

veterans in America and the people of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. If the Senator from Florida is ready to deliver her remarks, I would defer. I don't have enough time to give my remarks before the 2:15 vote, so just to keep the Senate on time, I will defer and try to land another time.

I ask unanimous consent that Senator MOODY be permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes before the previously scheduled rollcall vote.

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

The Senator from Florida.

(The remarks of Mrs. MOODY pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 773 are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

VOTE ON STEEL NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Steel nomination?

Mr. CORNYN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGRO), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 39, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 177 Ex.]

YEAS—55

Armstrong	Graham	Moreno
Banks	Grassley	Murkowski
Barrasso	Hagerty	Paul
Blackburn	Hawley	Ricketts
Boozman	Hoeben	Risch
Britt	Husted	Rounds
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Justice	Scott (SC)
Collins	Kaine	Shaheen
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sheehy
Cotton	King	Sullivan
Cramer	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Cruz	Lummis	Tuberville
Curtis	Marshall	Wicker
Daines	McCormick	Young
Ernst	Moody	
Fischer	Moran	

NAYS—39

Alsobrooks	Hassan	Murphy
Baldwin	Heinrich	Murray
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Ossoff
Blunt Rochester	Hirono	Padilla
Cantwell	Kelly	Peters
Coons	Kim	Reed
Cortez Masto	Klobuchar	Rosen
Duckworth	Lujan	Sanders
Durbin	Markey	Schatz
Fetterman	Merkley	Schiff

Schumer	Van Hollen	Welch
Slotkin	Warner	Whitehouse
Smith	Warren	Wyden

NOT VOTING—6

Bennet	Gallego	McConnell
Booker	Gillibrand	Warnock

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

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. 763, George Holding, of North Carolina, to be United States Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

John Thune, Ted Budd, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Katie Boyd Britt, Thom Tillis, Roger Marshall, Rick Scott of Florida, Bernie Moreno, Mike Rounds, John Boozman, Joni Ernst, Jon Husted, Marsha Blackburn, Steve Daines, Shelley Moore Capito, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Pete Ricketts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the mandatory quorum call under rule XXII has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of George Holding, of North Carolina, to be United States Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGRO), and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 54, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 178 Ex.]

YEAS—54

Armstrong	Curtis	Lankford
Banks	Daines	Lee
Barrasso	Ernst	Lummis
Blackburn	Fischer	Marshall
Boozman	Graham	McCormick
Britt	Grassley	Moody
Budd	Hagerty	Moran
Capito	Hawley	Moreno
Cassidy	Hoeben	Murkowski
Collins	Husted	Paul
Cornyn	Hyde-Smith	Ricketts
Cotton	Johnson	Risch
Cramer	Justice	Rounds
Crapo	Kaine	Schmitt
Cruz	Kennedy	Scott (FL)

Scott (SC)	Sullivan	Tuberville
Shaheen	Thune	Wicker
Sheehy	Tillis	Young

NAYS—41

Alsobrooks	Hirono	Sanders
Baldwin	Kim	Schatz
Blumenthal	King	Schiff
Blunt Rochester	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cantwell	Lujan	Slotkin
Coons	Markey	Smith
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murphy	Warner
Durbin	Murray	Warnock
Fetterman	Ossoff	Warren
Gillibrand	Padilla	Welch
Hassan	Peters	Whitehouse
Heinrich	Reed	Wyden
Hickenlooper	Rosen	

NOT VOTING—5

Bennet	Gallego	McConnell
Booker	Kelly	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 54, the nays are 41. The motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of George Holding, of North Carolina, to be United States Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the postcloture time with respect to the Holding nomination be expired and the Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Democratic leader no earlier than tomorrow; further, if the nomination is 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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, finally, I ask that the Senate proceed to 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

S. RES. 616

Mr. KAIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak upon a matter that will be brought to the floor for a vote within the next hour or so. The matter is what is called a 502B resolution filed by my colleague Senator CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, and a 502B resolution directs

the State Department to issue a human rights report on topics voted upon by the Senate.

This particular 502B resolution concerns a most serious human rights and criminal justice matter and one of the worst abuses of the Presidential pardon power in the history of the United States.

I applaud my colleague Senator CORTEZ MASTO for leading on this bill. I am a cosponsor of the bill. I was a missionary in Honduras and lived there in 1980 and 1981, and I have a number of friends still there who feel this issue is definitely one that warrants some additional attention by our government.

And I thank Senator CORTEZ MASTO. She will be the final speaker on this before it is called up for vote. My colleagues might remember that on March 8, 2024, former Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernandez was convicted of three counts of drug trafficking in a case that was brought in the Southern District of New York, also convicted of weapons conspiracy, and on June 26, 2024, he was sentenced to 45 years in prison.

Now, this conviction in March of 2024 followed a long investigatory process. President Hernandez' brother Tony was earlier convicted of serious drug offenses in the United States. That investigation began when Barack Obama was President. Most of the investigation was done during the Presidency of Donald Trump, term one. It continued during the Biden Presidency, and obviously, the conviction was obtained in the last year of the Biden Presidency.

