

Well, the name of yesterday's event was "Prove Me Wrong." It was a fitting testimony to Charlie's fearlessness. For those political convictions, for that personal courage, Charlie became the latest target of political violence.

Many of us knew Charlie personally, as did I. The Presiding Officer and I were with him in October—October 31. We were with him in Phoenix, AZ, during a campaign event with President Trump. He became a beacon for a better, brighter America. Charlie reminded all of us that civil debate makes our arguments sharper, and it makes our society better.

We must live as Charlie lived during his all-too-brief life: with courage and with conviction. God bless Charlie Kirk. May God bless his family, and may he rest in peace.

#### NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, on a separate matter, Senate Republicans today are prepared to break the Democrat nomination blockade. Senate Republicans are determined to overcome Democrats' confirmation obstruction. Senate Republicans are prepared to restore the Senate to the way it is supposed to work. For two centuries, most Presidential nominees have sailed through this Chamber by voice vote and by unanimous consent. That was the gold standard for "advise and consent." Senator SCHUMER and the Democrats abandoned it. Instead of deliberation, Senate Democrats chose unprecedented delay. That ends now.

This year, Democrats have forced the Senate to waste 210 hours of pointless procedural theatrics. That is 210 hours not used for debating legislation—legislation to fight crime, to secure the border, to unleash American energy, and to grow the economy. Modern Presidents have over 1,000 positions requiring Senate confirmation, and as a result, only 12 percent of President Trump's team is today on the job. And it is because of obstruction; it is because of Democrat delays. They have delayed positions vital to America's safety, vital to our prosperity, and vital to our diplomacy around the world.

These remain empty. Let me name a few. The Director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center—that is the person responsible for protecting us from foreign spies—empty; the Under Secretary for Nuclear Security at the Energy Department, the person responsible for safeguarding our Nation's nuclear weapons: empty; Ambassadors to key NATO allies as war rages in Europe: empty; the inspector general at the Central Intelligence Agency: empty; the Deputy Trade Representative, as America negotiates historic trade deals, remains empty.

Empty positions cannot keep our Nation safe. Empty positions invite Russia, China, Iran, North Korea—they invite them to test us. But that is what the Democrats have brought this country. The unquestionable, undeniable,

irrefutable, inescapable facts are that this Democrat obstruction makes America less safe. That is where we are today.

Let me point out what makes Democrat obstruction even more disgraceful. It destroys their own precedent. In May of 2001, 32 nominees from President George W. Bush were confirmed in a single group. A few months later, 55 more were confirmed in the same way. In February of 2010, for President Barack Obama, 77 nominees were confirmed exactly the same way. In 2017, with President Trump then in the office, 65 nominees were confirmed on a single day.

So what have we seen? Republican Presidents, Democrat Presidents, all with nominees confirmed in the same way. The Senate approved those nominees then as a long-established tradition in the Senate. That is the way the confirmation process is supposed to work. Just 4 years ago, with President Biden in the White House, 36 nominees were confirmed the exact same way.

I want to just get back to 4 years ago: 36 nominees confirmed for President Biden. Who personally came to this Senate floor that day to ask for that unanimous consent? Well, it was the current minority leader, CHUCK SCHUMER. He is the one who made the motion. He is the one who sought unanimous consent. And, of course, we agreed, and it was done that way.

All these groups of nominees, from President Bush to President Biden, were confirmed by unanimous consent. But now that Donald Trump is President again, Senator SCHUMER calls the process, in his words, "beyond the pale"—of doing what he just asked to be done when President Biden was in the White House. When the minority leader claims this week Republicans are breaking the Senate norms, he is trying to rewrite history. Who is he trying to fool? For the past 25 years, the Senate has confirmed routine nominees together in groups. It has been done for Republican Presidents, Democrat Presidents; but not anymore—not when President Trump was elected just this past year. Democrats are now trying to deny President Trump the team he needs in place and on the job to govern this Nation. But the American people elected President Trump to lead, not to watch his administration be held hostage by partisan politics.

