



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 119th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 172

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2026

No. 54

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, at 12 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2026

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, who does wondrous things, blessed be Your glorious name forever. Remake us in Your image, and bring our hearts under Your control.

Lord, infuse our Senators with a love for You that will make their obedience willing, joyful, and consistent. Astound them with Your limitless resources and supply all their needs from Your bounty. Keep them humble with the conviction that they can't breathe a breath, think a thought, or speak a word without Your mercy, grace, and power.

And, Lord, as the former chaplain of the U.S. Marine Corps, I thank You for the life and service of Robert S. Mueller III.

We pray in Your great name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Budd). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant bill clerk read the nomination of MARKWAYNE MULLIN, of Oklahoma, to be Secretary of Homeland Security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

NOMINATION OF MARKWAYNE MULLIN

Mr. GRASSLEY. Today, I will vote for the new Secretary of Homeland Security. The entire Senate will confirm our colleague the junior Senator from Oklahoma as the Department of Homeland Security Secretary.

Senator MULLIN is a welcome addition to the Cabinet. He is a consensus builder and, most importantly, has Oklahoma dirt under his fingernails. I am confident that he will use his business experience—and, more importantly to this farmer, his rancher experience—to get things done in the Department of Homeland Security.

I am confident, as I talked to him today about the importance of congressional oversight, and I hope he will take congressional oversight very seriously.

My advice to him is: Be transparent and responsive to the American people. Answer our letters. Protect whistleblowers. Hear whistleblowers out.

There is no way a Secretary can know what is going on in the bowels of the Department; and that is why, when people come to you saying, "Things aren't right, money is not being spent right, and the law is not being followed," listen to them.

And as I always say, run the Department; don't let the Department run you.

I wish Senator MULLIN all the best as he takes on this new role. I know he will serve his country with distinction. I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

HOME FOR EVERY CHILD INITIATIVE

On another matter, Mr. President, in my years in the U.S. Senate, I have been a person very interested in the foster care system serving the young people. So I would like to recognize a meaningful initiative that the Administration for Children and Families, or ACF, launched called A Home for Every Child.

ACF's A Home for Every Child initiative "sets an ambitious goal of achieving a foster home-to-child ratio greater than one-to-one in every state." I applaud this very ambitious goal.

I also have been working to beef up foster parent recruitment and retention efforts because kids in foster care deserve qualified, well-trained, and loving parents.

My bipartisan Recruiting Families Using Data Act complements ACF's A Home for Every Child initiative by enabling State child welfare agencies to

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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integrate best practices along with quality data. This will help ensure that foster youths and parents are best supported.

When referring to raising a child, a common phrase is used: It takes a village. That phrase rings more true when a child experiences foster care.

So I want to take this opportunity to thank First Lady Melania Trump for her work to modernize the child welfare system. It will strengthen partnerships for youth aging out of foster care through the program entitled Fostering the Future for American Children and Families initiative.

I also want to thank Assistant Secretary Adams for following through on his commitment to tackle the foster recruitment and retention challenge that is tainting child welfare agencies nationwide.

I look forward to continuing to work with the Senate Committee on Finance to advance the Recruiting Families Using Data Act.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

SAVE AMERICA ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, we have been debating the SAVE America Act for 7 days now, and what has been made clear in this debate is how out of touch Democrats are with most Americans.

Polls show that the commonsense policies in the SAVE America Act have support from the American people, but Democrats have repeatedly demonstrated they don't share the American people's interest in securing our elections.

And despite Americans' concerns, Democrats continue to embrace transgender ideology that allows men to compete in women's sports and children—children—to undergo irreversible, life-altering gender transition procedures.

At the start of this debate, the Democratic leader had the audacity to say that the SAVE America Act is a "radical bill." "Radical"—that is what he said.

Well, what is radical, I would say, about ensuring that only American citizens are voting in American elections? What is radical about asking voters for a photo ID?

And I don't know what world Democrats are living in, where keeping biological men out of women's sports is a radical proposition.

What is radical is men lining up alongside women at the starting line and winning medals and trophies meant for women. What is radical is telling female athletes that they have

to share a locker room with a biological male. That is radical.

