

was a consortium of newspapers that coordinated routine coverage. It was an incubator of journalistic talent that helped launch the careers of legendary Chicago journalists like Mike Royko and Seymour Hersh. At City News, Bruce was one of the overnight editors, working from midnight to 8 a.m., or as he described, “the mafia assassination beat.”

But 2 years after he joined City News, Bruce received an offer that would change the course of his career. One of Illinois’ oldest local papers, the Hyde Park Herald, was failing, and a group of concerned citizens asked Bruce if he would buy the Herald to keep it in circulation. While the prospect of buying and saving a paper was daunting, 24-year-old Bruce charged ahead and took out a \$2,500 loan to purchase the Herald. Thanks to Bruce, the paper did not miss a single issue. This began Bruce’s long career as an owner and manager of local papers. Soon after Bruce purchased the Hyde Park Herald, he acquired the Southtown Economist, which he grew into dozens of local newspapers spanning across the Chicago suburbs. Under Bruce’s leadership, these papers reached hundreds of thousands of Illinoisans as Bruce modernized their printing processes and pushed them to take a moral stand on the issues.

What made Bruce so successful was that he recognized the civic value of newspapers. In a Time Magazine interview, Bruce once decried how it was harder for someone to know what is going on in their own city than to find out what Khrushchev is doing in Cuba. Bruce wanted to demystify what was happening in Illinois. He took on topics that impacted every part of civic life, ranging from the corruption of political machines of Springfield to the protection of Frank Lloyd Wright’s famous Robie House. Anyone who worked at the Herald often would see Bruce’s office light on late into the night, a symbol of his tireless work in support of his city.

But Bruce’s commitment to public life in Chicago did not stop at the edge of the bullpen; he also was a passionate supporter of the arts. In 1965, Bruce bought the Harper Theatre to create an “off-Broadway” experience in Chicago. Bruce moved the Hyde Park Herald’s offices to the second floor of the theater and renovated the space as a “monument to urban renewal.” For decades, the Harper Theatre supported local musicians, dancers, and actors as they honed their crafts and shared their talents with the city. The Harper Theater was also where Bruce saw the Joffrey Ballet for the first time as part of the first modern dance festival in the Midwest, which he organized. Three decades later, Bruce helped facilitate the Joffrey Ballet’s move from New York to Chicago.

While mentioning all of Bruce’s contributions to support and save Chicago’s various cultural institutions would be difficult, his efforts did not go

unnoticed. In 2022, then-President Biden awarded Bruce with the National Medal of Arts. Cheering that selection was David Axelrod, who got his start working as a cub reporter for Bruce. I can think of no one more deserving of this honor than Bruce, a man who spent seven decades fighting to strengthen the ties of community and the richness of cultural life in Chicago.

But Bruce did not work alone. His wife Bette Cerf Hill was Bruce’s faithful partner as they both engaged in and supported every aspect of Chicago’s art scene, from literature festivals to architectural centers. Loretta and I send our deepest condolences to Bette; their five children Paul, Alex, Catherine, Teresa, and Diana; their 12 grandchildren; and their 9 great-grandchildren.

Chicago will be forever grateful for all that Bruce has done to enrich our cultural heritage. While we will miss Bruce dearly, his legacy will continue to benefit our city for generations. Whether someone watches a play at the Steppenwolf Theatre or reads the latest article in the Hyde Park Herald, I hope they take a moment to remember Bruce.

S. 3012

Mr. OSSOFF. Mr. President, the Senate remains at an impasse over the renewal of soon-to-expire health insurance premium tax credits under the Affordable Care Act. Americans’ health insurance premiums will skyrocket in 2026 unless the Congress acts to renew these subsidies. Time is running out to solve this problem. The enrollment period for next year’s insurance plans opens in just 9 days. The Trump administration’s intransigent refusal to work across the aisle to negotiate a solution has resulted in the ongoing government shutdown.

During this shutdown, military servicemembers, air traffic controllers, and TSA employees are among those who simply must come to work despite the lapse in congressional appropriations. They should be paid for that work. That is why today I voted to proceed to consideration of S. 3012, the Shutdown Fairness Act, sponsored by the Senator from Wisconsin. Senators from both parties should work together to ensure payment of military servicemembers and others in critical roles, including controllers, TSA workers, and those working at Georgia’s CDC. Debate of this bill should include an amendment process to improve the bill, including by limiting the President’s unilateral authority to determine which Federal workers are paid and which are not. Such authority could be abused by an executive determined to pay favored Federal workers and deny disfavored Federal workers pay without regard for congressional appropriations.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, yesterday evening, I missed rollcall

vote No. 583, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Stephen Chad Meredith to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Kentucky. Had I been present, I would have voted no.

Yesterday evening, I missed rollcall vote No. 584, confirmation of the nomination of William W. Mercer to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Montana. Had I been present, I would have voted no.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO STACEY MORTENSEN

• Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the distinguished career of Stacey Mortensen, a dedicated leader who has helped transform public transportation in California’s Central Valley and strengthened rail systems all across our State.

For more than three decades, Stacey has championed transportation and rail infrastructure in California. As a native of the region, she knows firsthand how important these investments are for families and businesses in our communities.

Thanks to Stacey’s work, thousands of Californians have enjoyed better transportation options. Among these is the Altamont Corridor Express, which launched in 1988 with just two weekday roundtrips. Thanks in no small part to her vision and determination, ACE now serves 10 stations and nearly 3,000 riders every day.