Today, Senate Republicans are going to return to the very practice that Democrats endorsed and followed until President Trump got elected. Let me remind the colleagues of that practice so they don't say: Well, they are going to speed things along. Every committee hearing and markup will still happen. Every FBI background check will still happen. Every ethics review will still happen. Every nominee will still appear before committees. Every nominee will still answer questions from Senators. And every nominee will still have a vote in a committee. Scru-

tiny of each and every nominee is going to continue.

What comes to the end is what is Senator SCHUMER's reign of procedural terror. The Schumer confirmation shutdown ends today. And to my Democratic colleagues, let me say, if you disagree with our effort to get the Senate working again, it is up to you to explain to the American people why you have chosen to paralyze the Senate. You need to explain why you chose to stop doing the work that you were elected to do. Republicans are getting this Senate back to work on behalf of the American people, and beginning next week, the backlog of President Trump's nominees will be confirmed, and they will be put to work to get America back on track.

#### WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to Executive Calendar No. 1, S. Res. 377.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). 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 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 Calendar No. 1, S. Res. 377, an executive resolution authorizing the en bloc consideration in Executive Session of certain nominations on the Executive Calendar.

John Thune, Bernie Moreno, John Kennedy, Katie Boyd Britt, John Cornyn, John Barrasso, Shelley Moore Capito, Tim Sheehy, Tom Cotton, Josh Hawley, Mike Rounds, Jon A. Husted, James E. Risch, Ted Budd, Markwayne Mullin, Kevin Cramer, Mike Lee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S. Res. 377, an executive resolution authorizing the en bloc consideration in Executive Session of certain nominations on the Executive Calendar, 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. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 513 Ex.]

#### YEAS—52

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

#### NAYS—47

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

#### NOT VOTING—1

Hassan

(Mr. HAGERTY assumed the Chair.)

(Mr. TILLIS assumed the Chair.)

(Mr. HAGERTY assumed the Chair.)

(Mr. TILLIS assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BUDD). On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 47.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is not agreed to.

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### MOTION TO RECONSIDER

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to reconsider.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask consent for myself and Senator SCHATZ to speak for up to 6 minutes, equally divided time.

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

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. I would ask for Senator SCHATZ and I to speak for up to 10 minutes of time, equally divided.

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

#### RULES CHANGE

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, the Senate is stuck. We have had an enormous number of nominations that have tried to be able to work through this

body. Quite frankly, it is the same number that we have every time when it is the first term for a new President to be able to work its way through the body.

But this time is different. And it is not just accidentally different; it has been intentionally different.

I understand my Democratic colleagues have problems politically with President Trump. I get that. Respectfully, we have differences of opinion on that. But this time it has been different. Every single nominee has been blocked. Every single nominee has required a vote for a motion to proceed, 2 hours of debate, and another vote.

The current status where we are right now to just do the nominees who are backlogged, where we currently sit right now, will take about 900 hours of floor time to be able to just do those. That doesn't include the ones who are coming next for the next nominations. We are stuck.

If every single one of them requires this kind of time, the Senate is no longer functioning. So what we had proposed was a pretty straightforward proposal; that is, that we actually can move nominees in small batches—let's say 15—once they come out of committee. So they have had vetting in committee; they had had a hearing in committee; they have passed out of committee; they are now coming to the floor. In the past, those individuals were then passed by what is called en bloc or by voice vote or unanimous consent.

It is very common to be en bloc. In fact, during President Biden's time, there were 277 nominees who moved en bloc. Do you know why? Because Republicans allowed them to be able to move en bloc.

Do you know what is interesting? During President Trump's first term, more than 500 nominees moved en bloc. Do you know why? Because Democrats allowed them to move en bloc because this was normal to be able to do. But now we are in a new political age where nothing seems to be normal.

So we proposed a very simple thing; that this would be helpful to do in what is called a standing rule. It would take 60 votes to be able to move this, and we would have a standing rule to say here is how this could be done. Up to 15 out of a committee would come to the floor en bloc. We would have a single vote to be able to pass those 15, very similar to how it has been done in the past. It is just structured that way.