Now, perhaps what is most radical about Democrats' position is that they seem to have no problem with gender transition procedures for minors. Democrats are more than happy to let transgender ideology reign, even when there is little to no evidence to support gender transition procedures for minors and increasing amounts of scientific evidence about the harms of these procedures for children.

But Democrats ignore the science. They ignore the fact that multiple European nations that have looked at the science have reined in gender transition procedures for minors.

They ignore the stories of Americans who underwent irreversible procedures as minors and have long lived to regret it.

So the SAVE America Act is not radical—radically common sense, maybe—so common sense, in fact, that only congressional Democrats could oppose it.

NOMINATION OF COLIN MCDONALD

Mr. President, as debate continues on the SAVE America Act, Republicans are also working to advance two nominees for important posts in the Trump administration.

One of those is Colin McDonald, whom President Trump has nominated to lead the new National Fraud Enforcement Division at the Department of Justice.

Fraud is a serious issue. Last year, it became clear that widespread fraud had taken root in the State of Minnesota. Prosecutors are working through cases and indictments related to at least \$9 billion in fraud, impacting 14 federally funded programs in that State alone.

And Minnesota is just the tip of the iceberg. The Government Accountability Office estimates that as much as \$500 billion in Federal funds is lost each year to fraud.

Now, needless to say, Mr. McDonald has his work cut out for him; and he is well suited to the challenge.

Colin McDonald is a career Federal prosecutor, which means, for his entire career, he has had only one client, and that is the American people.

Until coming to Washington to work at the Department of Justice, last year, Mr. McDonald spent 10 years as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Southern District of California. In that position, he spent a considerable amount of time trying cases in Federal court, including cases dealing with fraud, money laundering, and public corruption.

And his work has received notable praise. During one case in the Ninth Circuit, the judge actually interrupted proceedings to praise Mr. McDonald. None other than Judge Harry Pregerson, a notably progressive judge, said of Mr. McDonald:

I want to commend you on your candor, your openness, and your honesty with the Court.

Colin McDonald is well suited to provide justice for American taxpayers in

this role, and I look forward to confirming him swiftly so he can get to work.

NOMINATION OF MARKWAYNE MULLIN

Mr. President, the other nominee that we will be confirming this week is somebody we all know well—our colleague MARKWAYNE MULLIN.

President Trump has nominated MARKWAYNE to be the Secretary of Homeland Security. It is a tough assignment—made all the more challenging right now by Democrats having shut down DHS for 5 weeks.

But we all know that MARKWAYNE isn't afraid of a challenge—far from it. As a young man, MARKWAYNE left college to take over his family plumbing business. He grew that small enterprise into a large and successful business in the State of Oklahoma.

Just a few weeks after being elected to the House, when the Oklahoma delegation was touring storm damage, MARKWAYNE cut away from the other congressmen and climbed through debris to try to shut off water shooting through the wreckage. See a problem? Take action to solve it. That is MARKWAYNE. It is a big part of what drew him to public service.

I think all of us are familiar with MARKWAYNE MULLIN's seemingly unlimited supply of energy. His workout class in the House gym is the stuff of legend. In the halls, you can find him bouncing a little pink ball to get out some of his energy. And that energy doesn't come from coffee; MARKWAYNE does it all on decaf.

No, MARKWAYNE's energy is all him, but his strength, he will tell you, isn't his own. MARKWAYNE's strength comes from his wife and childhood sweetheart Christie and his rock-solid faith in God, both of which have made him an outstanding public servant and, most importantly, a loving father to their six children.

Heading up the Department of Homeland Security is a serious job, and I am proud to cast a vote for MARKWAYNE MULLIN, knowing with confidence that he is up to the work and to the task. I know how much I have depended on MARKWAYNE as a colleague and friend during his 3 years here in the U.S. Senate, and I am profoundly sorry to lose him. But the Senate's loss is the Department of Homeland Security's gain.

I want to thank MARKWAYNE for his service here in the Senate and wish him the very best as he continues to serve our country at DHS, and I hope whoever gets assigned to his security detail is ready to keep up.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, the Senate will soon confirm Senator