 percent to 90 percent. That is still a pretty good record of expediting these nominees, making sure that the President, whether that President be a Democrat or Republican, have their team on board, which is what the American people voted for when they were elected. Then you see when President Trump came along, the rules of the road were changed where only 65 percent of his first-term nominees were confirmed by voice vote or unanimous consent on an expedited basis. It literally took years for President Trump to get all his nominees on board because of the foot-dragging by our Democratic colleagues back in his first term. Then you see what goes around comes around. Biden's nominees, roughly 57 percent of them, handled on an expedited basis. But what we have seen this term, after this most recent election, is without any precedent, as you can see here.

Basically, what our Democratic colleagues are saying is we will agree to no confirmation votes on Trump nominees during his second term. This is part of what, I guess, you would call the resistance and the polarization of our politics and the fact that our Democrats are not the Democrats of old. These are radicalized people who cannot agree to anything, even when it really is not something that is controversial.

Again, it is fine to disagree about things that we do disagree on. We see the world in a different way or we think we have different and better ideas about what would serve the interest of the American people. But to mindlessly object to President Trump's nominees and deny the American people the benefit of their vote in the last election is simply unfair. It is unfair to the American people whose interests are being harmed by denying these people from being in place and doing their job. It is unfair to President Trump, who is being denied the team that he is entitled to help him carry out his policies. And, finally, it is unfair to the nominees themselves, many of whom have quit their jobs, sold their business, and are simply waiting month after month after month to be able to be confirmed. These are people who are, by and large, not political partisans. They are people who are interested in serving their country in some capacity or another.

Many of these nominees—I think, roughly, 30 of them—are Senate-con-

firmed nominees to serve as an ambassador in our embassies around the world.

I don't have to remind all of us that the world has become a much more dangerous place, and the idea that the United States would not have Senate-confirmed Ambassadors in these Embassies around the world is simply shooting ourselves in the foot. China and Russia and our other adversaries certainly have their Ambassadors working in each of those countries to further their interests, but the idea that the United States would be absent because Senate Democrats simply refuse to confirm these Ambassadors is really beyond the pale. It hurts not only the United States and our foreign policy and our diplomatic efforts, but it also, again, causes harm to the individuals who volunteered to give up their lives and their livelihoods to serve our country, just to be left hanging without any real hope of getting confirmed on a timely basis.

We are not talking about lifetime-tenured judges. Those, obviously, are sort of a different category. We aren't even talking about the President's Cabinet, which is a handful of his most key and most important advisers. What we are talking about, really, are rank-and-file people who are confirmed by a vote of the Senate.

I personally believe that we should change the law and not require Senate confirmation for many of these positions. It is a formality, really, to have to vote on some of these nominees. For example, there is the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration—I am not sure exactly why the Senate should be voting to confirm at all somebody who has been nominated to that position—or the Director of the U.S. Geological Survey or the general counsel for the Veterans' Administration. But regardless of whether or not they should be confirmed by the Senate, they currently are required to be confirmed, and the Democrats simply are mindlessly obstructing the confirmation of these noncontroversial, really apolitical nominees.

We also have people like the Federal Transit Administrator and the Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors—both waiting for confirmation.

The level of partisan gamesmanship that we are currently seeing is really something we have never seen before. This is not healthy for the country, and it is not healthy for this institution.

Again, what we have tended to see is that what goes around comes around. So the temptation will be, if President Trump can't get his team confirmed, when the next Democrat gets elected President of the United States, what will be the natural reaction to that President's nominees? Well, it is going to be to try to do to him what they did to President Trump. I don't think that is good for the country.

We need to break this logjam, and we need to do it now. I believe, if we can't