

they embarked upon this 250-year experiment in American democracy.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on adoption of the motion to proceed to H.R. 5334 at 6 p.m. today.

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

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote scheduled for 6 p.m. today on H.R. 5334 be allowed to begin.

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

VOTE ON MOTION TO PROCEED

The question occurs on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, 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 bill 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).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGO) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 84, nays 12, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 213 Leg.]

YEAS—84

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

NAYS—12

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

NOT VOTING—4

Gallego	McConnell	Whitehouse
Graham		

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JUSTICE). On this vote, the yeas are 84, the nays are 12. The motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

SUPPORTING EARLY-CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS' DEDUCTIONS ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5334) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow early childhood educators to take the educator expense deduction, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion on S. Res. 817.

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

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 Executive Calendar No. 6, S. Res. 817, an executive resolution authorizing the en bloc consideration in Executive Session of certain nominations on the Executive Calendar.

John Thune, John Barrasso, Alan Armstrong, David McCormick, Kevin Cramer, John R. Curtis, Tim Sheehy, James E. Risch, John Boozman, Pete Ricketts, Chuck Grassley, Cynthia M. Lummis, James Lankford, Jim Banks, Bernie Moreno, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Tim Scott of South Carolina.

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 Executive Calendar No. 6, S. Res. 817, an executive resolution authorizing the en bloc consideration in Executive Session of certain nominations on the Executive Calendar, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGO) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 214 Leg.]

YEAS—50

Armstrong	Fischer	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	Kennedy	Sheehy
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lummis	Tillis
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Curtis	McCormick	Wicker
Daines	Moody	Young
Ernst	Moran	

NAYS—45

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

NOT VOTING—5

Cruz	Graham	Whitehouse
Gallego	McConnell	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 45. The motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE RESOLUTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows: An executive resolution (S. Res. 817) authorizing the en bloc consideration in Executive Session of certain nominations on the Executive Calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

NATIVE CHILDREN COMMISSION IMPLEMENTATION ACT

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I come to the floor this evening to speak about legislation that I have recently introduced as chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee, alongside my friend Vice Chairman SCHATZ. The bill that we have introduced is the Native Children Commission Implementation Act.

Before I get started explaining our legislation, I want to recognize the Tribal leaders, the elders, the youth, the children, and the families who flew in last week for a congressional staff briefing to share their perspectives on the bill and the importance of it but also to help educate members and staff about the importance of the bill.

As events turned out, it was unfortunate that I was not here on that day due to my having a family emergency back home, but I was able to tune in virtually. It was 5:45 in the morning Alaska time, and I was able to beam in. I have to say I can't tell you how proud I was to see the Senate Indian Affairs hearing room. It was packed literally

wall to wall, which was a reminder to me of how this legislation has captured the attention of so many people who believe that Native children deserve every opportunity to thrive.

I was particularly grateful to the Tribal leaders, to Native youth, to advocates, and to commissioners who traveled from Alaska and across Indian Country all to be there. I really think that their presence, their stories, and their unwavering commitment have really brought this legislation to life.

I also want to acknowledge and thank my colleagues Senator SCHATZ and Senator SMITH for joining the event and helping to mark this important milestone. Together, they made it clear that this was more than just the introduction of a bill; it was the continuation of a movement—a movement that has been built on years of partnership, of perseverance, and on hope.

I want to take a moment to specifically recognize Gloria O'Neill, who chaired the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children. Gloria and her fellow commissioners have devoted years to traveling throughout Indian Country. They have listened to Native families and have brought forward recommendations that are rooted in the voices of the communities themselves, and we owe them a great deal of gratitude for their work.

Earlier this year, I joined the Alaska Federation of Natives and Tribal leaders for a gathering to recognize their work behind this effort. We were upstairs in the Hart Building, up on the ninth floor—a big room filled with Native leaders really from across the country—and I was deeply, deeply honored to be gifted the Mandan name “Ho Hsihe,” meaning “strong voice.” This was gifted to me by Bheri Rose Hallam, who is the granddaughter of Alyce Spotted Bear. I was very humbled—very humbled—to receive the name, and I carry it as a reminder of the responsibility that we all share to continue the work that Alyce Spotted Bear and so many Native leaders began on behalf of Native children and families. That responsibility really is at the heart of why this legislation matters so deeply to me.

Thousands of bills, we know, are introduced each Congress, and every bill matters to someone, but this one is particularly important to me.

As I look at the Presiding Officer in the chair, I am reminded of his comments at an Energy hearing this morning when he spoke with deep passion and love and care for those children whom he didn't know—children who had cancer. All he wanted to do was to be able to help them with a playground—a place to be happy, a place to feel good about being a child. So I know—I know—that he can relate when we talk about the important work we do for our children.

