

other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.”.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, I ask that the Senate proceed to executive session and the Chair execute the order with respect to the Holding nomination at 1:45 p.m. today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

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

The senior assistant legislative 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 Oklahoma.

FATHER'S DAY

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I have come to this floor many times to be able to talk about a lot of serious policy issues, to be able to walk through all different kinds of tax policy, energy policy, immigration policy. We have worked through a lot of different issues on this floor, and I have had the opportunity to be able to speak on a lot of issues.

I don't often take time just to be able to pause and talk about a cultural issue. I want to do that today.

This weekend, the Nation will pause and celebrate Father's Day. Now, this will be the 116th year of celebrating Father's Day in America; the 54th year since it was officially recognized as an official Federal holiday.

It is kind of a big deal. Every human being on Earth has a mom and a dad. You may or may not know them, but it does take two to tango, they say, and every single person does have a mom and a dad.

There are a lot of dads that are separated, and there is a lot of disjointedness. What we are watching in culture is culture pushing back on men, to challenge men to be better dads. I applaud a good thing that is happening in culture with that.

We are literally seeing the statistics on this. The numbers on it bear out. Literally in this generation of dads right now, they are three times more likely to spend more time with their kids than the dads during the 1960s.

It is an interesting shift that is happening. We have fewer dads out there, but the dads that are there in America are looking at their kids and saying: I want to spend more time with them.

Good. We need more engaged dads. Quite frankly, being a dad is a courageous job and a challenging job but exceptionally important. And it is not

just being a breadwinner, it is not just being a disciplinarian, it is just being there for their child.

I first want to say happy Father's Day to my own dad, but I also want to be able to challenge all dads that are out there to turn to your kids and to rededicate again, not just this weekend, but to rededicate again to actually spending more time with your kids because healthy families are the most basic building block of culture.

I have said it to people over and over again: Healthy families make healthy communities, make a healthy nation.

And when I hear people complain about the status of where we are as a nation, I have to tell you, the first place that I look are dads and to say how are dads doing because dads will define a tremendous amount of the strength of our Nation and the strength of our culture.

If dads back away from their families, families get weaker, communities get weaker, the Nation gets weaker.

If dads are engaged with their kids and with their families, the Nation gets stronger, communities get stronger.

Now, it is not just me speaking on this; I mean, you can go to any statistic that you want to be able to go to. The research out there for youth and adult offenders, between—depending on a State and a place—between 70 percent and 85 percent of incarcerated individuals do not have a dad in their life. They came from fatherless homes.

Around 85 percent of the abortions that happen in our country, year to year, happen with a single mom when no dad is around and no man is around—85 percent. That is a woman who is making an incredibly difficult decision to take the life of the child, often because she is afraid she will not have the resources or the support to be able to support this child, and so she makes this decision to take the life of a child instead.

I have a friend of mine that often says behind every abortion is an irresponsible man. Dads, dads are important.

Now, it is not something we can legislate, though I would tell you there are initiatives that are out there. Right now there is fatherhood.gov if people want to go to that site that encourages ideas for dads. It is not just up for Father's Day, it is up all the time. And people can go to fatherhood.org. Right now, the Ad Council is running an ad campaign across the entire country that just is called “Be a Good Dad Today.”

That is cultural encouragement on these things. But there are also things that we are working on as well: marriage penalty, for instance, in our tax law. If there are areas of our tax law that actually give you greater benefit not being married than married, those things need to be fixed. And there are several of those.

The Brookings Institute for years has asked the most basic question: How

does someone rise out of poverty? If someone is born in poverty, how do they rise out of poverty? For years, they have done this study, and the same three things rise up over and over again every time they do this study: if you graduate high school, if you have a job of any type, and if you wait until after marriage to have children. If those three things are true, 97 percent chance you rise out of poverty.

That is someone making good decisions, and it allows the next generation to also be successful as well. That is just good tax policy to be able to incentivize ways that we can keep families together and to encourage families in that way.

