

Judge for the Western District of Tennessee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, all postcloture time be expired and the Senate vote on confirmation of the Lea nomination at 11:30 a.m. tomorrow; further, that the cloture motion filed during Tuesday's session of the Senate ripen following disposition of the Lea nomination; further, if cloture is invoked on the Olson nomination, the Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination at 1:45 p.m. tomorrow; finally, if any nominations are confirmed during Thursday's session of the Senate, 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. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

#### THE NEW START TREATY

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, on February 13, 2025, President Trump said something few expected to hear. He said, "There's no reason for us to be building brand-new nuclear weapons. We already have so many. . . You could destroy the world 50 times over, 100 times over. And here we are building new nuclear weapons. . . . We're all spending a lot of money that we could be spending on other things that are actually, hopefully, much more productive."

I could not agree more with that statement. It is why I want to speak about the New START Treaty, which expires on February 5, and the very real possibility of a new nuclear arms race—something that, to my knowledge, neither the President, Vice President, nor any other senior U.S. official has meaningfully discussed.

The decision to start a nuclear war can be made by a single individual—the President of the United States—with no requirement that he first consult with anyone. A nuclear war could also be started at any moment by Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping, or any other leader of a nuclear weapon state. Or it could be triggered by mistake.

A single use of a tactical nuclear weapon, either by accident or design, could trigger a flurry of escalating re-

sponses with far more powerful strategic weapons that would cause incalculable loss of life, widespread radiation poisoning, and destruction on a scale unlike anything seen in human history. We all, regardless of political affiliation, must reaffirm what Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev said 40 years ago: "A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought."

For the past 80 years, the probability of mutually assured destruction has deterred the use of nuclear weapons. But in today's increasingly dangerous and unpredictable world, with mercurial leaders like Vladimir Putin and Kim Jong Un, we cannot rely on deterrence alone. Existing nuclear arms control treaties are either no longer adhered to by Russia or the United States or, as in the case of New START, are on the verge of expiring.

That represents a colossal failure of leadership by both the United States and Russia. There is no greater threat to humanity than a nuclear war, yet there are no negotiations underway to replace the treaty, nor are there discussions to consider a new generation of limits on nuclear weapons.

My colleague from Massachusetts Senator MARKEY and several others here have sought to counter this complacency. But the danger of a new nuclear arms race has received far too little attention from Congress and the administration, and with tomorrow's expiration of the New START Treaty, it is staring us in the face.

The United States, and our allies, must urgently seek to reinvigorate negotiations on a verifiable replacement for New START, with more effective mechanisms to prevent the development, proliferation, and use of nuclear weapons. Until then, we and the Russians should agree to continue abiding by the limits under New START, as President Putin has reportedly proposed. Despite our stark differences with the Russians, they have as much interest in preventing an unwinnable nuclear war as we do.

We must also invigorate discussions with China, which has some 600 nuclear weapons. That number is expected to more than double in fewer than 10 years.

If Putin refuses to replace New START, despite it being in Russia's own national interest, there are other steps that we, Russia, and China should take—short of negotiating a new treaty—to help reduce the risk of a nuclear war, whether due to a false alarm, error, or other misperception. For example:

- \* Creating joint early warning centers to monitor missile launches;
- \* De-targeting, so any accidental launch of a nuclear armed missile lands in the ocean;
- \* Removing all nuclear weapons from high-alert status;
- \* Reducing incentives to respond quickly to an unconfirmed nuclear attack;
- \* Reducing the number of deployed nuclear weapons; and
- \* Renouncing first use of nuclear weapons and eliminating the President's authority to

launch nuclear weapons without congressional approval.

Since the 1980s, thanks to negotiators in both countries, the United States and Russia curtailed an unrestrained nuclear arms race that had led to the deployment of staggering numbers of increasingly destructive weapons that could not rationally be justified for deterrence or any other purpose. The START Treaty and New START were historic achievements.

Twelve months ago, President Trump spoke of the need for the United States, Russia, and China to stop building more nuclear weapons. Yet while his National Security Strategy calls for "the world's most robust, credible, and modern nuclear deterrent," it says nothing about preventing another nuclear arms race. With respect to New START, he reportedly said, "If it expires, it expires."

As the New START Treaty fades into history, one commentator has suggested that "one likely successor to nuclear weapons' sole dominance on the strategic value ladder could be AI technology. . . . Either AI technology itself will become the primary strategic weapon—or it will enable the rapid creation of alternatives that render nuclear arsenals increasingly irrelevant to real-world outcomes."

It is only a matter of time—and probably far less time than we think—before the application of AI technology to warfare creates a whole new impetus for global instability. But even as AI becomes more versatile as a disruptive and destructive force, nuclear weapons and the threat of nuclear war are not going to disappear. So I urge President Trump to elevate nuclear arms control to the top of his national security agenda. Even the modest steps I have mentioned to reduce the chance of a catastrophic mistake or miscalculation resulting in the use of nuclear weapons should be among our highest national security priorities.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO RAY CURTIS

• Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President, I want to honor a very special North Dakota resident who is turning 109 years old on February 11. Ray Curtis is considered to be the oldest veteran living in North Dakota and our State's oldest resident. There are only 10 other known living veterans in the Nation who are older.

