

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

VOTE EXPLANATION

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I was absent for one rollcall vote on August 5, 2026.

On August 5, had I been present, I would have voted nay on the Motion to Invoke Cloture on the Nomination of Erica Schwartz to be Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (rollcall vote No. 219).

VOTE EXPLANATION

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. President, today the Senate voice voted the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 320, H.R. 6500, the legislative vehicle for a continuing resolution. Had this been a recorded rollcall vote, I would have voted "present" and ask that the RECORD reflect that accordingly.

TRIBUTE TO HMONG AMERICAN VETERANS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, today we honor the extraordinary bravery, sacrifice, and devotion of Hmong American veterans who stood alongside the United States during the Vietnam war.

From 1961 to 1975, Hmong soldiers fought in the CIA-backed operation known as the Secret War in Laos under the leadership of Vang Pao, risking everything to defend freedom and support American forces.

Hmong forces carried out dangerous missions, gathered intelligence, disrupted enemy supply lines along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and rescued downed American pilots. Thousands of American lives were saved because of the courage and perseverance of Hmong soldiers.

The Hmong people paid an enormous price for their alliance with the United States. More than 40,000 Hmong fighters were killed or wounded during the conflict.

For many years, the contributions of Hmong veterans remained largely unknown because the conflict in Laos was classified as the "Secret War."

Today, we ensure that history remembers their service and that future generations understand the sacrifices they made in defense of freedom.

Alaska is proud to be home to a robust Hmong community whose members continue to serve our State through military service, business ownership, public service, education, and community leadership.

We recognize veterans such as Pasert Lee, a resident of the Mountain View neighborhood in Anchorage, AK, who served as a lieutenant under General Vang Pao and helped rescue American pilots during the war. As communist forces took control of Laos, those who had stood with the United States faced persecution, imprisonment, and even

death. The beginning of the exodus of the Hmong people from their homes in Laos began following the May 1975 Communist takeover.

Many Hmong families were forced to flee Laos to escape persecution. Many veterans and their families have never been able to safely return to their homeland.

Mr. LEE, like most of our Hmong American veterans, has never returned home, even to visit, in fear for their lives.

Their story is one of courage, resilience, conviction, and unwavering commitment to the United States.

We have a moral obligation to remember those who fought beside American servicemembers and to ensure their sacrifices are never forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE WITHERELL

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Michael Witherell on a remarkable career spent in service of scientific achievement and discovery as he steps down after a decade of leadership as the eighth director of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. As the Director of Berkeley Lab, Mike dedicated himself to pursuing transformational breakthroughs across all areas of science and helped its researchers deliver scientific solutions addressing critical national priorities.

Mike Witherell was born on September 22, 1949, in Toledo, OH. He would go on to receive a bachelor of science from the University of Michigan in 1968. After earning his Ph.D. in experimental particle physics from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 1973, Mike served on the faculty at Princeton until 1981 and then found himself at the University of California, Santa Barbara until 1999. While working at UC Santa Barbara, Mike won the W. K. H. Panofsky Prize in Experimental Particle Physics from the American Physical Society in 1990 and was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1998. After serving as the director of the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory for 6 years, Mike returned to UC Santa Barbara in 2005 as the vice chancellor for research. He was then appointed director of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory in 2016, a position he held until June of 2026.

In his decade of service leading Berkeley Lab, Mike strengthened the lab's position as a world-leading institution for breakthrough science through significant real-world solutions in energy and pioneering programs in quantum informational science and artificial intelligence. This record of scientific excellence resulted in 31 members of the lab being elected to the National Academies of Science and Engineering, two National Medals, and three Nobel Prizes, including most recently in 2025 for groundbreaking research in quantum computing.

Thanks to his hard work and dedication, Berkeley Lab has contributed

greatly to the mission of the Department of Energy, including becoming a core contributor to the Genesis Mission. None of these efforts would have been possible without the passion, vision, and excellence that Mike poured into the lab during his storied tenure.

As Mike embarks on this new chapter in his life, his absence will undoubtedly be felt by all those fortunate enough to have collaborated with him. I extend my heartfelt wishes to Mike and his family for a joyful retirement.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 150th anniversary of the city of Hot Springs, AR.

Located in central Arkansas at the eastern edge of the Ouachita Mountains and the Ouachita National Forest, Hot Springs has long been one of my State's most treasured destinations. Since its incorporation in 1876, generations of residents have helped shape a city known for its resilience, vibrant community, and commitment to preserving the natural beauty and historic character that makes the city so special.

For centuries, the area's natural thermal springs have drawn visitors seeking their restorative waters. Long before Arkansas achieved statehood, Native American Tribes recognized their significance and laid the foundation for the city's enduring legacy as a place of renewal and hospitality.