The Trump administration has also made some changes to be able to encourage more dads to make alimony payments; if there is a divorce that happens and a child is there, for the dad to make sure he is providing alimony.

It is incredibly important to that woman, that mom, that is raising those kids to still have the financial support and for that dad to still show his financial support, I hope, as well as his love and encouragement to those kids. The Trump administration is now saying if a dad is not paying child support, they can't get a passport, and if a dad is not paying child support, they can have their tax refund, if they are getting that, withheld. Good for them to be able to encourage that man to be able to be responsible as well.

But, ultimately, you can't legislate being a good dad. That is a decision that a man makes. Now, I would tell you, I have talked to men, and they have said: Hey, I didn't have a man in my life and so it is tough to be able to learn how to do that.

I have talked to plenty of folks in churches and in communities and friends and neighbors that are just encouraging other dads to be able to be a better dad. It is a good gift to the next generation to be able to do that.

I will tell you this, pure and simple: Every child needs a mom. Every child needs a dad. There is no substitute. Many people in this body know I am a former youth pastor, and I would have parents that came up to me all the time and say: You are such an influence on my child for teaching and role modeling. And I would say that is very kind, but there is no influence that is a bigger influence on a child than their mom and dad. The path of their life will be set by their mom or dad.

So dads should not think it is somebody else's responsibility; it is theirs. If the next generation is going to be patriotic, if the next generation is going to love God, if the next generation is going to make good decisions, if the next generation is going to have a hard work ethic, if the next generation is going to learn to be kind, if the next generation is going to stand up for what is right, it is going to be because a dad invested that into that child's life.

So if you want to see the Nation stronger, dads engage. That is what is going to make the Nation stronger. Every child needs a guide, a role model. They need to see the courage and kindness and strength of a dad.

They need more than just dad jokes. They need a dad present. That is what makes the biggest difference.

Could I just say from my own context, the Scripture is full of conversations challenging dads to love their children, and, quite frankly, children to honor their parents. Let me just give you a couple of them.

In Malachi 4:6.

It says: The role of the Prophet Elijah was to turn the heart of the fathers back to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers lest there be a curse on the land.

What a clear statement: to turn the hearts of the fathers back to their children and the children to their father; if not, there is a curse on the land.

And how about this one? Just a simple challenge from Paul, who, interestingly enough, was not a dad but was somebody that understood the importance there. Paul in Ephesians 6:4. It says: Fathers don't exasperate your children. Don't just push them, push them, push them.

But instead he said: Bring them up in the training and the admonition of the Lord.

It is a very clear statement to dads to say don't just yell at your kids; train them on how to be able to love God and love people, train them up in the right way because if you want a church and community and a family to be better, dads need to be engaged with their kids.

So happy Father's Day to my dad, happy Father's Day to all the dads that are out there. And if I can make just the most simple cultural challenge, if we really want a stronger nation, there is no vote that we will take in this body today that will make the Nation stronger than just dads loving their kids and spending time with them and helping them know how to be able to walk with God and live a patriotic life and serve their family and community. There is no vote we will take that will help our Nation more than that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

INSIDER TRADING

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, Americans don't appear to agree on very much these days, but there is at least one thing on which the American people can agree; it is this thing that brings the American people together. Our citizens, no matter their politics, don't trust their leaders.

The list of institutions that Americans have lost faith in is long. We know this. We also know that Congress is at the bottom. In fact, over 80 percent of Americans disapprove of the job we are doing in this building.

The legislative branch is the foundation of representative government. It is

urgent, it is essential that we earn the trust of the American people back.

You see, we are charged with putting the interests of our constituents over our own interests. We are their voice. And yet many of the people we represent believe we are failing to honor that basic commitment.

It is no wonder many are losing faith, losing trust. We are their voice. A faith in government has eroded over decades. There are many causes. A lot of fingers can be pointed. There is plenty of blame to go around.