The story of how the Native Children's Commission began didn't start here in Washington. It began in Tribal

communities. It began with parents who wanted better opportunities for their children and with elders who were determined to preserve their languages and their cultures. It began with such a great story. It began with the young people who stood up in front of hundreds of grownups, hundreds of adults, in a convention in Fairbanks years ago, where they had the courage to tell the leaders what they were experiencing. They asked us—they asked us—to do something about it. That, to me, is really where it begins.

So more than anything, this bill is about children.

Across Indian Country, too many Native children experience challenges that no child should have to face. Some have watched their communities suffer from devastating storms or natural disasters. Some have lost loved ones to violence, to addiction, to suicide. Others have entered foster care. They have struggled to access healthcare or behavioral health services. Or perhaps they have carried the weight of the boarding schools era, which has caused historical trauma that continues to affect families today after subsequent generations.

Those experiences are very real, but they are also not the whole story. If there is one lesson that I learned from traveling across my State and meeting with Tribal communities across Indian Country, it is that resilience is every bit as real as hardship. Native communities possess extraordinary strengths, and their strengths include strong families, vibrant cultures, enduring languages, and generations of wisdom that is passed from elders to the children.

Time and time again, I have watched grandparents teach language to their grandchildren. I have seen parents work tirelessly to create opportunities for that next generation. I have seen elders reminding young people of exactly who they are and where they come from.

That sense of identity and culture is so, so powerful. It gives children confidence. It creates belonging. It fortifies our families. It reminds us that the future of Native children is built not only by overcoming hardship but by building—building—upon the remarkable strengths that have sustained Native communities for generations. That understanding has shaped every part of this legislation whose path began more than a decade ago.

I mentioned the Alaska Federation of Natives convention. This was back in 2013. During one of the sessions—again, this is the largest gathering of Native people in our State—a group of young leaders—kids, kids—from the village of Tanana stood up before Tribal leaders, community members, and elected officials. They stood on stage, and they spoke with an honesty and a bravery about what they were seeing in their community. They spoke of violence. They spoke of substance abuse and suicide. But what struck me most was not the hardship that they described; it

was the hope they carried with them. Their message was so simple. It was so clear. It was “Listen to us.” The children were saying “Listen to us, and then do something,” and I have not ever forgotten those words.

Last summer, I heard from Natasha Singh. She is a leader from the Tanana region, and she shared that the chiefs there continue to meet with young people every year.

They ask: What progress have we made? What challenges remain? What more needs to be done? What more do we need to do to listen to you?

And that kind of accountability is really remarkable because it reminds us that leadership is not measured by the promises that we make but whether or not we are willing to answer for them.

It also reminded me that if Tribal leaders are willing to answer to their children, then Congress should be willing to do the same. So those young people challenged us more than a decade ago, and this new legislation is part of our answer. That conversation that we had in 2013 ultimately led to bipartisan legislation with my friend and former Senator Heidi Heitkamp, and we established the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children.

And the commission had a very straightforward but very important mission, and that was travel throughout Indian country, listen to Native children, listen to the families, to the Tribal leaders, to the service providers, the experts, and then come back and tell us here in Congress what is needed to improve outcomes for Native youth. That is exactly what they did.

Over several years, the commissioners visited communities across the country, and they heard some pretty tough stories. They heard some heartbreaking stories, but they also witnessed extraordinary examples of resilience, of innovation, and Tribal leadership. They saw communities creating culturally grounded solutions that were then strengthening families and improving health, supporting children, and really restoring hope.

And their work culminated in a report that they called “The Way Forward.” But that report was never meant to be the end of the conversation; it was only the end of the beginning.

And when the commissioners presented their recommendations to our Committee on Indian Affairs, they urged us; they said: Please, don't let this work become another report that just sits on the shelf and gathers dust. The families who shared their stories deserved more than that; they deserved action.

And so that is when we got to work. Over the last couple of years, we have worked closely with Tribal leaders, Native organizations, youth advocates, Federal Agencies, and Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle. We released draft legislation. We held hearings and roundtables. We invited the

criticism. We made changes. We refined provisions, added new ideas, and we remained focused on one goal, and that was honoring what Native communities told us they needed.

This bill is stronger because it was built with Native communities, not for them. The Native Children's Commission Implementation Act reflects a simple idea, and that is: If we want to improve outcomes for Native children, we cannot look at just one issue at a time.

And we know when we are talking about kids, you can't talk about life in separate categories. A child does not experience life in neat, clean, separate categories. Health is connected to education. Education is connected to housing. Behavioral health is connected to family stability. Parents cannot succeed if they can't find childcare. Children can't reach their full potential if they are hungry, if they are dealing with untreated trauma or disconnected from language or culture or identity. So our policies should recognize that reality.

And we do that within this legislation. It strengthens access to healthcare and behavioral health services. It supports Native education and language revitalization. It improves juvenile justice, public safety, housing, nutrition, workforce development, and research. And, more importantly, it recognized that Tribal communities are best positioned to lead these efforts because they know their children and their families, and they know them better than anyone else.

