

military history: Appomattox, Yorktown, the Pentagon. We train all marine officers at Quantico. We have the biggest naval base in the world in Norfolk. The biggest military office in the world is the Pentagon in Arlington. I come from the most military State in this country. One of my kids is a marine. We are so pro-military.

But what my military families ask me is: Make sure we have the tools to do the job, but don't ask us to do a stupid job. Don't order our best and brightest—don't order our kids—to do foolish missions based on inadequate deliberation without a clear plan or rationale or without allies or without consulting with Congress and with the American public.

We will hear a lot about this deal, I am sure, in the days to come because under a bill that I authored with some colleagues back in 2015, the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, this memorandum has to be submitted to Congress for a review. So I am sure we will hear a lot more about it on the floor.

I have spent some time digging deeply back into the JCPOA—I was very involved in it at the time—and digging into this MOU, and I will just conclude with this conclusion: We gave an awful lot more to get an awful lot less than what we had and foolishly destroyed when President Trump walked out of the diplomatic deal that was working.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that, notwithstanding rule XXII, at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Democratic leader, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 758, Darrell Owens, to be U.S. Representative to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that 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

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Sen-

ators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

CUBA

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, whatever one thinks of the Cuban Government—and I am one who believes its repressive policies and mismanagement of the economy have caused immense hardship for the Cuban people—the depth of misery and desperation people in Cuba are currently experiencing is largely due to the oil blockade, for which the United States is responsible.

More than 84 percent of Cuba's total energy supply relies on oil and petroleum products. Cuba's economy is entirely dependent on imported fuel to power its electrical grid, agriculture, and transportation needs, the country typically requiring around 100,000 barrels per day to function normally. Since January 30, the United States has imposed an illegal blockade on oil shipments to Cuba, so the island is entirely dependent on domestic production which consists of heavy, high-sulfur crude that cannot be easily refined.

When asked about the humanitarian crisis on the island, where electricity is unavailable most hours of the day and night and hospitals, schools, and factories have all but ceased to function, the Trump administration routinely blames the Cuban authorities. Any objective observer knows that is a convenient oversimplification.

Imagine if there was no electricity in this country for lack of access to oil, due to the hostile acts of another government. We would rightly condemn it as an act of war. Cuba is a bankrupt country the size of Virginia that poses no threat to the United States. And today, Cuba's economy has all but collapsed.

According to the United Nations, the impact of the oil blockade has been devastating for Cuba's health system. More than 100,000 surgeries have been delayed, including 12,000 pediatric procedures, due to acute shortages of medicines and medical supplies. Survival rates for children with cancer have fallen from 85 percent to 65 percent. That amounts to thousands of children who would otherwise be alive today.

More than 2.5 million people are experiencing water shortages—more than one-fifth of the total Cuban population. The national water system is functioning with only 37 percent of the fuel required, and 84 percent of water pumping runs on electricity. Food prices have increased by 18 percent. Energy shortages are disrupting agricultural production, food processing, refrigeration, and distribution. Hunger and malnutrition are widespread.

The lack of electricity and water, combined with food shortages, is causing psychological distress and exhaustion, especially among children, the elderly, and caregivers.

The streets are overflowing with rotting garbage. The hurricane season is beginning, and rising temperatures are creating conditions for a surge in vector-borne and waterborne diseases when the health system is already stretched to its limits.

The bottom line is this: All basic services, from potable water and sanitation to food production and healthcare, are being severely impacted by the lack of fuel and electricity caused by the U.S. oil blockade.

The energy crisis is also limiting the ability of the UN and other humanitarian agencies to deliver aid already committed, with dozens of containers of food and medical supplies reportedly still sitting in ports due to the lack of fuel. The UN's Plan of Action to respond to the crisis is only 21 percent funded. The U.S. has offered \$100 million through private mechanisms like the Catholic Church, but it has not yet been delivered.

We would all like to see a better government in Cuba, one that cares more about the Cuban people than in holding onto power and enriching themselves. I would say the same about other corrupt, undemocratic governments, including some we treat as partners. But the American people have always opposed using food and medicine as a weapon. That has been a bedrock principle that Republican and Democratic administrations, and the Congress, have reaffirmed over decades. By cutting off the oil, we are imposing collective punishment on Cuba's most vulnerable people. Children and the elderly are dying needlessly.

