

she helped in so many ways with the negotiations— and Senator SHAHEEN, Senator KAINE, Senator ANGUS KING, my colleague, and the rest of the eight Democrats who were willing to cross party lines for the good of the people of this country.

So thank you, Mr. President, for all that has been done and for your personal participation as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, this has been a very long road—quite literally, the longest shutdown in history. I am very, very happy to be able to say that we are coming to the end.

Before we close today, I want to take the time to say thank you to my staff, who have worked around the clock tirelessly now for the past 6 weeks; to the staff of the Appropriations Committee, who have played a critical role in getting us to where we are today; to the Cloakroom staff; to every Senate staffer on both sides of the aisle, who has spent 41 days coming into work without pay; to the custodial staff, who, again without pay, have kept this building and the Senate office buildings livable; to all institutional staff, without whom this place would not run; to the Secretary of the Senate and everyone in her office; the Sergeant at Arms and her team; the Architect of the Capitol and his staff; and everyone on the floor right now making this session happen; and to the men and women of the U.S. Capitol Police, who have shown up during this shutdown day in and day out to protect the rest of us. I am humbled by and grateful for your service.

I know that the strain of these weeks has been immense, and you all have families, rent to meet, bills to pay, car and mortgage payments. I am grateful for all you have done to keep the Senate running and for all that you do every day, shutdown or no shutdown, to serve the Senate and to serve our country.

With that, after 6 excruciating weeks, I will stop talking and let all of you get some rest.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 515.

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 legislative clerk read the nomination of Ho Nieh, of Alabama, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the remainder of the term expiring June 30, 2029.

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. 515, Ho Nieh, of Alabama, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the remainder of the term expiring June 30, 2029.

John Thune, Roger Marshall, John Barasso, John R. Curtis, Ted Budd, Mike Rounds, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Tommy Tuberville, Jon Husted, Bernie Moreno, Steve Daines, Deb Fischer, Jim Justice, Kevin Cramer, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, David McCormick.

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. 464.

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 legislative clerk read the nomination of Donald Korb, of Ohio, to be Chief Counsel for the Internal Revenue Service and an Assistant General Counsel in the Department of the Treasury.

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. 464, Donald Korb, of Ohio, to be Chief Counsel for the Internal Revenue Service and an Assistant General Counsel in the Department of the Treasury.

John Thune, Roger Marshall, John Barasso, John R. Curtis, Ted Budd, Mike Rounds, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Tommy Tuberville, Jon Husted, Bernie Moreno, Steve Daines, Deb Fischer, Jim Justice, Kevin Cramer, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, David McCormick.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. 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.

PAUL AMENDMENT NO. 3941

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, today I voted yes on the motion to table Senator PAUL's amendment No. 3941 to strike a provision modifying the definition of hemp from the Agriculture Appropriations Act because I am concerned that existing Federal law creates the opportunity for unregulated and intoxicating synthetic hemp products to be marketed and sold to children. Current Maryland law bans these products, but without Federal action, they can still be distributed in our State. The language in the underlying bill would close that loophole while the Paul amendment would leave the loophole in place.

While I support closing the loophole that allows these intoxicating products to be marketed and sold to children, we should use the implementation period in the bill to ensure a sustainable pathway forward for safe hemp products like CBD, which many people depend on to safely manage pain and other health conditions. We ultimately need balanced, science-based regulation that preserves access to safe products while protecting public health.

VERMONT HEALTHCARE

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have the following printed in the RECORD.

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

RUTLAND, VERMONT—RESOLUTION REGARDING PROPOSED FEDERAL FUNDING CUTS AND VERMONT'S HEALTH CARE CRISIS

Whereas, health-care organizations are among Vermont's largest employers, and reductions in federal health funding will likely have negative ripple effects on local economies, workforce stability, lead to service reductions, and limit access to care; and

Whereas, Vermont's health-care system is financially fragile, with several rural hospitals operating at or below break-even levels, and experts warn that further reductions in federal Medicaid support could force providers to reduce services, delay investments, or close certain programs; and

Whereas, the federal Budget Reconciliation Act enacted on July 4, 2025, is projected by the Congressional Budget Office and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities to reduce federal Medicaid funding by more than \$1 trillion over ten years, shifting significant costs to states and threatening health coverage for millions of Americans; and

Whereas, analyses by the Medicare Rights Center indicate that the same law would reduce hundreds of billions of dollars in Medicare funding, creating uncertainty for older

adults and hospitals that rely on these reimbursements; and

Whereas, the Kaiser Family Foundation has found that this legislation will also restrict the use of provider taxes, a key funding mechanism that Vermont employs to support its Medicaid program; and

