The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard, and the bill will remain at the desk.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 37 on the Executive Calendar. I further ask consent that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD, and that the Senate then resume legislative session, with all of the above occurring en bloc.

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

The nomination was considered and confirmed, as follows:

THE JUDICIARY

Ralph R. Erickson, of North Dakota, to be United States District Judge for the District of North Dakota.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now return to legislative session.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2003

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 13; I further ask consent that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate then resume consideration of Calendar No. 19, S. 3, the partial-birth abortion bill, as provided under the previous order.

I further ask unanimous consent that when the Senate resumes morning business, the first 20 minutes be equally divided between Senators HAGEL and DORGAN, with the remainder of the time until 11:30 a.m. to be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. SANTORUM. For the information of all Senators, at 9:30 tomorrow morning, the Senate will proceed to a vote on final passage of the partial-birth abortion bill. Following that vote, there will be a second vote which will be on the nomination of Thomas Varlan to be a U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee. Following the second vote, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business until 11:30 a.m., as stipulated by the previous order.

At 11:30 a.m., the Senate will return to executive session and resume the consideration of the nomination of Miguel Estrada to be a Circuit Judge for the DC Circuit, with the time until 12:30 p.m. equally divided between the chairman and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee or their designees. At 12:30 p.m., the Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination.

Following the cloture vote, the Senate will consider additional judicial nominations. Members should expect up to three additional rollcall votes on these judicial nominations.

PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION BAN ACT

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I just want to make a few additional comments before we wrap up on this debate. As I said earlier, this has been 7 years in the making, to take a bill that was conceived not by me but by Charles Canady over in the House of Representatives, who is now a Federal judge, I believe, and others here in the Senate. Senator Bob Smith from New Hampshire was one of the original leaders on this issue in the Senate. I know he will feel very good about passage of this legislation. It has been a long time coming. And a lot of effort has been put behind this measure by many Members. We have accomplished something that I think is really important.

People have said this is not going to stop any abortions. That may be the case. People have said this procedure is very rare. Well, I would argue that several thousand abortions a year, several thousand children being put through this brutality—I will, first, not classify thousands as rare—and as the Senator from Minnesota so eloquently said earlier today, even one should cause this Senate to stand up and say no.

This is a procedure that has no place in medicine, has no place in the legal behavior of anybody here in the United States of America.

We had a good debate today. We were able to defeat some amendments that were very much aimed at eliminating this ban, wiping the underlying bill out and replacing it with some language that would have, frankly, done little to nothing.

I thank all of my colleagues for standing up and sticking with this underlying bill, defeating amendments which I know in some cases were very difficult votes for Members. They came through, and we were able to get decisive votes.

We have had this partial-birth abortion debate so often, and it is our fifth time, unfortunately, we have had to be here on the floor of the Senate. But we also had a good debate on the whole underlying issue of Roe v. Wade.

While I was disappointed that the sense of the Senate passed, with, I believe, 52 positive votes here in the Senate affirming Roe v. Wade, I hope those who had an opportunity to listen to the debate today—for those who did not, I encourage them to pick up the RECORD because I think both sides of the aisle laid out their case. They laid out their case as to why this judicial decision is a good thing for America, as a country, and for the people—those who are for it. And those who are against it laid out a good argument, I would argue a compelling one, since I was one of the ones making it, that Roe v. Wade is not a good thing for this country. It is damaging to our culture, to the spirit of America.

I just want to reiterate why I feel so strongly about that. Because, as you noticed in the Senate, even during that debate, as heated as it was, you did not have a whole lot of people coming down here to engage in that debate.

It is the great moral issue of the day. There is no other issue that fires passion in people like this one, and it has for decades. It has been 30 years since the Supreme Court grabbed from the people the decision to determine what the collective morality of this country is with respect to the sanctity of human life in the womb. The Supreme Court took that decision from the people, and did it through legislating in a judicial decision.

Now, I would argue that irrespective of your position on abortion, as free people, we fought a revolution about those people taking rights from us or taking decisions from us, people who are not elected, who are not subject to the will of the voter. And that is what the U.S. Supreme Court did in 1973. They took from us, the people, the right to determine our fate, the right to determine our collective judgment, our moral decision.

Some people have come up to me for years and said: You don't have the right to make this moral decision. My response is: Well, if I, as your elected representative, don't have the right, what gives the right to nine unelected judges to make this decision for you?

This is a representative democracy. You elect people to make decisions for the collective whole. That is how the system works. And what judges are there to do is to determine whether they are within the constitutional framework. They are not to use, as a flimsy excuse, the Constitution to create legislation. That is the constitutional amendment process.

If you want to create a new right, pass a constitutional amendment. You don't create new rights by someone coming on a court and saying: Hey, I found a new right. That is exactly what the U.S. Supreme Court did in Roe v. Wade. They found a new right that for centuries—roughly two centuries—had not been found by some of the smartest men we have had in this country, some of the best and brightest.

Lawyers and nonlawyers in this country have served on the U.S. Supreme Court, and for all that time they