In the mid-2000s, Stacey spearheaded a Memorandum of Understanding among 20 different agencies in Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Sacramento Counties to coordinate and streamline planning for service expansions between Merced and Sacramento. These collaborative efforts laid the foundation for what is now known as the Valley Rail Program. She also played a pivotal role in the creation of the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority, establishing a regional governance model for service in the San Joaquin Valley.

Throughout her more than 30 years of service in Stockton, Stacey has held an unwavering belief in the extraordinary potential of the Central Valley and its people.

Stacey’s work has led to one of the largest rail infrastructure improvements in the Nation—exceeding \$500 million—and helped secure nearly \$2 billion in funding for the Valley Rail Program, which will ultimately connect with California’s high-speed rail network in Merced.

Her leadership advanced key agreements with Valley Link and the California High-Speed Rail Authority, formally designating the rail commission and the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority as prospective operators for future rail services.

And in 2024, Stacey supported the creation of the Rail Academy of Central California, a vital workforce development initiative designed to train the next generation of rail professionals.

Throughout her career, Stacey has demonstrated a unique ability to unite people around a shared vision and inspire others to deliver meaningful, sustained progress and change.

As Stacey retires from her role as executive director of the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, on behalf of all Californians, I thank her for her outstanding commitment to public service. I also thank her spouse Leah for supporting Stacey over all these years.

As she transitions to the next chapter of her life, I thank my colleagues for joining me in recognizing Stacey and applauding her outstanding contributions and her exemplary service.●

RECOGNIZING DK DONUTS

● Mr. RISC. Mr. President, as a member and former chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each month I recognize and celebrate the American entrepreneurial spirit by highlighting the success of a small business in my home State of Idaho. Today, I am proud to honor DK Donuts in Boise as the Idaho Small Business of the Month for October 2025.

DK Donuts first opened its doors in the 1980s and has become a beloved institution in the Treasure Valley. The current owner Angkearot Long took over operations in 2004 and purchased the business 5 years later. Under his ownership, Angkearot has kept DK strong by maintaining the old-school donut shop everyone knows and loves. Offering a variety of sweets, from traditional cakes and glazed donuts to their famous bacon maple bar, DK Donuts is a Boise staple, even drawing customers from across State lines.

When leasing troubles for the 40-year-old donut shop arose last year, many fans worried the iconic store might close for good. Fortunately, Angkearot was able to work out a deal, signing a multiyear lease and continuing the delicious DK legacy that loyal customers keep coming back for.

Earlier this year, DK Donuts opened a second location in Nampa, managed by Angkearot's daughter Vimean Rath. Embracing innovation, Vimean expanded the menu to include baked goods, sandwiches, and a range of drink options, allowing customer to enjoy their goods all day long.

Congratulations to Angkearot Long, Vimean Rath, and all the employees at DK Donuts on being recognized as the Idaho Small Business of the Month for October 2025. Your dedication to excellence makes Idaho proud, and I look forward to your continued growth and success.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to

the Senate by Ms. Holstead, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2067. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a letter relative to Executive Order 14347, "Restoring the United States Department of War" listing officials and organizations using secondary titles; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2068. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia that was declared in Executive Order 12978 of October 21, 1995; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2069. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the continuation of the national emergency that was originally declared in Executive Order 13413 of October 27, 2006, with respect to the situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2070. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency with respect Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13067 of November 3, 1997; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2071. A communication from the Director for Public Affairs and Congressional Relations, Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of the Comptroller's 2024 Office of Minority and Women Inclusion Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2072. A communication from the Director, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Imposition of Special Measure regarding Huilone Group, as a Foreign Financial Institution of Primary Money Laundering Concern" (RIN1506-AB68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 21, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2073. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, thirteen (13) reports relative to nominations, vacancies, designations of service in acting roles, discontinuations of service in acting roles and actions on nominations for positions covered by the Federal Vacancies

Reform Act of 1998, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2025; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2074. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Supply Chain Risk Management Reliability Standards Revisions; Equipment and Services Produced or Provided by Certain Entities Identified as Risks to National Security" ((RIN1902-AG22) (Docket No. RM24-4-000)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2025; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2075. A communication from the Congressional and Public Affairs Specialist, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revision of Firearms License Requirements" (RIN0694-AJ46) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2076. A communication from the Congressional and Public Affairs Specialist, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Expansion of End-User Controls to Cover Affiliates of Certain Listed Entities" (RIN0694-AK11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 3034. A bill to amend the Federal Power Act to require the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to review regulations that may affect the reliable operation of the bulk-power system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. CRAMER, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 3035. A bill to amend the Natural Gas Act to provide for expanded natural gas exports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida:

S. 3036. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of the Treasury from engaging in transactions involving the exchange of Special Drawing Rights issued by the International Monetary Fund that are held by the Chinese Community Party; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself, Mr. TUBERVILLE, and Mr. JUSTICE):

S. 3037. A bill to prohibit United States persons from engaging in financial transactions with AliPay; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

S. 3038. A bill to establish a real-time data dashboard for graduate medical education training positions to improve health care workforce planning and distribution for the purposes of alleviating physician shortages in medically underserved communities; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WARNER, Ms. ALSOBROOKS, Mr. KAIN, Mr. KIM, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. GALLEGO,