

supporting our troops and defending our country, just take a look at this vote. Mere months ago—I say mere months ago—Democrats were complaining about all the damage shutdowns do to hard-working Americans. I literally could fill the rest of this hour with Democrat quotes from the past few years about the devastating impacts of shutdowns.

Now, Democrats couldn't care less. They are happy to sacrifice any American—evidently, any principle—to their political goals. Democrats like to position themselves as the party of the little guy and the defender of hard-working Americans. But, as this vote makes clear, whom do Democrats really care about? Democrats.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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 motion to proceed to Calendar No. 168, H.R. 5371, a bill making continuing appropriations and extensions for fiscal year 2026, and for other purposes.

John Thune, John R. Curtis, Tom Cotton, Chuck Grassley, Bernie Moreno, Marsha Blackburn, Mike Rounds, Eric Schmitt, Tommy Tuberville, Todd Young, James Lankford, Roger F. Wicker, Rick Scott of Florida, Jim Justice, John Barrasso, Mike Crapo, Cindy Hyde-Smith.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 294.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Anne-Leigh Gaylord Moe, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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. 294, Anne-Leigh Gaylord Moe, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

John Thune, Pete Ricketts, Markwayne Mullin, John Barrasso, Tim Sheehy, Ted Budd, Bill Hagerty, Bernie Moreno, John R. Curtis, Jon A. Husted, Jim Justice, Ashley B. Moody, Roger Marshall, Joni Ernst, Roger F. Wicker, Ron Johnson, John Boozman.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 372.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of William W. Mercer, of Montana, to be United States District Judge for the District of Montana.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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. 372, William W. Mercer, of Montana, to be United States District Judge for the District of Montana.

John Thune, Bernie Moreno, Katie Boyd Britt, Chuck Grassley, James Lankford, Pete Ricketts, Markwayne Mullin, Tim Sheehy, Jon A. Husted, Eric Schmitt, Jim Justice, James E. Risch, Tom Cotton, Steve Daines, Ted Budd, John R. Curtis, John Boozman.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 373.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Stephen Chad Meredith, of Kentucky, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Kentucky.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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. 373, Stephen Chad Meredith, of Kentucky, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Kentucky.

John Thune, Markwayne Mullin, John Barrasso, Tim Sheehy, Pete Ricketts, Ted Budd, Bill Hagerty, Bernie Moreno, John R. Curtis, Jon A. Husted, Jim Justice, Ashley B. Moody, Roger Marshall, Joni Ernst, Ron Johnson, John Boozman, John Kennedy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, first of all, I would like to compliment the majority leader, the Senator from South Dakota, for his continued efforts to have the Senate return to the days in which we were the greatest deliberative legislative body, assuming that was ever true. It is hard to find evidence that it is true today. And, certainly, a basic function of the Congress is to do appropriations bills.

I have heard a number of my colleagues, particularly Democratic colleagues, complain about the appropriations efforts by the White House, by the administration. They remind us that the Constitution puts in the prerogative, it is the Congress that appropriates. Here we are trying to appropriate, to do our constitutional duties, and the vast majority of Democrats stand in the way on one of the most important appropriations bills that we could consider, the Defense appropriations bills.

Our adversaries, our allies, again, wait and watch for signals that the United States of America is the country it needs to be to defend freedom and liberty around the world. As of today, we are incapable of funding our Department of Defense.

I highlighted yesterday in remarks that those who had come to the floor and worried and complained about the

military men and women during the shutdown who are not receiving compensation for their service to our Nation, the most straightforward way to make certain that those who serve are compensated is to pass the Defense appropriations bills authorizing and appropriating the money to make those payments. Yet, today, there are those who stood in the path to prevent that from happening.

UKRAINE

Mr. President, a related topic I want to address today is that as President Trump, today, spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin and tomorrow he will meet with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, I want to highlight how important it is—how critical it is—to securing a resolution to Russia's unjust war in Ukraine.

I had intended to give remarks today on this topic. I opened the Wall Street Journal this morning, and as I was reading it, its top editorial on the editorial page deals with this topic. I would commend it to my colleagues. It expresses the views as I wish that I could express them so clearly. I am going to try to do so today, right now.

Last week, we witnessed the long-awaited peace agreement between Israel and Hamas. It did come to fruition. Thanks to the efforts of President Trump and his administration, a cease-fire is holding, Iran has been dealt a crippling blow that has weakened its hold on the region, and Hamas has released all living hostages who have been held captive for more than 2 years.

