

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 596—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 2 THROUGH 6, 2026, AS “NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK”

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHIFF, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 596

Whereas the American School Counselor Association has designated February 2 through 6, 2026, as “National School Counseling Week”;

Whereas school counselors have long advocated for all students;

Whereas school counselors help develop well-rounded students by guiding students through academic learning, social and emotional development, and career exploration;

Whereas personal and social growth can help lead to increased academic achievement;

Whereas school counselors play a vital role in ensuring that students are ready for both college and careers;

Whereas school counselors play a vital role in making students aware of opportunities for financial aid and college scholarships;

Whereas school counselors assist with and coordinate efforts to foster a positive school climate, resulting in a safer learning environment for all students;

Whereas school counselors have been instrumental in helping students, teachers, and parents deal with personal trauma as well as tragedies in their communities and in the United States;

Whereas students face a myriad of challenges every day, including peer pressure, bullying, mental health issues, the deployment of family members to serve in conflicts overseas, and school violence;

Whereas a school counselor is one of the few professionals in a school building who is trained in both education and social and emotional development;

Whereas the roles and responsibilities of school counselors are often misunderstood;

Whereas the school counselor position is often among the first to be eliminated to meet budgetary constraints;

Whereas the national average ratio of students to school counselors is 376 to 1, far exceeding the 250 to 1 ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, and other organizations; and

Whereas the celebration of National School Counseling Week will increase awareness of the important and necessary role school counselors play in the lives of students in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of February 2 through 6, 2026, as “National School Counseling Week”; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe National School Counseling Week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the

role school counselors play in schools and the community at large in preparing students for fulfilling lives as contributing members of society.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I have nine requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a subcommittee hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 10 a.m., to conduct a business meeting.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 2:15 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS’ AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans’ Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 4 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 3 p.m., to conduct a closed hearing.

Mr. BARASSO. I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHMITT). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN CONNELL

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to my longtime chief of staff John Connell during his last week of session in the U.S. Senate—or, as John fondly refers to it, the “House of Lords.”

Since I was first sworn into the House of Representatives in 2011, John has served as my chief of staff. But he is much more than that—a trusted adviser, a talented strategist, an effective leader of our team, and a confidant. John is also a friend.

John graduated from Indiana University already a fierce partisan, I have to say; but, in his case, it was as a proud member of Hoosier Nation—more on that later.

He then moved to Washington to start his career on Capitol Hill. Despite his family roots in Naperville, IL, and his college years in Bloomington, IN, John quickly learned the ropes of serving in the legislative branch while working for three Kentucky delegation Members of the U.S. House—Representatives Geoff Davis, Ron Lewis, and BRETT GUTHRIE—two of whom were West Point grads, I should add.

He also spent time on the campaign trail for multiple Members in Kentucky and Kansas, before we were first introduced in late 2010.

Along the way, John developed an amazing golf swing, he made tons of friends, and he started dating a lovely fellow congressional staffer by the name of Marjorie Dornette, who later became his wife.

I first met John through an introduction by Congressman Davis. I needed a chief of staff, and Geoff said that he trusted John.

And, candidly, I didn’t have the foggiest idea what attributes to look for. So I decided to resist everything I had learned in a decade of naval service by trusting the Army guy.

And, boy, I don’t regret it. From almost that very moment, I came to regard that as one of the best decisions of my life, professional and otherwise.

Suffice it to say, John has supported my time in Congress in every meaningful way. He has earned a stellar reputation of his own around this town and back home in the State of Indiana, and he has accrued a remarkable record of achievement, something I would like to unpack here today.

For starters, John has identified and hired amazing talent for our team. He has a knack for recruiting, thanks to his extensive network, his instincts, and an amazing eye for talent. He has

fostered a Team Young alumni network of current and rising leaders and regularly offers his help and counsel to countless individuals wishing to serve, advance their careers, and realize their dreams.

John is known for viewing our intern program as the “farm team,” and an incredible number of our interns have gone on to serve and to move up in my congressional office and well beyond, thanks to John’s efforts.

In addition to being a team player on our team, however, he has served the broader team in many important ways. In fact, other congressional offices and several Presidential administrations have regularly turned to John for advice on navigating Congress and overcoming obstacles.

John has treated his role of overseeing my DC office and instate operations with great enthusiasm, accessibility, friendliness, professionalism, dependability, and responsiveness—all of which resulted in our team’s ability to have maximum impact. Whether through legislative wins or building one of the Nation’s best constituent service operations, John’s fingerprints are on all of it.

Another important role John quickly became adept at was helping me identify talented professionals to be nominated for Federal service and shepherd them into important roles around the world, including an Under Secretary of State, an ambassador to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, and the Chief Management Officer for the DOD. This also applied to our Federal judiciary. From district court to the U.S. Supreme Court, John was always on the hunt for rising legal stars who might be willing to serve.