Now this unique feature sits at the heart of Hot Springs National Park, arguably the oldest within the National Park System. The land was first set aside for protection by Congress in 1832, decades before the National Park Service was established in 1916. Today, visitors from across the Nation and around the world enjoy the city's historic Bathhouse Row, scenic trails, thriving downtown, nearby lakes, world-class horse racing, and many other attractions that showcase Arkansas' majestic landscapes and rich history.

Beyond its historic landmarks, Hot Springs continues to be an important economic and cultural center. Its small businesses, hospitality industry, and community organizations reflect the hard-working spirit that has helped the city thrive for 150 years.

Congratulations to the entire community on this sesquicentennial celebration and steadfast commitment to building a bright future. I am pleased to recognize this milestone and commemorate 150 years of embracing its identity and charming residents and visitors alike.●

RECOGNIZING ALPHA PHI SORORITY, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND CHAPTER

• Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Alpha Phi Sorority at the University of Maryland, College Park. Alpha Phi has dedicated its philanthropic efforts to advancing women's heart health, the leading cause of death among women in the United States.

Although the topic of women's heart health is often overlooked, the members of Alpha Phi have made it their mission to advance this vital cause through research, education, and advocacy. The University of Maryland chapter has received national recognition for its year-round efforts to not only raise funds, but to increase awareness of heart disease and relevant prevention methods.

Every year, the University of Maryland chapter hosts the Red Dress Gala, their capstone philanthropic event. This past year, they successfully raised over \$26,000 to benefit their cause. Beyond their fundraising, the members of Alpha Phi treat every event as an opportunity to educate the campus community, honor those affected by heart disease, and inspire others to support women's health.

I commend the Alpha Phi Sorority at the University of Maryland, College Park for its unshakable dedication to women's heart health and look forward to witnessing its continued impact on its community.●

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 7008. An act to amend chapter 131 of title 5 to require certain restrictions on stocks for Members of Congress and their spouses and dependents, and for other purposes.

S. 5271. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require voters to provide photo identification.

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-4293. 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 Kuwait for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$542 million ((RSAT Case 26-53) (OSS-2026-0587)); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4294. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act, the notification of enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability ((RSAT Case 26-0W) (OSS-2026-0586)); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4295. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Depart-

ment of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act, the notification of enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability ((RSAT Case 26-0S) (OSS-2026-0588)); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4296. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act, the notification of enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability ((RSAT Case 26-1F) (OSS-2026-0589)); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4297. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency that was originally declared in Executive Order 14105 of August 9, 2023, with respect to the threat posed by advancement by countries of concern in sensitive technologies and products critical for the military, intelligence, surveillance, or cyber-enabled capabilities of such countries; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4298. A communication from the President of the United States to the President pro tempore of the United States Senate, transmitting, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, a report relative to military action taken on July 27, 2026, against targets in the Republic of Iraq following Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-directed attacks by Iranian aligned militia groups; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4299. A communication from the Secretary of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Brazil that was declared in Executive Order 14323 of July 30, 2025; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4300. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the advancement by countries of concern in sensitive technologies and products critical for the military, intelligence, surveillance, or cyber-enabled capabilities of such countries that was declared in Executive Order 14105 of August 9, 2023; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4301. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 3(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, a certification of a proposed transfer of major defense equipment with an original acquisition value of approximately \$255,900,000 (RSAT Case 26-11558); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4302. A communication from the Senior Bureau Official, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 3(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, a certification of a proposed transfer of major defense equipment with an original acquisition value of approximately \$28,000,000 (RSAT Case 26-11496); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4303. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense, transmitting legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 119th Congress; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4304. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense, transmitting legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 119th Congress; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4305. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense, transmitting legis-

lative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 119th Congress; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4306. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report of the National Security Education Program (NSEP) for fiscal year 2025; to the Select Committee on Intelligence.

EC-4307. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense, transmitting legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 119th Congress; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-4308. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense, transmitting legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 119th Congress; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4309. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense, transmitting legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 119th Congress; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4310. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense, transmitting legislative proposals that the Department of Defense requests be enacted during the second session of the 119th Congress; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4311. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense, transmitting the report of 16 officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4312. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of lieutenant general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777a; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4313. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of lieutenant general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777a, for a period not to exceed 14 days before assuming the duties of the position for which the higher grade is authorized; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4314. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of lieutenant general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777a; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4315. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of lieutenant general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777a; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4316. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting the report of 13 officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of rear admiral (lower half) in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4317. A communication from the Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs of the Department of Defense-Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Amendment" (RIN0790-AM02) received in the Office of the President