This was an idea that percolated around for a while and then began to grow. Then we had multiple of our Democratic Senators who came on board and said that that is a reasonable proposal. In fact, it is similar to something that we proposed a couple of years ago for several Members.

So after a while of discussion, more and more Democrats came on board. And now we have a supermajority of Members of this body right now to be able to vote on it today who are willing

to say let's vote on it. We have a supermajority. We have plenty of folks who are willing to be able to step up and say that is a reasonable thing to be able to do. The problem is, it takes consent to actually bring it to the floor. It is just a simple issue of do we have the ability to be able to vote on this today? If we don't, we are stuck.

Now, it only takes 60. We definitely have 60 votes in this body today to be able to pass it. What we don't have is consent to be able to actually bring it.

We have been asked: Well, what if we just did it next week? The challenge is this body has just broken down trust. So we are not confident there is not going to be a next week and a next week and a next week. In the meantime, we are still not moving nominees. We are still stuck.

So we have asked a very simple thing: Let's move this idea today, where we know we have 60 of our colleagues ready to be able to pass it today, in regular order in the process. We are just asking one thing; that is, consent to be able to do it.

I am planning to bring that request for consent in just a moment, but I would like to be able to yield time to my colleague Senator SCHATZ from Hawaii to be able to speak on this same issue because he has also worked very hard on rules and trying to be able to make this Senate work.

So, with that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, he is right. He is asking for unanimous consent, and we don't have unanimous consent. We do not have unanimity.

What we do have, and Senator LANKFORD is right, is now a critical mass of people who are willing to entertain changes to the way that we process nominees. That is a pretty big deal. That is a pretty big deal.

This would be the first major bipartisan rules reform, I think, in a political generation, maybe several political generations. And it is not your usual suspects of moderates who might be able to get you guys to 60 but a pretty wide swath of U.S. Senators on the Democratic side to try to reform the rules on a bipartisan basis. And we are achingly close to doing this like adults.

It is not lost on me on 9/11 and after the terrible political assassination of Mr. Kirk that we have a special obligation to demonstrate that politics is a substitute for violence and not a precursor to violence. We have to demonstrate that we can be adults.

So we were achingly close to a deal, but I am afraid that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have run out of patience.

I understand the overall argument about the number of nominees who are in a backlog. I understand that argument. I am not talking about that. I am talking about they just want to go today. They want to leave today. People have flights today. It is Thursday, and it is not 5 p.m.

So were we to work a weekend to try to land this airplane, that would be beneficial to the country, to the body, to Republicans and Democrats alike. We are actually very close, and Senator LANKFORD knows that. I think he is as frustrated as I am about how achingly close we are to behaving like adults.

I don't know who it is or what the dynamic was, but about an hour ago, everybody just said: Nah, I don't care how close we are. We are just going to do this because we are going to start to lose Members. We are going to start to lose momentum. The weekend is hard. Maybe we are going to get yelled at from the left; you are going to get yelled at from the right; and we can't withstand that so we just have got to go through with it. It is a damn shame.

Maybe this exercise builds a little muscle memory for at least exploring how to have a bipartisan negotiation. Maybe there is some silver lining to this. Maybe there is some understanding that this institution actually matters, especially in this polarized and divided time. But I have to tell you, I am deeply disappointed at the extent to which Members on our side of the aisle and your side of the aisle put themselves in a position of some political peril to try to stabilize the country and be the ballast that everybody needs across America.

We were trending well. We were trending well. I know how negotiations go. They go up and down. They go sideways. They stall a bit. People get a little irritated. But we really were trending well. And I am legitimately shocked that we are like 94 percent of the way there, and somebody just woke up and said: Do you know what? Never mind. We are going to do the thing we were planning on doing originally.

So hope springs eternal, but this is a deep disappointment. And it didn't have to be this way. All we had to do—and I am going to offer this consent later, but I want everybody to understand what this consent means. I am going to ask unanimous consent that the cloture vote upon reconsideration with respect to Executive Calendar No. S. Res. 377 be at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, no earlier than Monday; and that if cloture is invoked upon reconsideration, the postcloture time be deemed expired.