While we recognize there are significant challenges that remain in the Middle East, this marks a critical step toward a just and lasting peace in the region. This agreement would not have been possible without the strength of the U.S. military, our steadfast alliance with Israel, and making it unequivocally clear to Hamas that the United States is willing and able to assist our ally in war.

Through strength, the United States brokered a peace deal that serves the security of Israel and the humanitarian needs of Gazans alike.

Now, as the conflict in Ukraine has surpassed its 3-year mark, Putin remains undeterred in his mission to carry out his unjust war on the Ukrainian people. Each day this war continues, lives are lost, and the safety, economic stability, and global leadership of the United States are threatened. This war must end.

To bring an end to this war, the United States and our allies must maintain pressure on Moscow. As was just seen, we must maintain pressure on Hamas. One recent and important development in this effort is the potential transfer of U.S. Tomahawk missiles to Ukraine. This weaponry will strengthen Ukraine's ability to defend its territory, deter further Russian aggression, and help level the battlefield as negotiations, hopefully, move forward.

By providing advanced provision strike systems, America demonstrates our commitment to Ukraine sovereignty is backed not only by words but by legitimate support that can alter the course of the war.

I commend the administration for its efforts to facilitate this transfer and for leading discussions between Ukraine and Russia that, hopefully, will secure a durable and just peace.

The United States cannot act alone. Our NATO allies must also shoulder the burden. President Trump recently secured an agreement with our NATO allies to increase defense spending from 2 percent to 5 percent by 2035. This commitment is critical to maintaining the continued defense of Europe. Russia's economy is already under strain, but their capacity to fund conflict will continue without enforcement of steady and severe global sanctions.

Before Congress, there is legislation that has widespread support of more than 80 Senators from both sides of the aisle. This legislation would deliver a severe blow to Russia's economy and trade by cutting off the resources that allow Putin to fund this war. We can hasten the path to success in finding peace.

Last week, we advanced the Defense Authorization Act, but today we failed to advance the appropriations bill to fund our military. We all should recognize that the world is watching. They are watching us. Our adversaries pay attention, and our allies pay attention. We have to, every day, make clear the case that it is true the United States is a stable and friendly supporter of our allies and a full-fledged adversary to those who wish to cause us harm. Our adversaries—Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran—are always looking for the opportunity to disrupt our alliances, weaken our resolve, and disturb the free world.

It is imperative that the United States stands firm in its support for Ukraine and, in doing so, places significant pressure on Putin to show our adversaries that democracy—democracy—will not go undefended.

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. 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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MORAN. 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.

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

TRIBUTE TO DR. MARTIN KELLER

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the career of Dr. Martin Keller as he prepares to depart Colorado's National Renewable Energy Laboratory, NREL, at the end of October.

Dr. Keller has devoted his career to the growth and success of our National Laboratories, his work culminating in nearly a decade spent as the Laboratory Director at NREL. Under his leadership, NREL built the Research and Innovation Laboratory, planned and began construction of the Energy Materials and Processing at Scale, EMAPS, facility; launched the Department of Energy's Advanced Research on Integrated Energy Systems, ARIES; and extended NREL's footprint beyond Colorado to its new Alaska Campus in Fairbanks.

Beyond new facilities and capabilities, Dr. Keller has developed an engaged, talented, and highly accomplished NREL workforce, earning him widespread acclaim from his peers. He was named one of the Denver Business Journal's "Most Admired CEOs" in 2022 and recognized as Laboratory Director of the Year in 2024 by the Federal Laboratory Consortium for Technology Transfer.

While Dr. Keller's return to his native Germany is a loss for both NREL and Colorado, the Helmholtz Association, a preeminent national research institution, is lucky to have him as its new president. His skillful, kind, and thoughtful service to NREL and American energy research will be felt for generations. I wish him the very best in this next chapter.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO REV. DR. WILLIAM E. FLIPPIN, SR. AND FIRST LADY SYLVIA FLIPPIN

• Mr. OSSOFF. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate and honor Rev. Dr. William E. Flippin, Sr., and First Lady Sylvia Taylor Flippin for their 35 years of ministry, service, and leadership at the Greater Piney Grove Baptist Church in Atlanta, GA.

Throughout their nearly four decades of service at "The Grove," Rev. Dr. Flippin, Sr., and First Lady Flippin have showcased distinguished leadership and a steadfast commitment to uplifting members of the Greater Piney Grove congregation and Georgians at large.

After leading Springfield Baptist Church in Greensboro and Shoal Creek Baptist Church in Locust Grove, both of which were founded by former slaves, Rev. Dr. Flippin, Sr., took the reigns as senior pastor of the Greater Piney Grove Baptist Church in Atlanta in 1990 and quickly became a catalyst