

AUTHORIZING APPOINTMENT OF  
ESCORT COMMITTEE

Mr. HAGERTY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the President of the Senate be authorized to appoint a committee on the part of the Senate to join with a like committee on the part of the House of Representatives to escort His Majesty Charles III into the House Chamber for the joint meeting on Tuesday, April 28, 2026.

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. HAGERTY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the postcloture time with respect to Executive Calendar No. 670 be expired and at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, no earlier than tomorrow, the Senate proceed to executive session and vote on confirmation of the nomination; finally, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

MEASURE READ THE FIRST  
TIME—S. RES. 690

Mr. HAGERTY. Mr. President, I send an executive resolution to the desk for the consideration of certain nominations en bloc and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title for the information of the Senate.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

An executive resolution (S. Res. 690) authorizing the en bloc consideration in Executive Session of certain nominations on the Executive Calendar.

Mr. HAGERTY. In order to place the executive resolution on the calendar, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection having been heard, the executive resolution will lie over for 1 calendar day.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. HAGERTY. 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. JAMES S.C. CHAO

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, on May 2, 2026, Maine Maritime Academy bestows an honorary degree upon Dr.

James S. C. Chao in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to global shipping, education, and public service. Dr. Chao's lifelong commitment to maritime commerce and leadership development has had a lasting impact on the industry and on generations of young professionals.

It is fitting that the keynote speaker for the academy's 83rd commencement is Dr. Chao's daughter, the Honorable Elaine Chao, who served our Nation with distinction as both Secretary of Labor and Secretary of Transportation. In that latter role, Secretary Chao was a champion of America's maritime academies that prepare the next generation of leaders for our Navy, Coast Guard, and maritime industry. When the new training vessel State of Maine was delivered in March of this year, I was proud to stand with Secretary Chao as cosponsor of that magnificent ship.

Appreciating the vital role the oceans play in commerce, security, and the environment is a family tradition. Dr. Chao was born 99 years ago in a small, rural farming community in China. Despite the danger and privations of World War II and the Chinese Civil War, he excelled in his educational pursuits and became one of the youngest captains in the Chinese Merchant Marines. After being separated by the war, Dr. Chao searched relentlessly for the love of his life Ruth Mulan Chu and finally found her by chance in Taiwan. They were wed in 1951, beginning a marriage that lasted for 57 years until her passing in 2007.

In 1958, Dr. Chao achieved a record-high score on the Chinese Merchant Marine Master's Special Qualification Examination, which gave him the opportunity to continue his studies in the United States. Arriving in New York alone and with little money, he secured a low-paying job with a Chinese shipping company and, with persistence, eventually gained admission to graduate programs at Columbia University and St. John's University. Balancing his studies with three jobs, he finally was able to bring Ruth and their three children to America in 1961.

After earning a master's degree in business administration in 1964, he founded his own company, Foremost Maritime Corporation. Among his early accomplishments was managing emergency food shipments during the wars in Vietnam and Bangladesh. Today, the company, now part of the Foremost Group, is global leader in international shipping, trading, and finance. Foremost Group is a leader in green technology in shipping, continuously upgrading its fleet with energy-saving devices, and building new ships with alternative fuel and carbon capture features.

Foremost's fleet is ranked among the world's most eco-friendly bulk carriers. For his outstanding contributions to the maritime industry, Dr. Chao was inducted into the International Maritime Hall of Fame at the United Na-

tions. Among his many other honors are the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, the Horatio Alger Award of Distinguished Americans at the U.S. Supreme Court, and an Outstanding American by Choice recognition by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Together, Dr. and Mrs. Chao devoted their business success to philanthropy, particularly in providing scholarships to deserving students. Since four of their daughters attended Harvard Business School, the couple endowed the Ruth Mulan Chu Chao Center as part of a \$40 million gift to the university that also supports the Chao Family Fellowship Fund.

Dr. Chao credits his remarkable accomplishments to courage, determination, confidence, and trust. As our Nation celebrates its 250th anniversary, we do well to heed his words, as one who achieved the American dream: "I could not have had the same success anywhere else as I have in this country. In America, you don't need to have a connection or a certain background. All you need is to have a goal. After that, all you have to do is work hard and help others."

America is so fortunate to have such an outstanding individual come to our shores and contribute so much. I congratulate Dr. James S.C. Chao on this recognition from Maine Maritime Academy and wish him all the best.

TRIBUTE TO ERIC F. MELGREN

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Honorable Eric F. Melgren of the U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas on the occasion of his assumption of senior status.

Raised on a cattle and wheat farm in southwest Kansas, Judge Melgren was the first in his family to pursue a college education. He attended Wichita State University, where he distinguished himself as student body president. He later earned his law degree from Washburn University School of Law, contributing to the Law Review during his time there.

Judge Melgren began his legal career clerking for Judge Frank Theis, a role that would ultimately come full circle when he returned to serve in the same chambers from the bench. He later spent 15 years with Foulston & Siefkin, Kansas' largest law firm, where he specialized in tax and business matters.

In 2002, he was called to public service as U.S. Attorney for the District of Kansas, a position he held until his appointment to the Federal judiciary by President George W. Bush in 2008. Following Senate confirmation, Judge Melgren took his seat on the U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas, where he has served with distinction ever since.