Ray embodies the very best of the "Greatest Generation." He was born in 1917 in the hospital in Portal, near his northwestern North Dakota hometown of Columbus. Ten years later, his family moved to Minot, and he graduated from Minot High School in 1935. Before enlisting in the U.S. Army, Ray farmed with his father and brother. His 5 years of Active Duty involved work as a clerk-typist, communications officer, and commander of an automatic weapons unit in the United States. After the

Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Ray was eventually stationed in Germany for 10 months as an infantry unit commander.

Following Pearl Harbor, Ray married his sweetheart Ellen in Reno, NV. After his discharge from the Army, they farmed his family's land and raised five children. Since 1983, they lived in Minot, and following the death of Ellen in 2014, he moved to an assisted living center, where he continues to live a full and active life.

We consider the centenarians living in North Dakota among our most treasured residents. Their pioneer spirit, dignity, and hard work have brought them through many challenges and personal achievements. And while we owe a debt of gratitude to every veteran who has served our country, having Ray as one of the Nation's oldest living World War II veterans increases our admiration and appreciation for him and his remarkable life.

On behalf of all North Dakotans, I thank Ray Curtis for his service to our country and wish him a happy 109th birthday. We hope he enjoys continued good health and vitality. ●

#### TRIBUTE TO BOB MURPHY

● Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I am honored to recognize Bob Murphy of Salem as January's Granite Stater of the Month for his efforts to support Parkinson's disease research.

Last June, Bob was asked to participate in a bracelet-making fundraiser to benefit the Alzheimer's Association. Bob discovered he had a hidden talent for making beading designs and enjoyed the creative outlet that the crafting provided. When he realized other residents and staff at the facility where he lived were interested in buying his bracelets, Bob started selling them in the lobby and donating the proceeds to the Parkinson's Foundation. So far, Bob has donated \$1,500.

Bob picked the Parkinson's Foundation because he has lived with Parkinson's disease for 20 years. Bob likes to do activities that keep his mind active, such as doing puzzles, playing cards, reading, and now, making bracelets. Although he sometimes drops beads or moves more slowly than he would like to, the beading keeps him focused, and he will sometimes work on bracelets for the entire day—comparing his crafting operation to a factory. The hobby has also helped him make new connections with other residents who come by to watch him work and even request bracelet designs.

Bob's creative fundraising is an inspiring example of the Granite State spirit of ingenuity and persistence. His work to contribute to Parkinson's research is why I am honored to name him January's Granite Stater of the Month. ●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to

the Senate by Ms. Holstead, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

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.)

#### PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

#### REPORT OF THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 14014 OF FEBRUARY 10, 2021, WITH RESPECT TO BURMA—PM 48

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the situation in and in relation to Burma declared in Executive Order 14014 of February 10, 2021, is to continue in effect beyond February 10, 2026.

My Administration is closely monitoring developments in and in relation to Burma and is engaging with relevant stakeholders and regional partners to encourage dialogue among conflict parties that reduces violence and increases political stability. I am prepared to calibrate pressure as necessary to protect American interests in and in relation to Burma. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 14014 with respect to the situation in and in relation to Burma.

DONALD J. TRUMP.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 3, 2026.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 1:09 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3377. An act to authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor to James Capers, Jr., for acts of valor as a member of the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War.

H.R. 7194. An act to authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor to Nicholas Dockery for acts of valor as a member of the Army while serving in Afghanistan.

H.R. 7211. An act to authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor to John W. Ripley for acts of valor during the Vietnam War, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED FEBRUARY 3, 2026

The President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY) announced that yesterday, February 3, 2026, he had signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 3424. An act to amend titles 11 and 28, United States Code, to modify the compensation payable to trustees serving in cases under chapter 7 of title 11, United States Code, to extend the term of certain temporary offices of bankruptcy judges, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7148. An act making further consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, and for other purposes.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 7194. An act to authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor to Nicholas Dockery for acts of valor as a member of the Army while serving in Afghanistan; to the Committee on Armed Services.

H.R. 7211. An act to authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor to John W. Ripley for acts of valor during the Vietnam War, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

#### 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-2682. A communication from the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget and Programs, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2025; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2683. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Inspector General's Semiannual Report and the Management Response for the period of April 1, 2025 through September 30, 2025; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2684. A communication from the Acting Deputy Staff Director, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2025 received in the Office of the President pro tempore; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2685. A communication from the Assistant Chief Counsel for Safety, Federal Railroad Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Reflectorization of Rail Freight Rolling Stock; Codifying Existing Waivers" (RIN2130-AC77) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2026; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2686. A communication from the Manager of Legal Litigation and Support, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc., Airplanes, Amendment 39-23242" (RIN2120-AA64)