Whereas, rural hospitals in Vermont rely heavily on Medicaid funding due to the demographics of the populations they serve, and reductions in this support will shift the cost of uncompensated care onto already strained hospital budgets, designated mental health agencies, primary care clinics, and private insurers, resulting in higher insurance premiums for individuals, school systems, and employers; and

Whereas, VT Digger reports that Vermont officials estimate that as many as 45,000 Vermonters could lose health insurance coverage as a result of the federal funding changes; and

Whereas, according to the 2021 Vermont Household Health Insurance Survey conducted by the Vermont Department of Health and Market Decisions Research, approximately 35 percent of Vermonters under age 65 and 17 percent of Vermonters age 65 and older reported that they could not afford needed health care, representing roughly 187,800 working-age adults and 34,900 aged 65 and older, or more than one in three Vermonters overall who struggle to pay medical costs not covered by insurance; and

Whereas, the 2021 Vermont Household Health Insurance Survey also determined that 11 percent of households, approximately 60,000 Vermonters, carry medical debt, which often affects their ability to pay for food, clothing, and other necessities; and

Whereas, national estimates from the Congressional Budget Office and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities project an additional \$186 billion reduction in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), known as 3SquaresVT in Vermont, funding over the next decade due to the Budget Reconciliation Act, which would result in fewer food benefits for thousands of Vermont households.

Now, therefore, be it *Resolved* that the Rutland Board of Aldermen:

- Expresses its concern regarding the potential impacts of the Budget Reconciliation Act on the health, well-being, and economic stability of Rutland Regional Medical Center, Rutland residents and Vermonters statewide;

- Urges the Vermont General Assembly to explore legislative measures to help protect Vermont's health-care system and mitigate the adverse effects of anticipated reductions in Medicaid and SNAP funding;

- Calls upon Vermont's Congressional delegation to continue building bipartisan coalitions to safeguard federal funding for Medicaid, Medicare, and SNAP, ensuring that vulnerable populations are not left behind;

- Directs the City Clerk to transmit a copy of this resolution to Vermont's Congressional delegation, the Governor, and the leadership of the Vermont General Assembly; and

- Encourages other municipal boards across Vermont to consider adopting similar resolutions in support of protecting health care and nutrition programs essential to their communities.

Adopted this 3 day of November 2025, by the Board of Aldermen of the city of Rutland, Vermont.

DAVID W. ALLAIRE,
Chair, David Allaire, Board of Aldermen, City of Rutland, Vermont.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 3168. A bill to appropriate funds for pay and allowances of Federal employees, contract employees, and members of the Armed Forces during a lapse in appropriations, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC-2114. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report to advise that he is exercising his authority to designate an Acting Inspector General of the Department of Education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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. KIM (for himself and Mr. MCCORMICK):

S. 3169. A bill to amend the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 to expand new home construction, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mr. KELLY):

S. 3170. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to implement an automated system with callback functionality for each customer service telephone line of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 3171. A bill to waive the guarantee fee for certain business loans made to veterans and spouses of veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. MULLIN, and Ms. ERNST):

S. 3172. A bill to repeal certain Acts that impose sanctions upon Syria; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. ERNST:

S. 3173. A bill to prohibit the Small Business Administration from awarding sole source contracts until the Administration conducts a full audit of and submits to Congress a report on the business development program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 3174. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to affirm a collective bargaining agreement, and to nullify certain Executive orders that relate to collective bargaining by employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. MORAN):

S. Res. 492. A resolution recognizing community care as an essential tool for meeting the health care needs of the veterans of the United States; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. KENNEDY:

S. Res. 493. A resolution reducing the annual rate of pay of Senators if a Government shutdown occurs during a year; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. PETERS, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. SMITH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. SLOTKIN):

S. Res. 494. A resolution observing the 50th anniversary of the date on which the SS Edmund Fitzgerald sank in Lake Superior, and remembering the 29 lives lost in one of the worst storms ever recorded on the Great Lakes; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BANKS, and Mr. GALLEGO):

S. Res. 495. A resolution recognizing the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War and honoring the United States veterans who served during the conflict; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MARSHALL (for himself, Mr. WARNOCK, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. LUJÁN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MERKLEY, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. Res. 496. A resolution expressing support for the designation of November 8, 2025, as "National First-Generation College Celebration Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. Res. 497. A resolution permitting the collection of clothing, toys, food, and housewares during the holiday season for charitable purposes in Senate buildings; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. WELCH):

S. Res. 498. A resolution honoring Dr. Jane Goodall and her legacy as an ethologist, conservationist, and activist; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 142

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 142, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to wildland firefighters in recognition of their strength, resiliency, sacrifice, and service to protect the forests, grasslands, and communities of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 752

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 752, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to streamline enrollment under the Medicaid program of certain providers across State lines.

S. 961

At the request of Mr. ROUNDS, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. MCCORMICK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 961, a bill to amend