During a hearing earlier this year on a draft legislation, Joan Johnson of the Fort Belknap Indian Community shared a story of a young woman who entered the Tribe's Tiwahe wellness program, and the Tiwahe Initiative is a pilot program at BIA that assists Tribes in providing holistic services that promote everything from child safety to family stability and Tribal self-determination.

And Fort Belknap testified that their wellness program has removed the stigma of intervention by meeting families in their homes and helping them access care.

To understand the need to make this initiative permanent, Joan shared the story of a young woman who had struggled with addiction and homelessness. And the young mother shared, she said:

Tiwahe gave me the nudge I needed. They guided me to become closer to my Creator and helped me learn who I am.

And, today, that young woman is sober. She is raising her children. And she is helping build a brighter future for her family.

And that transformation doesn't happen because Washington has all the answers. It happened because a Tribal community invested in one of its own. And we have learned from that, and we are seeking to codify Tiwahe as one important section in our legislation.

Councilwoman Johnson also described children who came into the

Tiwahe program knowing they were Native, but not knowing their language, not knowing their traditions, or even their own family stories. And elders helped connect those young people with their identity. They learned their Native names. They participated in ceremony.

And many of those same young people eventually became mentors for the children who followed them. So healing became leadership; one generation began lifting the next.

We heard similar stories from Alaska where the Association of Village Council Presidents redesigned the way that families receive services. So instead of forcing parents in crisis—maybe it is addiction, maybe it is homelessness. But it is hard when you have so many disconnected programs. And so through this initiative, they brought education, employment, childcare, family services all together in one place. And so when you have got a family that is just facing so many big, big, heavy burdens, that kind of coordination can make all of the difference.

And these stories, again, remind us that the best ideas rarely begin in Washington.

And while I am proud to get to this point, which is our bill introduction, it is also a reminder that our work is just beginning. This legislation represents more than a decade of listening, learning, and working alongside Tribal leaders, Native organizations, families, and young people. And it reflects the belief that lasting change happens when we listen first and legislate second.

While this is an important step, what matters is that we keep moving forward because every recommendation in the report which was translated into this bill began with a conversation in a Tribal community.

And I am going to keep coming back to those young people from Tanana, because they said—it was more than a decade ago. They asked us to listen. And I hope—I hope—today they can see that we are listening. We are acting. The Native Children's Commission Implementation Act is not about creating yet one more Federal program or one more report that is going to sit on a shelf somewhere. It is about strengthening what is already working in Native communities. It is about trusting Tribal governments, investing in Native families, and ensuring—ensuring—that every Native child—whether Alaska Native, American Indian, Native Hawaiian—has the opportunity to grow up healthy, to grow up safe, connected to their culture, and confident in who they are. And that is a goal that should unite all of us.

So, today, I invite my colleagues—Republicans and Democrats alike—to join Senator SCHATZ and me as cosponsors of the Native Children's Commission Implementation Act. Let's show that when Tribal communities speak, Congress listens. Let's turn their recommendations of "The Way Forward" report into meaningful action, and let's

work together to build a future where every Alaska Native, American Indian, and Native Hawaiian child has the opportunity to not only overcome challenges, but to become those leaders of the next generation.

So I look forward to working with you and the rest of our colleagues to do just that.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HUSTED). The Senator from Utah.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I would like to address the Senate today regarding a bill that has been passed by the House of Representatives known as H.R. 7008. H.R. 7008 performs two badly needed functions to restore faith and integrity in our system of government: Firstly, it bans Members of Congress from using their unique access and knowledge to profit through stock market speculation; secondly, it requires something very simple, a voter ID.

You have got to show an ID when you pick up something at will call if you are there to pick up tickets to the theater, if you are picking up a prescription at the pharmacy, if you are going to the bank, if you are boarding an airplane—you are doing all kinds of things that are part of Americans' day-to-day experience where it matters whether you are who you claim to be, you have got to show an ID.

We should require nothing less when it comes to the exercise of one of the most fundamental rights that Americans have; that is, their right to vote.

You see, when someone else votes in your place, they displace your vote. They offset your vote. If they are double voting, if they are voting when they are not allowed to vote because they are not a citizen or otherwise, if they do something foolish and they try to go and vote, they will be caught if they are asked to produce an ID at the balloting place.

So this bill accomplishes both of these things. And like I say, both of them would do a lot to restore faith, confidence, and integrity in our system of government.

Dealing specifically with the voter ID requirement in this legislation, this is a very straightforward requirement. When you show up to vote, you just have to show an ID, just like you do at the bank, just like you do at the pharmacy or the doctor's office or the bank or when boarding an airplane.

And if you vote by mail, then that is easy to accommodate. You just include a simple photocopy of your photo ID.

Now, we have gone to great lengths to make sure that everyone is taken care of here, to make sure that there is not a single U.S. citizen that would be disadvantaged or unable to vote if we were to pass this.

So for those who, let's say, for whatever reason, don't have access to a photocopier and they want to vote by mail, well, we have taken that into consideration. The bill requires States