What does that mean? It means that you would have kept your optionality to go nuclear on Monday and not have lost a thing. The leader would have been able to go nuclear on Monday if negotiations never went anywhere, if they went sideways, if they tanked, and no time would have been lost.

So the imperative to kind of get this done on a certain timeframe, we tried to respect and said: Fine. We will just deem the 30 hours expired. We will accommodate your imperative to get this done if you needed to get it done by the end of next week. We said: Sure, keep

negotiations open. And we ran a hotline on that, and it cleared our hotline.

We had some very difficult conversations with Members who hate this idea. But just to keep the aperture open to renegotiate and to preserve the majority's prerogative to move forward with some pace, we accommodated that.

I thought, Great. We are trending well. We are going to wake up in the morning; we are going to get on some conference calls; and we are going to see whether there is a pathway.

I don't know whether there would have been a pathway, but I know today that the majority party in the U.S. Senate decided to foreclose the possibility of bipartisanship, and that is a real disappointment to me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I missed the conversation on the floor—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator needs consent to speak.

Mr. MERKLEY. I ask unanimous consent to speak—for 3 minutes for each.

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

Mr. MERKLEY. Thank you, and thank you to my colleague from Oklahoma.

The issue we are addressing needs to be addressed. The nomination process is entirely broken. People are sick and tired of bringing their expertise to the Senate and basically being an automaton in a nomination factory. So that is why there is great sympathy for us working together to resolve this.

I put forward a somewhat different version of the world from my colleague from Oklahoma and said: Let's do a block of time where multiple people can be debated simultaneously. That alone speeds things up by six to eight times because it is not 2 hours or 120 minutes per nominee. Let's create a motion where we go directly to that block of time, and because of the block of time, you don't have to have cloture on it in order to vote. Let's speed up how we hold those votes.

I felt we could get to wiping out the backlog through some of the agreements that were done before August and by accelerated consideration and preserve the ability to vote on each nominee.

I had concerns about the en bloc because I think we have a constitutional responsibility, if there is a bad apple, to weigh in on that and be accountable to our constituents on whether we favor or disfavor that individual. So I proposed an amendment.

I do appreciate my colleague working to arrange to have a vote on that amendment that said 10 Members in the minority, or minority-majority, could sign a petition to have someone pulled out of a group of 15 if they felt that person merited more scrutiny or presented particular problems.

I heard about kind of the distrust that that might be used to dismantle an entire block of 15, so I am open to

modifications of that that could address that. But I was one of the people who said, as written initially, I couldn't vote for unanimous consent to just adopt it. But to consider it on this floor—yes, I can vote for it to be considered on this floor because that is what we should be doing. We should be bringing rules ideas to this floor to be wrestled with in order to make this Chamber work better.

And so I appreciate that the plan wasn't to just try to get UC on the proposal but to get UC to consider it. Why shouldn't we all agree to that? So I am not sure where the reservation is, the holdout. I have heard that there are folks who like the idea of a supernova nuclear option and therefore want to blow up normal consideration of a standing order, of a new proposal standing order.

But I just—I guess, having missed the presentation, if I missed it, from the majority leader, I would say maybe we should take an hour and try to resolve that or adopt what my colleague has said, to iron out the details over the weekend—because it is a big deal. It is a big deal to go nuclear. It is a big deal to adopt a new idea that hadn't been widely circulated until the last few days.

So I cast my heart and my vote with the idea of let's try to figure this out.

I thank the President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 384

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I want to bring a unanimous consent request, but I would say I represent—every single Republican is in agreement to this. Every single Republican was ready today to be able to move on what was an agreed-upon bipartisan agreement—not by all; understanding that. But, again, we have a supermajority of Members of this body that are being blocked by a small group of the minority party saying they don't want to allow consent to vote on it—just to vote on it. So we are stuck.

So, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the Lankford resolution, S. Res. 384, which is at the desk. I further ask that there be up to 30 minutes of debate on the resolution, equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; further, that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on an amendment from Senator MERKLEY, if offered, and following disposition of the Merkley amendment, the Senate vote on the resolution, as amended, if amended, with no further intervening action or debate, with 60 affirmative votes required for adoption of the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HUSTED). Is there an objection?

The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, reserving the right to object—and I won't belabor the point except to say, if you have 60, 65, 70 votes for something, just

file cloture. Right? That is what you do. If you have got the votes, you just sort of move through the process of taking the vote.

What they are asking for is unanimity, and we don't have it. And so if you are interested in enacting this on a bipartisan basis, there is a process for doing that. It is available to you. But, again, it is more a matter of running out of patience than running out of time. We are leaving probably this evening, and then we have Friday, Saturday, Sunday off—not off. I understand people work weekends. Whatever. But not here, let's say. And then our first vote will be 5:30 on Monday. There is time. There is just no desire to go through the process. Right?

So it is true—I am not actually sure that you would have 60 votes for that, but there is a way to test it, and that is to file cloture on a new standing order or a new resolution or whatever the procedural pathway is.

What Senator LANKFORD is asking us to do is to have unanimity for a rules change to have the Senate not vote on individual nominations. Right? That is 15 at a time, and you have to go yes on all of them or no on all of them. And I don't love that idea, but I was willing to entertain it as a sort of matter of principle to try to sort of stabilize this body. But they have run out of patience, not run out of time. So, therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Hawaii.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 377

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture vote, upon reconsideration, with respect to Executive Calendar No. 1, S. Res. 377, be at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Democratic leader, no earlier than Monday, September 15; further, that if cloture is invoked upon reconsideration, the postcloture time be expired; finally, that it be in order for the majority leader to make a point of order prior to the cloture vote upon reconsideration of Executive Calendar No. 1, S. Res. 377.

This would buy us the time we need and not cost the leader anything.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I would just say to my colleagues on the Democratic side: How much time is enough? How much time is enough?

The proposal that we are voting on, or want to vote on, and just asked consent to get on has been around for 2 years—introduced by Democrats. They had a hearing in the Rules Committee. It has been around for 2 years. In fact, what we are supposed to vote on today is less expansive than the bill that was discussed in the Rules Committee, the Democrat Rules Committee—a pro-

posal made by Democrats. We don't include judges in this. Your proposal did.

We are asking you to vote on a Democrat proposal, and you are saying: No, we won't even vote on it; we won't even get on it.

Give me a break. Two years is not long enough? How about 8 months—8 months of this? Eight months of this. Look at that chart. Zero. Every President going back to 41, George H.W. Bush, has had a majority—a supermajority—of their nominees approved here in the Senate by unanimous consent or voice vote. Look at that: 98 percent—98 percent for Bill Clinton, 90 percent for George W. Bush, 90 percent for President Obama, 65 percent for Trump 1, 57 percent for Biden. Not trending in the right direction, which argues for everything that is being said here today about we need to fix a broken process. But that—that is an embarrassment. Zero.

Show the other chart. We have a second chart here. This is what we are talking about. We have to fix this, guys, and we have had plenty of time to do it. Eight months. Eight months. This is what we left on before the August break was this issue. So now we are 6 weeks into it. We have had all week. I have been saying all week: We are going to vote on this on Thursday one way or the other; we are going to change this process in a way that gets us back to what every President prior has had when it comes to the way that these nominees are treated here in the U.S. Senate—by both sides, Republicans and Democrats; both Presidents, Republicans and Democrats. This is the way it has been handled. Look at that. Zero. President Biden had 530 of his nominees confirmed by voice vote or unanimous consent.

This, ladies and gentlemen, has to be fixed. We offered you a proposal that had your fingerprints on it. It wasn't even your fingerprints; you initiated it. And all we are saying is: Give us a chance to vote on it. And even some of your own Members—the Senator from Oregon said: I want an amendment. We said: Fine, you can have an amendment vote.

But we need to vote. We need to fix this. And, yeah, we could drag it out over the weekend, and you could start adding more conditions and more ideas. The good idea fairy will start to circulate around here and we will have a whole bunch more conversations and it will drag on and nothing will get done.