I urge Secretary of State Rubio to consider the human cost of the administration's oil blockade. It is illegal. It is immoral. It is preventable. And it is beneath this country.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. President, I missed the following votes, but had I been present, I would have voted:

No on rollcall vote No. 177, Confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 760, Michelle Steel, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Korea.

No on rollcall vote No. 178, Motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 763, George Holding, of North Carolina, to be United States Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Yes on rollcall vote No. 179, Motion to discharge S. Res. 616, a resolution requesting information on Honduras's human rights practices pursuant to section 502B(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING GRONEN

• Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as chair of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each

week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to honor Gronen of Dubuque County, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Founded in 1999 by John and Mary Gronen, Gronen began as a small, family-owned construction company focused on masonry work and historic rehabilitation projects in Dubuque's Washington Neighborhood. As Dubuque natives, John and Mary shared a vision of restoring neglected properties, strengthening neighborhoods, and preserving the city's historic character. What started with a small construction crew and commitment to community-driven revitalization has grown into successful redevelopment and property development firms. Over the past 25 years, Gronen has expanded beyond historic rehabilitation into commercial and residential development, property management, development consulting, and real estate services. Today, the company operates through Gronen Restoration, Gronen Properties, Gronen Development, and DBQ Property Group, employing 70 individuals and serving clients throughout Iowa and the broader Midwest.

For years, Gronen has continued transforming underutilized properties into productive community assets. The company has contributed to numerous redevelopment efforts across Dubuque, including work associated with the Field of Dreams project and the award-winning Steeple Square redevelopment. Through these and other projects, Gronen has helped create housing opportunities and spurred economic growth while preserving Iowa's rich architectural heritage.

Beyond its business operations, Gronen remains deeply engaged in the Dubuque community. The company supports and partners with organizations, including the Dubuque Chamber of Commerce, Greater Dubuque Development, Dubuque Forward, Heritage Works, Smart Growth Development, and the HEART housing program. Through these efforts, Gronen continues to invest in the long-term success of the communities it serves. Gronen's commitment to excellence has earned national and industry recognition, including the Tony Goldman Award, the J. Timothy Anderson Award, and recognition from the International Federation for the Roofing Trade. These honors reflect the company's leadership in historic preservation, community revitalization, and innovative redevelopment.

I am pleased to recognize John and Mary Gronen, along with the entire Gronen team, for their dedication to Dubuque and Iowa. I look forward to their continued success and wish them the very best in the years ahead.●

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with

accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-3930. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of firearms, parts, and components controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions List to Oman in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 26-023); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3931. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Denmark, Norway, Poland, and the United Kingdom in the amount of \$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 26-026); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3932. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to the United Kingdom in the amount of \$25,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 26-030); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3933. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services for the manufacture of significant military equipment abroad to Italy (Transmittal No. DDTC 25-149); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3934. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of firearms, parts, and components controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions List to Ukraine in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 26-045); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3935. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of firearms, parts, and components controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions List to the United Kingdom in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 26-042); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3936. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to Israel and Italy in the amount of \$25,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 26-034); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3937. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to France, Germany, and Italy in the amount of \$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 26-011); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3938. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, the Army's proposed letter(s) of offer and acceptance to the Government of Brazil for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$330 million (RSAT Case 26-62); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3939. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, the Army's proposed letter(s) of offer and acceptance to the Government of Singapore for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$73 million (RSAT Case 26-67); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3940. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, the Navy's proposed letter(s) of offer and acceptance to the Government of Kuwait for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$235.9 million (RSAT Case 26-56); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. CRUZ, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, without amendment:

S. 1898. A bill to establish a demonstration program for the active remediation of orbital debris and to require the development of uniform orbital debris standard practices in order to support a safe and sustainable orbital environment, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 119-128).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. CRUZ for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Coast Guard nominations beginning with Capt. Matthew T. Brown and ending with Capt. Torrence B. Wilson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on November 18, 2025. (minus 1 nominee: Capt. Blake L. Novak)

*Coast Guard nomination of Rear Adm. (lh) Russell E. Dash, to be Rear Admiral.

*Coast Guard nomination of Joanna K. Hiigel, to be Rear Admiral.

*Coast Guard nominations beginning with Capt. John F. Barresi and ending with Capt. Jacqueline M. Leverich, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 19, 2026.

*Coast Guard nomination of Tabitha A. Schiro, to be Rear Admiral (Lower Half).

*Coast Guard nomination of Dorothy J. Hernaez, to be Rear Admiral (Lower Half).

*Coast Guard nomination of Tevin A. White, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORD on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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