

knows now he can, and he knows that President Trump is actually putting the interests of the American worker above everything else.

Another Sean—apparently you have to be named “Shawn” to run a union—another Sean, Sean O'Brien, head of the Teamsters—I am young enough but still remember that maybe the unions were the ones that supported Democrats, but here we are.

Sean O'Brien says:

There's no secret what our position is as a union on tariffs.

He supports them because he knows those tariffs will produce more economic activity here in America.

So this is a very clear situation. My Democratic colleagues kept us in this Chamber for 27 hours in a row to block a bill that prevented the largest tax increase in American history. Had that bill not passed, I will tell you what would have happened to small businesses. They would have been destroyed. And there wasn't a single Democrat that voted to prevent that tax increase—27 hours, in fact, to block that tax increase. They blocked no income tax on tips, no income tax on overtime.

Now, on Martha's Vineyard, they don't worry about income tax on tips or overtime because they probably don't even pay it when they go out, and maybe they don't even like to pay it to their employees.

They blocked a \$2,200 child tax credit that would have gone to zero. And maybe on Martha's Vineyard, they don't care about child tax credits, but in Chillicothe, OH, in Coshocton, OH, and in Lorain, OH, they absolutely do.

They blocked \$1,000 Trump accounts—money that will go into an index fund that can grow so that when that baby becomes an adult, they have a nest egg, finally, so they don't have to live in their parents' basement and they can afford a home or a car.

By the way, let me just clear this misconception up—two things—and I will end so that we can get moving today to confirm the nominees that President Trump deserves.

No. 1—and my colleague in Massachusetts may not know this because he may not be somebody who is in the automobile market quite often—car prices are down. Let me repeat that again. Car prices are down this year. That means people are paying less money for cars right now than they were at the beginning of the year.

And guess what. Fifty-one percent of the cars sold in this country at the beginning of the year were made in this country. Now it is 56, and we are heading right to the sixties, and we are not going to stop. When I was a kid, that number used to be in the eighties.

So these tariff policies have been an incredible success.

Let me just speak to the chamber of commerce as a former small business owner. To say that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is an advocate for small business is like saying Hamas is an advocate for Israel's best interests.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I request that I be allowed to finish my unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The unanimous consent request is pending. There is still time remaining on the nomination.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I would just say this. Right now, here is what American small businesses know: Unemployment is going up. Inflation is going up. Tariffs are going up.

It is a tax. It is a sales tax that all Americans are paying. It is having a profoundly negative impact on our Nation. People are having Pepto Bismol moments in the marketplace, on Main Street, across our country. They are having Maalox moments in the marketplace. Their stomachs are churning as they look at all of this economic data.

Lutnick and Bessent are the Smoot-Hawley of the 21st century. We already did this once with Smoot-Hawley. They are repeating history. As Mark Twain said, there is no educational benefit to the second kick of a mule. This country got kicked in the behind by Smoot-Hawley, and Lutnick, Bessent, and President Trump are about to have that second kick affect every American in a profoundly negative way.

I thank the Presiding Officer for granting me that unanimous consent 1 minute in the continuation of debate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Burch nomination.

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

Mr. COTTON. I know of no further debate on the nominee.

VOTE ON PUZDER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Puzder nomination?

Mr. COTTON. 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 Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGRO) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 486 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Banks	Blackburn	Britt
Barrasso	Boozman	Budd

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

NAYS—44

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

NOT VOTING—3

Gallego	McConnell	Welch
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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.

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. 100, Brian Burch, of Illinois, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Holy See.

John Thune, Bernie Moreno, Tim Sheehy, David McCormick, Ted Budd, Roger Marshall, Cynthia M. Lummis, James E. Risch, Joni Ernst, Mike Crapo, John R. Curtis, Markwayne Mullin, John Barrasso, Bill Hagerty, Dan Sullivan, Mike Rounds, Kevin Cramer.

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 Brian Burch, of Illinois, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Holy See, 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.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL)

and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEG0) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 487 Ex.]

YEAS—51

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

NAYS—45

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

NOT VOTING—4

Gallego	Welch	Wicker
McConnell		

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). On this vote, the yeas are 51; the nays are 45. The motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Brian Burch, of Illinois, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Holy See.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO MARK CROWLEY

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I want to highlight one of my members, a former member of my staff, Mark Crowley.