It is time to move. It is time to quit stalling. It is time to vote. It is time to fix this place. And the ideal way to fix it would be in a bipartisan way: Democrats and Republicans coming together behind a proposal that makes all the sense in the world and that both sides agree, frankly, is the right solution to do this.

We looked at them all. We looked at all the options. We had some very good people who spent the month of August examining how to fix this process in a way that would get us to an outcome

that preserved the institutional prerogatives of the Senate, that preserves advice and consent of the Constitution, but gets away from that embarrassing statistic and the fact that we are spending all our time.

Do you guys like the fact that we are a personnel department, that the Senate spends two-thirds of its time on nominees? We have cast over 500 votes this year in the Senate, more than any Senate in history at this point in the term of the Senate.

To finish just the nominees in the pipeline today between now and the end of the year, we would have to cast another 600 votes—not to mention all the intervening time periods and filing cloture and everything else. That is what this means: another 600 votes. We have cast over 500 in the first 7 months of this session. We have to cast more than that in the last 3½ months just to get the pipeline cleared, which doesn't mean all the additional noms that are coming through—or judges.

This is a broken process, folks. That is an embarrassment. That is what you gave us.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, would my colleague yield for a question?

Mr. THUNE. No, I won't yield.

We are going to fix this. We are going to start to fix it today, I hope. And I would hope that when we have people in good faith put forward an offer, that you would, at least, let us get on that good offer—a solution, a solution that is bipartisan, initiated by Democrats 2 years ago, which has been talked about ad infinitum, ad nauseam, just this week alone—not to mention in the 6 weeks going back to the end of the July work period.

So, Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. THUNE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

VOTE ON MOTION

The question is on agreeing to the motion to reconsider.

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 Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 514 Ex.]

YEAS—52

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

|            |           |            |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| Hawley     | McConnell | Scott (FL) |
| Hoever     | McCormick | Scott (SC) |
| Husted     | Moody     | Sheehy     |
| Hyde-Smith | Moran     | Sullivan   |
| Johnson    | Moreno    | Thune      |
| Justice    | Murkowski | Tillis     |
| Kennedy    | Paul      | Tuberville |
| Lankford   | Ricketts  | Wicker     |
| Lee        | Risch     | Young      |
| Lummis     | Rounds    |            |
| Marshall   | Schmitt   |            |

## NAYS—45

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

## NOT VOTING—3

|           |        |        |
|-----------|--------|--------|
| Fetterman | Hassan | Mullin |
|-----------|--------|--------|

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

## POINT OF ORDER

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I make a point of order that, consistent with the precedent of the Senate established November 21, 2013, the threshold for cloture on an executive resolution for the en bloc consideration of nominations with a calendar number on the Executive Calendar, other than those on level 1 of the executive schedule under 5 U.S.C. 5312 or article III judges, is a simple majority.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The precedent set on November 21, 2013, applied only to the consideration of the nomination, not to multiple nominations and not to executive resolutions of any kind. The point of order is not well taken.

## APPEALING THE RULING OF THE CHAIR

Mr. THUNE. I appeal the ruling of the chair and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

And the question is, Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the Senate?

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 45, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 515 Ex.]

## YEAS—45

|                 |              |           |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------|
| Alsobrooks      | Cortez Masto | Kaine     |
| Baldwin         | Duckworth    | Kelly     |
| Bennet          | Durbin       | Kim       |
| Blumenthal      | Gallego      | King      |
| Blunt Rochester | Gillibrand   | Klobuchar |
| Booker          | Heinrich     | Lujan     |
| Cantwell        | Hickenlooper | Markey    |
| Coons           | Hirono       | Merkley   |

|         |         |            |
|---------|---------|------------|
| Murphy  | Sanders | Van Hollen |
| Murray  | Schatz  | Warner     |
| Ossoff  | Schiff  | Warnock    |
| Padilla | Schumer | Warren     |
| Peters  | Shaheen | Welch      |
| Reed    | Slotkin | Whitehouse |
| Rosen   | Smith   | Wyden      |

## NAYS—53

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

## NOT VOTING—2

|           |        |
|-----------|--------|
| Fetterman | Hassan |
|-----------|--------|

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas are 45, the nays are 53.