The point is, this was a very intense effort by the Department of Justice over both Democratic and Republican administrations to go after serious narcotrafficking.

What was he convicted of doing? This former Honduran President was convicted of—while he was President, he was engaged in a conspiracy to import more than 400 tons of cocaine into the United States—400 tons.

U.S. prosecutors described Hernandez as a key figure in one of the largest and most dangerous drug trafficking convictions ever prosecuted in the United States court system.

This disgraced former President even bragged about how he and his cartel friends—and this was evidence that was introduced against him at trial:

We're going to shove the drugs right up the noses of the gringos, and they're never even going to know it.

A serious narcotrafficker who abused the public trust of his nation to flood the United States with drugs used to kill Americans.

On December 1, 2025, after less than a year, a little bit more than a year service of his 45-year sentence, President Orlando Hernandez, this disgraced drug trafficker was released from Federal prison and given a full and complete pardon by Donald Trump, our President.

We have yet to receive any public plausible explanation for the pardon.

President Trump said he thought it was a setup job done by the Biden administration, even though much of the investigation was conducted by President Trump's own officials in the Department of Justice in the Southern District of New York.

I have spoken about this matter before when the pardon was undertaken. The former President Hernandez is represented by some pretty high-priced folks. There is virtually no explanation for this that makes any sense, except a corrupt one. Someone got money for this pardon.

I don't know exactly who, and I am sure it is in an account somewhere that we will never be able to find out who, but there would be no reason to pardon this individual for this serious crime unless there was some corrupt motive behind it.

Now, this particular pardon raises serious doubts and questions given that President Trump is currently claiming to be at war against narcotraffickers. We have had much debate in this Chamber about the President's actions to direct the U.S. military to target and bomb boats and kill occupants on those boats in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific.

And at a hearing that we recently had with the Secretary of State, I asked him questions based upon my review of 46 files of the strikes, the first 46 strikes—now over 200 people have been killed in these strikes—and I asked the question why the administration did not demand evidence of the presence of narcotics on the boats that they are bombing.

That is not one of the targeting criteria. I am not allowed to describe the targeting criteria because they are classified, but I think I can discuss something that is not one of the targeting criteria. And evidence of narcotics on the boats has never been one of the targeting criteria in the strikes that have now killed more than 200 people.

But why would an administration that is bombing boats, even without evidence of narcotics, and claiming it is an effort to stop narcotrafficking—why would that administration pardon this guy—this guy—certainly, one of the most powerful and dangerous narcotraffickers ever convicted in the history of the United States? How does this make any sense?

Why is the President and this administration prioritizing Juan Orlando Hernandez over the American people?

And this is not the only example of a narcotrafficker or a drug trafficker being pardoned by the President. He pardoned a notorious drug trafficker on the first day of his Presidency. But this is the most egregious one.

Granting clemency to this narcotrafficker, after serving only 1 year out of a 45-year sentence, sends a troubling message about justice and accountability and about the fact that there are basically two systems of justice in this country—one for the well-con-

nected, who can hire fancy folks and pay a lot of money to get out of a 45-year sentence, and everybody else.

So I call on my colleagues to stand up for what is right, to push back on this enabling of cartels, to push back on this impunity in releasing a dangerous narcotrafficker.

And I thank my colleague Senator CORTEZ MASTO for filing this resolution and bringing it to the floor of the Senate so that all Members of the Senate can go on the record about whether they believe the law should apply to everybody or whether there are, in fact, two standards of justice for people like Juan Orlando Hernandez.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

#### INFLATION

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, last week, President Trump was asked about the surge in inflation. His response:

I love the inflation.

“I love the inflation”? It is almost like the reality betrays reality. What else does he love? Does he love the increase in measles cases, screwworm infecting our cattle, record credit card debt?

The truth is the President's economy has become a disaster for Americans. Families feel like they are getting squeezed every which way they look. This has become a cost-of-living emergency.

According to a recent report by the Joint Economic Committee minority, Coloradans have spent \$3,300 more on goods and services since President Trump took office last year. That is \$416 more on rent and mortgage payments; \$310 more for groceries at the checkout line, as everything from ground beef to coffee has spiked; and \$1,000 more in average deductibles for people on the Affordable Care Act insurance plans.

And Americans have gotten completely ripped off at the gas pump. In total, Coloradans have spent over \$780 million more on gas since the beginning of President Trump's illegal war with Iran. That means Colorado families are spending \$347 more now than they did before the war started.

Not only did President Trump raise your bills, but he also broke another campaign vow. He repeatedly promised, in his campaign, no more expensive, deadly wars.

Now, we are almost 14 months into an illegal war—a war of choice—in Iran. It is a war that Trump promised would be over in 4 to 5 weeks.

Mr. President, \$100 billion later, 14 servicemembers lost, and we are still waiting for it to end.

A few hours ago, the administration finally released the details of a memorandum of understanding, which appears to kick the can down the road on many of the hard decisions still to be