

Nebraska also boasts more than 260 female State Proficiency winners and 5 female National Proficiency winners. These students represent the best of the best, having achieved the highest level of excellence in their chosen fields.

Ninety women in Nebraska have served as State FFA Officers, with 8 serving as President. Four Nebraska females have served as National FFA Officers. These leaders have invested their time and talents in building influential relationships with members and growing the Organization.

The contributions of female members have helped the National FFA Organization to become a premier student leadership organization, comprised of more than 507,000 members in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

The FFA's mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agriculture education.

Today I am proud to offer a resolution to recognize the positive contributions female members have made to achieve FFA's goals of proficient agricultural leadership and advocacy, community citizenship, volunteerism, and cooperation.

I congratulate the National FFA Organization for 40 years of membership by women and for its role in developing tomorrow's leaders.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 319) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 319

Whereas the National FFA Organization is a premier student leadership organization with more than 507,000 members in all 50 States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands;

Whereas the mission of the National FFA Organization is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education;

Whereas women were first admitted as members of the National FFA Organization in 1969 at the 42nd Annual National FFA Convention;

Whereas, by 2009, 41 percent of all members of the National FFA Organization were women, and more than 50 percent of leadership positions in the National FFA Organization were held by women; and

Whereas female members have made positive contributions to the goals of the National FFA Organization, including proficient agricultural leadership and advocacy, community citizenship, volunteerism, and cooperation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate congratulates the National FFA Organization for 40 years of membership by women and celebrates the achievements and contributions of female members of the National FFA Organization.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar Nos. 132, 475, 476, 479, 485, 486; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc; that no further motions be in order; that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; provided further that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; further, that the cloture motion with respect to Calendar No. 132 be withdrawn and the Senate then return to legislative session.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION

William K. Sessions III, of Vermont, to be Chair of the United States Sentencing Commission.

William E. Spriggs, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor.

Joseph A. Main, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary of Labor for Mine Safety and Health.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Jose Antonio Garcia, of Florida, to be Director of the Office of Minority Economic Impact, Department of Energy, vice Theresa Alvillar-Speake, resigned.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Marcia K. McNutt, of California, to be Director of the United States Geological Survey.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Arun Majumdar, of California, to be Director of the Advanced Research Projects Agency—Energy, Department of Energy.

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM K. SESSIONS III

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, the Senate is taking action long delayed by an anonymous Republican hold. That hold has extended for almost 6 months without explanation. I have spoken repeatedly to the Republican leader, the assistant Republican leader, and the ranking Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee. No one has given me any explanation for the hold. When the Senate majority leader asked back in early June to proceed to the nomination that was reported without objection by the Senate Judiciary Committee on May 7, the Republican leader objected, saying "we have not had an opportunity to get that cleared." They had had a month;

another 4 months have now passed. In violation of the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act, no Republican Senator has come forward in all this time to identify himself and specify a reason for the hold.

Judge Sessions is an extraordinary public servant. Judge Sessions has twice previously been confirmed unanimously by the Senate to serve on the Sentencing Commission. He has served with distinction for 10 years, and has served as a vice chair of the Sentencing Commission. He is a distinguished U.S. Federal judge who has served for 14 years and now serves as the chief judge for the District of Vermont. He is a member of the Judicial Conference of the United States, made up of the leaders of the Federal judiciary. He has also contributed to his local community as a public defender, an adjunct law professor, and even as a coach of the local Little League team. A lawyer's lawyer and a judge's judge, he has earned the praise of both the prosecution bar and the defense bar.

Judge Sessions is eminently well qualified to serve as the chair of the Sentencing Commission. I must say that in my numerous conversations with Republican Senators and Republican Senate leaders during the last 6 months, no one raised any dispute or criticism or reason for this obstruction and delay.