The decision of the Chair is not sustained.

## VOTE ON CLOTURE MOTION UPON RECONSIDERATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now occurs on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 1, S. Res. 377, upon reconsideration.

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY), and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS), are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 53, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 516 Ex.]

## YEAS—53

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

## NAYS—43

|                 |              |            |
|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| Alsobrooks      | Heinrich     | Padilla    |
| Baldwin         | Hickenlooper | Reed       |
| Bennet          | Hirono       | Rosen      |
| Blumenthal      | Kaine        | Sanders    |
| Blunt Rochester | Kim          | Schatz     |
| Booker          | King         | Schiff     |
| Cantwell        | Klobuchar    | Schumer    |
| Coons           | Lujan        | Shaheen    |
| Cortez Masto    | Markey       | Slotkin    |
| Duckworth       | Merkley      | Smith      |
| Durbin          | Murphy       | Van Hollen |
| Gallego         | Murray       |            |
| Gillibrand      | Ossoff       |            |

|         |        |            |
|---------|--------|------------|
| Warner  | Warren | Whitehouse |
| Warnock | Welch  | Wyden      |

## NOT VOTING—4

|           |       |        |
|-----------|-------|--------|
| Fetterman | Kelly | Peters |
| Hassan    |       |        |

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 53. The nays are 43.

Pursuant to the precedent of September 11, 2025, the motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

## RULES CHANGE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I just want everyone here and in the country to understand what our Republican colleagues just did.

For the third time this year, Republicans just resorted to the so-called nuclear option in the Senate, weakening the Senate even further and turning this Chamber into a conveyor belt for unqualified Trump nominees—a conveyor belt for unqualified Trump nominees.

Make no mistake. This move by Republicans was not so much about ending obstruction, as they claim; rather, it was another act of genuflection to the executive branch.

Democrats have shown very clearly we are willing to negotiate. We did that at the end of the last work period. We were doing it today. But what Republicans have done is chip away at the Senate even more to give Donald Trump more power and to rubberstamp whomever he wants, whenever he wants them, no questions asked. That is not the Senate's job.

We are supposed to debate and take votes on nominees, especially when the executive branch is grossly breaking norms by sending us woefully unqualified, unscrupulous, and, in some cases, deeply dishonest individuals for powerful and important positions.

By going nuclear today, Republicans are saying: We don't want to do our jobs. They are saying: Whatever Trump wants, we will do it.

Make no mistake. Because of the harmful step Republicans took today, the historically bad nominees Donald Trump has sent to the Senate all year long will get even worse.

Republicans now own even more than they had before: the terrible nominees who are about to sail through this Chamber, the special interests will get even richer, and the American people will be the ones who are hurt the most.

This is a sad, regrettable day for the Senate, and I believe it won't take very long for Republicans to wish they had not pushed the Chamber further down this awful road.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

## 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, ATTACKS

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, today is a solemn day in the memory of our Nation. May we pause at the beginning of my remarks to remember those who passed into the light on September 11.

(Moment of silence.)  
Amen.

#### POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Mr. President, I rise tonight in deep sadness for a nation that is increasingly beset by political violence.

Yesterday, political activist Charlie Kirk was killed while speaking to students on a college campus—a place that is set up for the exchange of ideas.

He was just 31 years old, a husband, a father of young children. I pray for his wife Erika and for his children who must now make their way without him.

And his death comes on the heels of the devastating assassination of Speaker Emerita Melissa Hortman and her husband Mark Hortman of Minnesota, victims of premeditated political violence. This should shock the conscience of every American, and it should cause all of us to rise up and say: Enough.

Let me be clear. I disagreed with Charlie Kirk on just about everything, but I rise tonight not in spite of those differences but, in a real sense, because of those differences. I rise to say that he had a right to speak, to think, to change his mind or not, to engage with others, to participate in the free exchange of ideas, to argue it out.

