

## MORNING BUSINESS

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

## TRIBUTE TO JAYDEN BENDER

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Jayden Bender, an intern in my Aberdeen, SD, office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several months.

Jayden is a graduate of Britton-Hecla High School in Britton, SD. Currently, she is attending the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, SD, where she is majoring in legal studies with a minor in political science. She is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Jayden for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.

## TRIBUTE TO REAR ADMIRAL ERIC H. VER HAGE

Mr. McCORMICK. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a distinguished American, RDML Eric H. Ver Hage, U.S. Navy, a native of Mechanicsburg, PA, upon the occasion of his retirement after more than 42 years of distinguished service to our Nation. On June 13, 1984, he reported from his home in Upper Allen Township to the Harrisburg Military Entrance Processing Station, beginning a career that took him from enlisted electronics technician to Naval Academy midshipman to surface warfare officer, and ultimately the Military Deputy and Deputy Assistant Secretary of War.

Over his career, Rear Admiral Ver Hage commanded USS CARR (FFG 52) and the Naval Surface Warfare Center Divisions at Corona and Port Hueneme, led the multi-billion-dollar Aegis Ashore program to completion in Romania, and served as commander of the NAVSEA Surface and Undersea Warfare Centers and of the Navy Regional Maintenance Centers, where he directed a global workforce of roughly 10,000 and a \$5 billion annual budget. He most recently served as Military Deputy and Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of War for International and Industry Engagement, strengthening our defense industrial base and international armaments cooperation.

Rear Admiral Ver Hage's retirement ceremony will be held tomorrow on July 31, 2026. He will officially be released from Active Duty on September 30, 2026, closing 42 years, 3 months, and 17 days of service to our Navy and our Nation. His four decades of service stand as a model of the dedication, integrity, and leadership our Nation depends upon, and he leaves the Navy stronger for having served. In recognition of his service, and in this milestone year of America's 250th anniversary, a U.S. flag was flown over the U.S. Capitol on July 4, 2026, in Rear Admiral Ver Hage's honor.

## TRIBUTE TO WAYNE FRANKLIN PHILLIPS

• Mr. HUSTED. Mr. President, today I would like to wish Mr. Wayne Franklin Phillips of Deshler, OH, a happy 100th birthday. Mr. Phillips was born on August 5, 1926, on a farm outside of Hamler with his three brothers and sisters. Mr. Phillips served our country bravely in WWII, eventually earning the rank of sergeant TEC 4. He was honorably discharged in 1946. Mr. Phillips married Eileen Rutter on January 1, 1950, and lived on Elm Street, where they raised their three children Wayne, Paul, and Martha. Mr. Phillips started the Phillips Oil Company in 1950, where he still drives to work every day along with his two sons, grandson, and nephew. Mr. Phillips is a faithful member of Deshler United Methodist Church and was politically engaged, serving as Henry County commissioner for 16 years and a Deshler City councilman for 4 years.●

## RECOGNIZING THE MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

• Mr. SHEEHY. Mr. President, as we celebrate the 250th year of our country, it is my honor to recognize Molly Kruckenber and the talented staff at the Montana Historical Society for their dedicated work to showcase Montana history at the state-of-the-art Montana Heritage Center in Helena, MT.

History is more than a subject taught in school; it is a practical guide for leadership and decision making. The successes and failures of the generations that came before us offer valuable lessons to those willing to understand them. I carry that perspective into public service every day, and it is why the Montana Heritage Center was a project our family was proud to support.

More than a decade in the making, the new Montana Heritage Center is an investment in preserving Montana's story and ensuring future generations understand the people, values, and events that shaped Montana. This world-class center reminds us that good policy is strengthened by historical perspective and an appreciation for the enduring principles that guide our Nation and Montana.

The opening of the Montana Heritage Center would not have been possible without Molly and her staff, and they deserve every recognition for their efforts.●

## RECOGNIZING THE HINDU CENTER OF CHARLOTTE

• Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Hindu Center of Charlotte, which first opened in 1982. Since its founding, the Hindu Center of Charlotte has been an anchor of the

local Hindu community and exemplifies the enduring values of faith, family, service, education, and civic engagement. Recently, I was glad to attend the grand inauguration of the center's new Vedic Mandir alongside community leaders, other elected officials, and thousands of devotees celebrating this historic milestone.

