

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arkansas.

NOMINATION OF WALTER CLAYTON

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I speak today in support of Mr. Jay Clayton's nomination to be the next Director of National Intelligence.

Earlier this month, Mr. Clayton appeared before the Senate Intelligence Committee, where he answered hundreds of written questions for the record and provided detailed testimony on his approach to serving in this new role. As part of these discussions, Mr. Clayton assured the committee that he would assist our efforts to return the Office of the Director of National Intelligence to its original size, scope, and mission.

He also pledged to work with the committee to secure the essential funding the intelligence community needs. Based on the shortcomings that my committee staff identified, I project that any supplemental appropriations bill or reconciliation bill must include around \$40 billion for our intelligence Agencies. I look forward to working with Mr. Clayton to meet this vital need.

Given his past professional experience, Mr. Clayton is well qualified to serve as the Director of National Intelligence. As the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, Mr. Clayton went after some of the worst of the worst national security threats. He has overseen numerous high-profile cases, including the indictment of Venezuelan dictator Nicolas Maduro and the prosecution of an Iran-backed terrorist connected to multiple attempted terror attacks in the United States. Time and again, Mr. Clayton has worked hand in glove with our intelligence Agencies and counterterrorism personnel to put these savages behind bars and keep America safe.

Based on Mr. Clayton's testimony and the many conversations I have had with him over the last few months, I can say with confidence that his reputation for leading with integrity precedes him. I am pleased to support his nomination, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of his confirmation.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I speak today in opposition to the nomination of Jay Clayton to be Director of National Intelligence. He has repeated baseless conspiracy theories about American elections, refused to acknowledge who won the 2020 election, and participated in an abusive investigation of American journalists while providing false testimony to Congress about that investigation.

It has been clear for months that, under this administration, the main qualification to be DNI is the willingness to use the position to spread conspiracy theories about elections and to help Donald Trump make it harder for Americans to vote. Even before his nomination, Mr. Clayton decided he would show how eager he is to serve as Trump's election conspiracy wingman.

Now, he is the U.S. attorney in the Southern District of New York. Yet we all saw him on television talking about elections in California and insisting, without any evidence, that America was doing a "terrible job" with election integrity. I was especially alarmed by his conspiracy mongering about vote-by-mail. That is how my home State of Oregon has been voting successfully for years.

On June 8, just a few days before he was nominated, Mr. Clayton was on television talking about how "one group" was using vote-by-mail "dishonestly." That is ridiculous. The first two Senators elected by mail were a Democrat and a Republican.

Vote-by-mail benefits rural voters who live far away from polling stations. Vote-by-mail benefits older people who may not be able to drive. It has never been partisan—certainly not until Donald Trump, aided by people like Jay Clayton, made it a part of the attack on American democracy.

Mr. Clayton didn't offer a shred of evidence to support his conspiracy theories, so I asked him point-blank: Who were these mythical election bandits? In his responses to written questions, he said he was only asking questions. That is the stock-in-trade for conspiracy theorists. The moment they are asked to provide some evidence—any evidence—for claims, they fall back on: I was just asking questions. That is my excuse.

It is fundamentally dishonest. It is also behavior that shouldn't be tolerated in someone responsible for providing Congress and the public assessments based on actual intelligence.

Now, as we all saw during his disastrous nomination hearing, Mr. Clayton also refused to acknowledge the simple fact about Joe Biden winning the 2020 election. Everybody knows the truth here. The only reason to avoid the question is to satisfy the Trump ego. But that is what Mr. Clayton did, signaling to Donald Trump and the whole country that he is never going to stand up to Donald Trump—not ever.

I am also deeply concerned about Mr. Clayton's role in the abusive subpoenas issued to the journalists at the New York Times. Mr. Clayton is the U.S. attorney for the Southern District. He signed the subpoenas. He is responsible for this effort to intimidate the press. He is also responsible for the numerous mistakes and errors committed by the attorneys under him, which even included a subpoena to a journalist's mother. This whole mess came out in a court hearing last week, where not only did the judge criticize the govern-

ment attorneys, but the government itself—the government itself—acknowledged its numerous errors and mistakes before eventually withdrawing the subpoenas.

All that is bad enough, but it also raises serious questions about Mr. Clayton's testimony to the Intelligence Committee that I sit on.

Eight days before that court hearing in which the government acknowledged its mistakes, Mr. Clayton testified repeatedly that the government had followed all the required procedures.

That was obviously false. The only question is whether Mr. Clayton knew it, at the time, that his testimony was false. If he didn't know, then he had no idea what his own office is doing, despite having signed the subpoena, which isn't a great justification for somebody to lead the intelligence agencies.

If he did know, then he may have willfully misled Congress. This is a vitally important question that the Senate should continue to look at, rather than rushing to confirm Mr. Clayton.