That is what it means to live in a democracy. That is who we are. We Americans engage in loud, heated, and sometimes rambunctious debates, not as a precursor to violence but to avoid violence. And we must learn to disagree without becoming violently disagreeable.

Let me be clear. There is nothing more anti-democratic than political violence. Democracy is about creating space for competing voices and countervailing visions about who we are as one people, and that debate in the public square is what has made us better over time.

So while pushing back—sometimes hard—against those with whom we vigorously disagree, we must, with the same voice and vigor, defend their right to be—their right to be heard, to be free.

Our American family is held together by these democratic ideals, but I am afraid that what we are seeing increasingly around us is the tearing of those threads that bind us together—“*e pluribus unum*”; out of many, one—the ability to see past our political differences and see in the humanity of the other a glimpse of our own.

So we must condemn what happened to Charlie Kirk, whether we are on the right or on the left, because condemning that heinous crime is not about the difference between right and left; it is the difference between right and wrong. And what happened yesterday was wrong. Whatever the motivation, this we know: It was wrong. And we have to say that clearly and without hesitation.

I serve as pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, the spiritual home of Martin Luther King, Jr. We all know that Dr. King was a victim of gun violence.

What fewer people remember or know is that in 1974, his precious mother Alberta Williams King, the wife of the pastor of the church, Martin Luther King, Sr., was shot and killed in our church one Sunday morning while playing “The Lord’s Prayer” on the organ.

Martin Luther King, Sr., was asked what he thought about all of this, and I am struck and inspired by his words. Having lost his precious wife on a Sunday morning, having witnessed his son struck down, Martin Luther King, Sr., said:

I will never let any man pull me down so low as to hate him.

He said:

Hate is too heavy a burden to bear.

He is right, and that is why in this moment, we must condemn political violence. But we must also condemn hate and hate speech. You cannot condemn one without condemning the other.

Hate is itself a kind of violence that kills the spirit and corrupts the soul of a person and of a nation. That vicious cycle of violence and hate, of hate and violence can only lead to the demise of our country and the destruction of our humanity.

So in this defining moment, may we resist the seductive sirens of those who are trying to convince us that we are at war with one another. Amidst our fierce debates, I submit that at the end of the day, we are all we have got—the people. All we really have is one another. And a democracy is the imperfect institutionalization of that moral insight. All we have is one another. You either have a democracy, or you have political violence. You cannot have a democracy awash in political violence.

So every single day, let us choose democracy, choose what the Apostle Paul called the more excellent way—the way of love.

Love comes alive in the complicated story of a diverse people who refuse to give up on one another. It takes strength to love. It takes courage to love. It takes patience and persistence to love.

God grant us strength and courage. God grant us patience and persistence for the facing of this hour and for the living of these days.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. COTTON. 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.

#### ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act

requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee’s intention to see that relevant information is still available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications that have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such an annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY  
COOPERATION AGENCY,  
Washington, DC.

Hon. JAMES E. RISCH,  
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,  
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 25-60, concerning the Air Force’s proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Finland for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$1.07 billion. We will issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale upon delivery of this letter to your office.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL F. MILLER,  
Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 25-60

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Finland.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:  
Major Defense Equipment \* \$0.95 billion.  
Other \$0.12 billion.  
Total \$1.07 billion.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):  
Up to four hundred five (405) AIM-120D-3 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAM).

Eight (8) AIM-120D-3 guidance sections, with precise positioning provided by either the Selective Availability Anti-Spoofing Module or M-Code.

Non-Major or Defense Equipment:

The following non-MDE items will be included: AMRAAM control sections, containers, and support equipment; Common Munitions Built-in Test (BIT)/Reprogramming Equipment (CMBRE); ADU-891 adaptor group test sets; munitions support and support equipment; spare parts, consumables and accessories, and repair and return support; weapons software and support equipment; classified software delivery and support; classified publications and technical documentation; personnel training and training equipment; transportation support; site surveys; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (FI-D-YAR).