The grand inauguration of the new Vedic Mandir represents the continued growth of the Hindu community in Charlotte, as well as the deep cultural and social bonds that have been formed. It was an honor to attend the grand inauguration with so many other important community leaders and attendees, and I look forward to seeing the community continue to grow.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Hindu Center of Charlotte for this historic milestone and wishing them continued growth and prosperity.●

## MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Hanley, one of his secretaries.

## EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

## 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-4264. A communication from the Acting Director for Legislative Affairs, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report entitled "State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program Annual Report: Fiscal Year 2023"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4265. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rescinding Guidelines for Eliminating Discrimination and Denial of Services on the Basis of Race, Color, National Origin, Sex, and Handicap in Vocational Education Programs" (RIN1870-AA25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2026; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4266. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rescinding Portions of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Title VI Regulations to Align with the Statutory Text and Conform to Executive Order 14281" (RIN1870-AA20) received in the

Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2026; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4267. A communication from the General Counsel, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Loan Performance Categories and Financial Reporting" (RIN3052-AD63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2026; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4268. A communication from the Chairwoman of the National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's 2025 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

### EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. CASSIDY for the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

\*Erica Schwartz, of Florida, to be Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

\*Sean Kaufman, of Georgia, to be Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Department of Health and Human Services.

\*Keith Sonderling, of Florida, to be Secretary of Labor.

\*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 5173. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat tax penalties as assessable in the same manner as taxes, to provide notice requirements for certain penalties, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SHEEHY (for himself and Mr. SCHIFF):

S. 5174. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require a school food authority to make publicly available any waiver of the Buy American requirement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COONS, Mr. ARMSTRONG, Mr. KELLY, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. ROSEN, and Mr. RICKETTS):

S. 5175. A bill to amend the Arms Export Control Act to address third party transfers of certain defense articles for Ukraine, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. HICKENLOOPER (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 5176. A bill to establish a pilot program to address critical workforce integration and national security imperatives; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. LUJÁN (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 5177. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to include two counties in

New Mexico in a certain Veterans Integrated Service Network; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SCOTT of Florida:

S. 5178. A bill to amend chapter 6 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the "Regulatory Flexibility Act"), to ensure complete analysis of potential impacts on small entities of rules, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mr. JUSTICE, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. BUDD, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. SHEEHY):

S. 5179. A bill to clarify that for purposes of Federal nondiscrimination requirements applicable to education programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance, discrimination prohibited under title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is based on the biological reality of sex; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. WELCH, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. KING, Mr. TILLIS, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 5180. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure stability for provider payments under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CURTIS (for himself and Mr. KELLY):

S. 5181. A bill to require the Secretary of Transportation to establish a grant program relating to the digitization of county roads and the creation of publicly accessible road datasets, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SCHIFF (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 5182. A bill to establish a Federal working group for recycled plastic content traceability, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. KIM, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. PADILLA):

S. 5183. A bill to establish the Anti-Corruption Bureau, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 5184. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to establish a summer meal delivery vehicle pilot program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. SMITH, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. LEE, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PAUL, Mr. MURPHY, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 5185. A bill to provide for auditing of the Pentagon; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. REED, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. BOOKER, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 5186. A bill to eliminate asset limits employed by certain federally funded means-tested public assistance programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. YOUNG):

S. 5187. A bill to require the Secretary of Energy to establish a program to strengthen the domestic science and engineering workforce through partnerships among institutions of higher education, National Laboratories, other Federal science agencies, and

industry to support accelerated doctoral programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Ms. ROSEN):

S. 5188. A bill to amend the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 to establish requirements for unified boxing organizations and to further enhance the well-being of professional boxers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. ALSOBROOKS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. WARREN, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. SLOTKIN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. KIM, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. KELLY, Mr. SCHIFF, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 5189. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1994, to codify and clarify gender neutral standards for members of certain Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 5190. A bill to prohibit forced arbitration in work disputes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 5191. A bill to provide for the acquisition of United States citizenship for certain individuals who were internationally adopted, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 5192. A bill to assist trafficking survivors who lack government issued identification in accessing air travel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 5193. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to expand the capacity to improve health outcomes and increase access to specialized care; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 5194. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to improve the maintenance, alteration, and construction of United States courthouses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHIFF, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 5195. A bill to establish a Green New Deal for public schools; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LUJÁN:

S. 5196. A bill to prohibit the Department of Justice from granting immunity to the President, Vice President, or family members, trusts, parents, sisters, related companies, or affiliates of the President or Vice President, for certain crimes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CURTIS (for himself and Mr. KELLY):

S. 5197. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for a State-