Judge Melgren's service has extended beyond the courtroom through civic and professional leadership, including roles with the United Way of the Plains, the Wichita State University

Alumni Association, Leadership Wichita, and other organizations. He also serves as the Tenth Circuit representative on the Judicial Conference's Defender Services Committee.

I now ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Judge Melgren for his service to Kansas and the United States and in wishing him continued success in the next chapter of his judicial career.

#### RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF ACOG

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today, it is my honor to recognize the American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, or ACOG, as it celebrates the 75th anniversary of its founding. Since 1951, ACOG has played a central role in advancing the field of obstetrics and gynecology and improving the health and well-being of patients across the United States.

ACOG is the leading professional membership organization for obstetrician-gynecologists, representing more than 62,000 members who live in and provide care to patients in every congressional district nationwide, including over 1,300 members in Washington State. Its members uphold the highest professional standards and are united in their delivery of exceptional, respectful, and science-based care for patients across their lifespan. For three-quarters of a century, ACOG has set the standard for obstetrics and gynecology through clinical guidance, education, and advocacy, empowering physicians to provide the best care possible for their patients.

ACOG has served as a trusted source of accessible and reliable health information for both healthcare providers and the public. In partnership with its members, ACOG has championed initiatives to improve maternal health outcomes, protect the patient-physician relationship, create more sustainable practice environments for obstetrician-gynecologists, bolster the healthcare workforce, and protect and advance access to quality healthcare for all individuals.

In my time in the Senate, I have been proud to partner with ACOG in efforts to protect access to reproductive healthcare; prevent harmful treatment of pregnant and postpartum patients in immigration detention; advance investments in women's health research; require pregnancy-related accommodations for workers; expand access to fertility services for veterans, service members, and their families; and secure support for State maternal mortality review committees.

ACOG's 75th anniversary is an important opportunity to recognize its historic contributions and enduring leadership in obstetrics and gynecology. To name a few, ACOG was a leading voice advocating to extend Medicaid coverage to at least 1 year postpartum, advocated for legislation to address opioid use during pregnancy, led qual-

ity improvement initiatives to address and prevent the leading causes of maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity, helped pave the way for broader access to contraception, and translated the scientific advances of HPV vaccine development into clinical practice.

For 75 years, ACOG has helped shape the future of women's health and continues to play a vital role in ensuring high-quality care for patients and families nationwide, and I look forward to continuing to partner with them to improve access to healthcare for women in my State and across the country.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO STEVE AND GAYLE MASON

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I have the honor to recognize Steve and Gayle Mason as Montanans of the Month.

Steve and Gayle Mason are residents of Somers, MT. Steve is a U.S. military veteran, and his dedication to country and community has continued long after the end of his military service.

Northwest Montana is home to a large, active veteran community, and nearly 6,000 veterans live in Kalispell alone. The Masons have dedicated a tremendous amount of their time and resources to give back to veterans in need by gathering donations and distributing food, clothing, and medical supplies.

It is my distinct honor to recognize Steve and Gayle Mason as Montanans of the Month. Their hard work, dedication to the veteran community, and their selfless service to Montanans will be remembered and inspire many. •

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Hanley, 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 and withdrawals which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4690. An act to amend the Energy Conservation and Production Act to repeal cer-

tain Federal building energy efficiency performance standards, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6387. An act to amend the Clean Air Act to require revisions to regulations governing the review and handling of air quality monitoring data influenced by exceptional events or actions to mitigate wildfire risk.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following resolution:

H. Res. 1206. Resolution relative to the death of the Honorable David Scott, a Representative from the State of Georgia.

#### ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The message further announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 98. An act to require the Federal Communications Commission to establish a vetting process for prospective applicants for high-cost universal service program funding.

S. 1020. An act to require the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to extend the time period during which licensees are required to commence construction of certain hydropower projects.

S. 2066. An act to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to exclude from the limit on leverage certain amounts invested in smaller enterprises located in rural or low-income areas and small businesses in critical technology areas, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

#### MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 4690. An act to amend the Energy Conservation and Production Act to repeal certain Federal building energy efficiency performance standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 6387. An act to amend the Clean Air Act to require revisions to regulations governing the review and handling of air quality monitoring data influenced by exceptional events or actions to mitigate wildfire risk; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

#### MEASURES DISCHARGED PETITIONS

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, hereby direct that the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be discharged of further consideration of S.J. Res. 125, a resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to the withdrawal of the rule relating to "Debt Collection Practices (Regulation F); Pay-to-Pay Fees," and, further, that the resolution be immediately placed upon the Legislative Calendar under General Orders.

Elizabeth Warren, Peter Welch, Bernard Sanders, Jeff Merkley, Jeanne Shaheen, Tammy Duckworth, Richard J. Durbin, Martin Heinrich, Mazie Hirono, Richard Blumenthal, Mark Kelly, Raphael G. Warnock, Chris Van Hollen, Christopher Murphy, Brian Schatz, Alex Padilla, John Hickenlooper, Adam B. Schiff, Tina Smith, Cory Booker, Ron Wyden, Patty