This is most unfortunate because some of us have worked very hard to move beyond the era when delays in nominations to fill vacancies on the Sentencing Commission got so bad and extended so long that it drew the attention of the Chief Justice of the United States in his annual reports in 1997 and 1998. I have worked with the Republican chairmen and ranking members on the Judiciary Committee and consistently protected their rights and interests. I have treated their recommended nominees with respect and shown them support. I worked to break the impasse in the Republican-led Senate by working across the aisle and with the White House to develop a slate of nominees, Republican, Democratic and independent, that was confirmed as a group. Thereafter, I have worked conscientiously with the lead Republican on the Judiciary Committee to fill vacancies appropriately as they arose.

Most recently, I worked even during the last weeks of the Bush administration to have the Judiciary Committee report and the Senate confirm two nominees recommended and supported by Senate Republicans. William Carr, a recommendation from the ranking Republican on the Judiciary Committee, was confirmed on November 20, 2008, weeks after the Presidential election, and now serves as a vice chair. We also proceeded to confirm to another term Judge Ricardo Hinojosa, who I supported when he was nominated to the Commission by his friend President Bush in January 2003, when he was nominated and confirmed as chair in

2004, and when he was renominated for another term and confirmed in November 2008. Judge Hinojosa has served as acting chair because Republicans have held up the confirmation of Judge Sessions. Apparently, Senate Republicans have chosen to respond to our having proceeded with those confirmations in November 2008 to the Sentencing Commission and to my years of cooperative efforts by resorting to delay and obstruction. They have refused to allow the Senate to consider the nomination of Judge Sessions to serve as chair of the Sentencing Commission for the last several months.

I commend Judge Sessions for his patience, determination and sense of public service. I thank the majority leader for proceeding to file the cloture petition last night that is finally resulting in Senate action on this important nomination.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

Mr. DURBIN. 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. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, are we in a period of morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes, we are.

Mr. REID. I thank the Chair.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2009—MOTION TO PROCEED

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we are trying to work something out on an unemployment compensation extension. We are being as fair and reasonable as we can. We have exchanged papers with the minority. We hope they will come back with a reasonable number of amendments on which we can move forward.

In order to move the process along, as we continue to negotiate, I ask unanimous consent to proceed to Calendar No. 174, H.R. 3548, and I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been filed under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 174, H.R. 3548, the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009.

Harry Reid, Patty Murray, Mark Udall, Roland W. Burris, Mark Begich, Byron L. Dorgan, Frank R. Lautenberg, Amy Klobuchar, Bill Nelson, Jack Reed, Carl Levin, Jeff Bingaman, Bernard Sanders, Sherrod Brown, Sheldon Whitehouse, Barbara Boxer, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Richard Durbin.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum be waived.

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

Mr. REID. I now withdraw the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is withdrawn.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2009

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until tomorrow at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, October 22; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and there be a period of morning business for an hour, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the second half; that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2647, the Department of Defense authorization bill, and

there then be an hour for debate, equally divided and controlled between Senators LEVIN and MCCAIN or their designees, prior to the cloture vote on that conference report.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Senators should expect the first vote tomorrow to occur at 11:45 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the provisions of S. Res. 315, as a mark of further respect to the late former Senator Clifford Peter Hansen of Wyoming.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:50 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, October 22, 2009, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate, Wednesday, October 21, 2009:

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

WILLIAM E. SPRIGGS, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR.

JOSEPH A. MAIN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR FOR MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

JOSE ANTONIO GARCIA, OF FLORIDA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF MINORITY ECONOMIC IMPACT, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

MARCIA K. MCNUTT, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

ARUN MAJUMDAR, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE ADVANCED RESEARCH PROJECTS AGENCY—ENERGY, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY.

THE ABOVE NOMINATIONS WERE APPROVED SUBJECT TO THE NOMINEES' COMMITMENT TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS TO APPEAR AND TESTIFY BEFORE ANY DULY CONSTITUTED COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE.

UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION

WILLIAM K. SESSIONS III, OF VERMONT, TO BE CHAIR OF THE UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION.

THE JUDICIARY

ROBERTO A. LANGE, OF SOUTH DAKOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH DAKOTA.