And we know that the task of restoring trust is going to be a long-term project. But I am here today to argue that there is an immediate step that we need to take to restore a measure of trust in this institution, and it is imminently achievable.

We can prevent its Members from using their positions of public trust to enrich themselves, to enrich their families, by banning stock trading among Members of Congress.

You see, as lawmakers, we write and pass bills that significantly impact the market. We do it on a daily basis. We sit on committees of jurisdiction that oversee entire sectors of America's economy. We have access to briefings and updates on a regular basis that provide nonpublic market information.

There is little to prohibit Members of Congress from using such privileged information to guide their personal selection of stocks.

In fact, in the last two decades, Members have made trades conspicuously timed around market-moving events, events shaped by information they had access to or legislation that they helped advance. Of course, this creates a direct conflict of interest between public duty and personal financial interest. And it is also a troubling double standard.

Most people say isn't insider trading a Federal crime for all Americans? And it is, but when it comes to Members of Congress trading on information gained through public service, enforcement is quite rare and very difficult to police.

So it is no wonder many Americans are convinced that the market is rigged for a privileged set of citizens who can manipulate it for their gain.

Now, to be fair, in 2012, Congress made some headway in addressing this unfairness. They passed the STOCK Act. This law, get this, mandates that lawmakers report stock trades over \$1,000 within 30 days of the transaction. But the enforcement mechanism and initial fine of a mere \$200 is virtually toothless.

So, the underlying problem remains, and it should not. Today, roughly 200 Members of Congress own shares in publicly traded companies.

Many of them, most of them, are good people. They are ethical people. They came here for all the right reasons, and many have not lost their way. And among those 200 Members, many sit on committees that craft pol-

icy for and conduct oversight on the very industries in which they invest.

In an era of deep partisanship, most Americans—no matter their political beliefs, their party, their underlying ideology, the geography in which they live, their gender, their age—they see this as a problem. How much of a problem?

Well, according to a survey conducted by the University of Maryland's School of Public Policy, 86 percent of our population supports a prohibition on congressional stock trading.

There aren't many issues like this. In a divided America, this could unify America. Our Congress could be unified by exercising the will of the American people and banning Members of Congress from trading stocks.

What do Republicans say? Mr. President, 87 percent of Republicans think this is a problem, think we should ban Members of Congress from trading stocks. You go across the country, almost 9 out of 10 Republicans you talk to will say we should do it.

And why have we not? What about Democrats? Mr. President, 87–88 percent, rather, of Democrats, almost 9 out of 10. Independents—81 percent.

So, listen, there are two bills that we already have. I don't need to draft a new bill. Let's recognize our colleagues' handiwork and get something important done.

Two bills that would accomplish this in the U.S. Senate: The first bill, the Stop Insider Trading Act, would just prevent Members of Congress, their spouses, and their dependent children from trading individual stocks, and it would strengthen disclosure and enforcement requirements. And unlike current law, the bill would impose meaningful financial penalties for violations. Under this bill, lawmakers who fail to comply with the law's mandates would be fined the greater of \$2,000—probably still not enough but enough maybe to get it passed through the Senate; we can increase it later—be fined the greater of \$2,000 or 10 percent of the investment value, plus the forfeiture of any net gain realized from the sale.

The second bill, the Restore Trust in Congress Act, would prohibit Members of Congress from trading individual stock. It would establish guidelines for Members to divest existing holdings within a defined period. It would also empower congressional ethics offices to enforce compliance through meaningful penalties.

Now, look, there is no easy or quick way to restore complete trust in Congress, faith in this essential institution of democratic government. But prohibiting Members of Congress from leveraging their positions of public trust for personal enrichment would go a long way. I think most Americans would acknowledge that it would be a meaningful step toward that goal.

Passing these bills will ensure stock trading comes to an end in Congress and help restore trust in us, those who