In fact, without John, I know I would not have had nearly as much success in translating my policy priorities into action. He owns a big piece of our legislative victories, having been instrumental at every stage of the policy-making process—from conception, to passage, to implementation—ensuring the State of Indiana maximally benefits from each law we pass: bringing social impact bonds to the Federal level; shoring up our semiconductor supply chain and incentivizing tech innovation through the CHIPS and Science Act; creating Indiana’s first national park, the Indiana Dunes National Park. Even into his last days in my office, he has been working on ensuring the Senate appropriately recognizes the IU Hoosiers for winning the 2025 College Football Playoff National Championship after completing an undefeated season.

To this day, he describes his presence in Assembly Hall in Bloomington on December 10, 2011, as his beloved Hoosiers beat Kentucky in basketball, as the greatest day of his life—except for his wedding, he is always careful to add. That incredible victory occurred during John’s first year on Team Young. It seems only fitting that as he departs, we are celebrating an even

more improbable IU athletics triumph—a national championship in football.

John plays by the rules. He is honest, sincere, dependable, upbeat, and optimistic, but he is always measured, and he is always realistic. He is relational—relational—the opposite of transactional, which can be a rare quality in Washington.

Another rare quality: his singular lack of ego in a town known for some big ones. He is skilled at creating a work culture that is serious about public service and satisfying work but is also done by great people in a fun office along the way.

If you know John, you know he loves Indiana, and he loves the Senate, but not more than his wife Marjorie and his three boys: Jack, George, and Matthew. He has been a great chief of staff, but he is an even better husband and father. He has found a way to give this job his all, to accomplish more than I could ever expect in a way that I could never improve upon, and he did it without sacrificing any of the relationships he valued most. For me, that is his most important legacy.

I will personally miss seeing John at work every day. I am going to miss his daily presence in the office, but I am not anxious about this transition—not for John, not for me, not for Hoosiers. Like a consummate professional, John has institutionalized excellence in our office, making every preparation for us to keep racking up victories for the State of Indiana and continue adding value to the U.S. Senate.

I now look forward to watching John apply his many considerable talents and experiences outside of Congress. I know he will continue to impress, continue to hold himself and others to the highest standards, and continue to win in whatever arena he competes.

So, John, thank you for your service to this office, to Hoosiers, to our country. On behalf of your many friends, colleagues, and admirers on Capitol Hill, I wish you fair winds and following seas.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). The Senator from Michigan.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, there is a phrase that gets tossed around a lot these days: “suicidal empathy.” It is a term I have used myself on more than one occasion. It means, more or less, exactly what it sounds like: Tolerance, taken to its most extreme and destructive end.

This is not the classic Republican tolerance you find in the Federalist Papers or the writings of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. It is a tolerance of anything and everything which overpowers all reason and undermines all distinctions between right and wrong, good and evil, order and anarchy.

It is an attitude summed up by the famous slogan of the French student

radicals in 1968: “It is forbidden to forbid.”

That is what the phrase “suicidal empathy” is meant to describe. We open our borders and import millions of unvetted refugees because we can’t bear to turn a single asylum seeker away. We empty out our prisons because we just can’t stomach the thought of keeping anyone behind bars.

We let violent criminals off with a slap on the wrist because we see them as victims of socioeconomic conditions beyond their control. We turn a blind eye to rioters who loot, steal, and burn their way through our city streets because a riot is just the language of the unheard.

But as I watch what is happening in the cities like Minneapolis and I listen to the pundits and politicians on the left openly cheer on the agents of chaos, I am increasingly convinced that suicidal empathy is not the right description of the disease that inflicts our body politic today. I think that phrase is actually far too generous.

These radicals on the streets of Minneapolis and their comrades in cities like Los Angeles, Chicago, and Portland are not driven by “empathy” in any meaningful sense of the term. These are not bleeding-heart humanitarians paralyzed by an overwhelming concern for the welfare of mankind—quite the opposite. Their sphere of moral concern is vanishingly small, and it is reserved exclusively for those who can be used as instruments for their political goals.

They don’t care about what is just; they just care about what is useful. They wield the language of decency and compassion as a political weapon. If this was about empathy, they would have wept with the parents of Jocelyn Nungaray, the 12-year-old girl who was kidnapped, raped, and murdered by two illegal aliens in 2024.

If this was about compassion, they would have mourned for the five young children of Rachel Morin, an American mother who was ambushed, raped, and murdered by an illegal alien on a hiking trail in Maryland in 2023.

If this was about justice, their hearts would have broken for the family of Laken Riley, a 22-year-old nursing student in Georgia who was brutally murdered while out for a jog nearly 2 years ago this day, beaten and strangled to death by a Venezuelan illegal because she fought back when he tried to rape her.

The two illegal aliens who murdered Jocelyn had been stopped at the border, processed, and then simply released into the interior just weeks before. The illegal alien who murdered Rachel was a fugitive with a warrant out for his arrest for the murder of a different woman back home in El Salvador. He had been deported three times in that year alone, only to waltz back in across our open border.

The monster who murdered Laken had been illegally released into our country under the Biden administration’s humanitarian parole program.