Now, there are other examples of how Mr. Clayton is willing to say anything in defense of Donald Trump. In May, he went on television and defended the decision to immunize Donald Trump and his family from a tax audit. He said: It was a "pretty good deal for the government."

Well, it was certainly a good deal for Donald Trump and the family, but it wasn't so great for everyday Americans who don't control the IRS. And it wasn't a good deal for government either.

In fact, a judge recently found that the so-called "settlement" was "improper," had "no viable basis in law or fact," and was an abdication of the government's "responsibility to zealously defend the interests of the United States."

Yet Mr. Clayton was happy to go on television and defend the corruption.

Finally, as U.S. attorney, Mr. Clayton has been the lead of the administration's investigation into Jeffrey Epstein. He was responsible for the inexcusable release of information on Epstein's victims.

As for his other actions related to the investigation in the Epstein files, he has refused to say. Someday, there will be transparency about how this administration handled the Epstein case, and Mr. Clayton's full role—his full role—is going to come out.

Jay Clayton has no business being confirmed for this role. He has repeatedly demonstrated his eagerness to support Donald Trump's conspiracy theories and corruption. He participated in the abuse of the justice system to try to intimidate the press, and he has provided false testimony to Congress during his own confirmation hearing.

Tonight, I urge Senators to oppose this nomination.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask unanimous consent to start the vote immediately.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON CLAYTON NOMINATION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Clayton nomination?

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO: The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Ms. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL).

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 211 Ex.]

YEAS—51

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

NAYS—47

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

NOT VOTING—2

Graham	McConnell
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The nomination was confirmed.

(Mr. BUDD assumed the Chair.)

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant executive 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 motion to proceed to Calendar No. 454, H.R. 5334, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow early childhood educators to take the educator expense deduction, and for other purposes.

John Thune, Darline Graham, John Barrasso, Tim Sheehy, John Cornyn, John Hoeven, Mike Crapo, James Lankford, Kevin Cramer, Steve Daines, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Tom Cotton, Roger Marshall, Thom Tillis, John R. Curtis, Jon A. Husted, Pete Ricketts.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 454, H.R. 5334, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow early childhood educators to take the educator expense deduction, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Ms. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL).

The yeas and the nays resulted—yeas 86, nays 12, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 212 Ex.]

YEAS—86

Alsobrooks	Fischer	Murphy
Armstrong	Gallagher	Murray
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Banks	Grassley	Reed
Barrasso	Hagerty	Ricketts
Bennet	Hawley	Risch
Blackburn	Heinrich	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Booker	Hoeven	Schatz
Boozman	Husted	Schiff
Britt	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Budd	Johnson	Schumer
Cantwell	Justice	Scott (FL)
Capito	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Kelly	Shaheen
Collins	Kennedy	Sheehy
Coons	King	Slotkin
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Smith
Cortez Masto	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lujan	Tillis
Crapo	Lummis	Tuberville
Cruz	Marshall	Van Hollen
Curtis	McCormick	Warner
Daines	Merkley	Warnock
Duckworth	Moody	Whitehouse
Durbin	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Moreno	Young
Fetterman	Murkowski	

NAYS—12

Blunt Rochester	Markey	Sanders
Hassan	Ossoff	Warren
Hirono	Padilla	Welch
Kim	Paul	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Graham

McConnell

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. On this vote, the yeas are 86, the nays are 12.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

SUPPORTING EARLY-CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS' DEDUCTIONS ACT—Motion to Proceed

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion to proceed.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 454, H.R. 5334, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow early childhood educators to take the educator expense deduction, and for other purposes.

MORNING BUSINESS

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WYOMING PIONEER ASSOCIATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Wyoming Pioneer Association. For a century, this organization has preserved Wyoming's pioneering spirit and honored the men and women who helped shape our State.

On August 13, 2026, the Wyoming Pioneer Association will celebrate its 100th anniversary at its annual conference in Douglas, WY. This milestone celebrates 100 years of preserving Wyoming's rich heritage and ensuring that future generations remain connected to the State's remarkable past.

The roots of the Wyoming Pioneer Association stretch back to 1884, when the organization was first established as Wyoming's Old Timer's Association. "Old Timer" membership was reserved for individuals whose contributions helped transform the Wyoming Territory into the State of Wyoming. These soldiers, freighters, cowboys, and stockmen laid the foundation for the Cowboy State.

Starting with Wyoming's first State fair in 1905, the Wyoming Old Timer's Association gathered annually in Douglas. On January 8, 1926, the group was officially incorporated and adopted the name of the Wyoming Pioneer Association. The association's first official meeting took place on September 15, 1926, at Douglas's historic Princess Theater. Under the leadership of its inaugural president John Hunton, the group dedicated itself to preserving Wyoming's pioneer legacy.

Shortly after its first meeting, the association constructed a cabin on the Wyoming State Fairgrounds to serve as a permanent gathering place. As membership steadily grew, the annual meeting returned to the Princess Theater to accommodate its growing number of members.