For the past 8 years, I have benefited from the service, the hard work, and the loyalty of my legislative director, Mark Crowley. After 12 years of working here on Capitol Hill, Mark is leaving public service, but he has made a positive—a very positive—change during the time that he has spent here working in the U.S. Senate.

Before coming to work for me, he was working for his home State senator, Mark Kirk of Illinois. He was with Senator Kirk from 2013 to 2017. He first joined my office as a legislative assistant covering issues that surrounded the topic of justice, the Department of Justice. He also became my counsel, helping me on issues ranging from technology, taxes, to consumer protection.

Mark's contribution to the Senate has been both wide-ranging and deeply meaningful. One of the examples of this impact of his work was in 2018. The subcommittee in the Commerce Committee that I chaired completed a Senate investigation into the sexual abuse of Olympic athletes. He helped lead a thorough investigation that uncovered systemic failures that allowed abuse to persist way too long.

The joint investigation included four subcommittee hearings, interviews with Olympic athletes and survivors, and the retrieval of more than 70,000 pages of documents.

This work culminated in the development and passage of the Empowering Olympic, Paralympic, and Amateur Athletes Act of 2019. This landmark law made critical improvements to the Olympic movement that strengthened oversight and accountability for the safety of American athletes, and Mark was a critical component of the team that saw this legislation become law.

After serving as an LA and then as counsel, Mark shifted his work to the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, which, as general counsel, he was greatly helpful to me after I became that committee's chair.

In that role, he talked to whistle-blowers, provided in-depth oversight of the operations and policy of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and helped veterans navigate legal challenges within the VA.

Mark has played a key role in passing some of the most consequential veterans legislation in recent memory, including the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act and the PACT Act.

Through his work on behalf of veterans, Mark has showed the same qualities that defined his work on the Olympic investigation: deep policy expertise, a strong desire to get things done—and done right—and great care for the people who are involved.

At the beginning of 2023, Mark then took over the policy team, serving as my legislative director back in my personal office. Most recently, Mark helped to guide the ACRE Act and the Financing Our Energy Future Act to passage during the reconciliation process.

Whether we are talking about veterans, technology, the Olympics, complex Senate procedure, Mark could be counted on to effectively advise me and lead our team to the success that we have had.

He has been a mentor and guiding hand to several legislative assistants

who have come through my office. My junior staff would tell you that Mark brings a steady hand, a steady presence, and even under pressure, he recognizes the importance of thoughtful decision making before taking action. They would also tell you that Mark is quick to crack a joke and often brings much needed humor to Capitol Hill on stressful days. More importantly, he has a real interest in getting to know the people he works with—not just knowing them, not just knowing what makes them tick, but being a mentor and a friend.

Mark leads in a way that earns respect. He makes sure that everyone on the team knows their role, and they know that it matters. He is the kind of person who listens first, gives clear feedback, and never dismisses an idea out of hand. I have many ideas that I thought would be shot down from the very beginning, and Mark, at least, took time to convince me that I was wrong. Because of that, my staff and I have been more encouraged to take ownership and to work harder.

While Mark has expressed to me and to his colleagues how much he loves working in the Senate as a legislative director, there is another role that he loves even more, and that of being a husband and a dad.

The fact that the Senate never seems to end its business anytime during the normal business hours really has created problems in people's family lives. I am grateful to Mark's wife Colleen for letting me keep Mark at work late into these nights for evening votes and vote-aramas, even when that meant he missed out on helping with bedtime and other tasks related to being a dad.

Mark is the father to Ilsa, James, Hallee, and has a fourth baby on the way. As much as he loves working in the Senate, he loves his family. And with a fourth child on the way, he recognized it is time to really put his family first.

I will miss Mark's presence in my office and in the Senate. I will miss his skills and expertise. They don't come along every day. He has a lot to offer our country. While he wasn't a Kansan—perhaps his only shortcoming—he embodies many of the traits that we value in the Midwest: hard work, a cheerful attitude, and determination to get things done.

My many thanks to Mark. I thank Mark for his years of service to me, to Kansans, and to our country. I am wishing him well as a father and a husband and in his new line of work.

I ask the Senate to acknowledge with me, today in these remarks, the contribution that we all find from those who work side by side with us every day in hopes for a great outcome.

TRIBUTE TO GENE MERRY

Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a Kansan, a Kansan named Gene Merry—a longtime resident of Burlington, KS—as he prepares to begin a new chapter in his life in another Kansas community, Salina.