

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 46, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 97 Leg.]

YEAS—46

Table with 3 columns of names: Alexander, Ayotte, Barrasso, Blunt, Boozman, Burr, Chambliss, Coats, Coburn, Cochran, Collins, Corker, Cornyn, Crapo, Enzi, Fischer, Flake, Graham, Grassley, Hatch, Heller, Hoeven, Inhofe, Isakson, Johanns, Johnson (WI), King, Kirk, Lee, Manchin, McCain, McConnell, Moran, Murkowski, Paul, Portman, Risch, Roberts, Rubio, Scott, Sessions, Shelby, Thune, Toomey, Vitter, Wicker.

NAYS—50

Table with 3 columns of names: Baldwin, Begich, Bennet, Blumenthal, Booker, Boxer, Brown, Cantwell, Cardin, Carper, Casey, Coons, Donnelly, Durbin, Feinstein, Franken, Gillibrand, Hagan, Harkin, Heinrich, Heitkamp, Hirono, Johnson (SD), Kaine, Klobuchar, Landrieu, Leahy, Levin, McCaskill, Menendez, Merkley, Mikulski, Murphy, Murray, Nelson, Pryor, Reed, Reid, Sanders, Schatz, Schumer, Shaheen, Stabenow, Tester, Udall (CO), Udall (NM), Walsh, Warner, Whitehouse, Wyden.

NOT VOTING—4

Table with 2 columns: Cruz, Rockefeller, Markey, Warren.

The motion was rejected. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I have a germane amendment to this matter, which I have been trying to get recognized to present.

I call up my amendment No. 2931 to the Reid amendment No. 2874.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is not in order to be offered. It is inconsistent with Senate precedence with respect to the offering of amendments, their numbers, degree, and kind.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, in light of the fact that our practice of regularly shutting out Senators from the ability to offer reasonable and germane amendments is inconsistent with all of the history and traditions of the Senate, I appeal the ruling of the Chair that the amendment is not in order and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to table and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 67, nays 29, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 98 Leg.]

YEAS—67

Table with 3 columns of names: Alexander, Ayotte, Baldwin, Begich, Bennet, Blumenthal, Booker, Boxer, Brown, Cantwell, Cardin, Carper, Casey, Chambliss, Cochran, Collins, Coons, Corker, Donnelly, Durbin, Feinstein, Flake, Franken, Gillibrand, Hagan, Grassley, Hoeven, Inhofe, Isakson, Johnson (SD), Kaine, King, Klobuchar, Landrieu, Leahy, Levin, Manchin, McCain, McCaskill, Menendez, Merkley, Mikulski, Murkowski, Murphy, Murray, Nelson, Pryor, Reed, Reid, Sanders, Schatz, Schumer, Sessions, Shaheen, Stabenow, Tester, Udall (CO), Udall (NM), Walsh, Warner, Whitehouse, Wicker, Wyden.

NAYS—29

Table with 3 columns of names: Barrasso, Blunt, Boozman, Burr, Coats, Coburn, Cornyn, Crapo, Enzi, Fischer, Graham, Grassley, Hoeven, Inhofe, Johanns, Johnson (WI), Kirk, Lee, McConnell, Moran, Paul, Risch, Roberts, Rubio, Scott, Shelby, Thune, Toomey, Vitter.

NOT VOTING—4

Table with 2 columns: Cruz, Rockefeller, Markey, Warren.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to table the appeal on the ruling of the Chair is agreed to.

The majority leader.

NOMINATION OF TOMASZ P. MALINOWSKI TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR

NOMINATION OF PORTIA Y. WU TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR

NOMINATION OF DEBORAH L. BIRX TO BE AMBASSADOR AT LARGE AND COORDINATOR OF UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES TO COMBAT HIV/AIDS GLOBALLY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, pursuant to an order that is now in effect in the Senate, I move to proceed to executive session to consider the Malinowski, Wu, and Birx nominations, and ask that all time for debate be yielded back on all of these nominations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nominations.

The assistant bill clerk read the nominations of Tomasz P. Malinowski, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor; Portia Y. Wu, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor; and Deborah L. Birx, of Maryland, to be Ambassador at Large and Coordinator of United States Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS Globally.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I rise to express my support for the nomination of Dr. Deborah Birx to serve as the next Global Aids Coordinator at the Department of State. Dr. Birx's extensive leadership, experience, and research in the field of HIV/AIDS make her an ideal candidate to lead our Nation's response to HIV/AIDS around the world.

The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR, has been a resounding success. Our investments in fighting HIV/AIDS throughout the world have resulted in access to treatment for millions of people and dramatic reductions in new infections. It has also garnered unprecedented respect for the United States in communities around the world. This is why it is important that we have a strong coordinator who will continue to lead on this important issue. Dr. Birx has a unique combination of scientific, technical, and leadership experience that makes her the best candidate for this position.

Dr. Birx began her career serving in the Walter Reed Army Medical Center and the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, where she led the Department of Defense in its work on HIV/AIDS throughout the 1980s. In that role, she lead one of the most influential HIV vaccine trials in history,

which resulted in the first supporting evidence of any vaccine being effective in lowering the risk of contracting HIV.

For more than a decade, Dr. Birx served as the Director of the U.S. Military HIV Research Program at the Department of Defense. During her time there she brought together the Army, Navy, and Air Force in a new model of cooperation and greatly improved the U.S. military's HIV/AIDS efforts through innovative collaboration.

Since 2005, she has served as the Director of the Global AIDS Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC. Through her leadership, CDC now has an infrastructure that supports HIV/AIDS programs in over 75 countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America which are funded by PEPFAR.

Dr. Birx has dedicated her career to advancing and improving the field of HIV/AIDS. After three decades in the fight against HIV/AIDS, her passion and dedication to her work has not wavered, and she remains stalwart in her belief that we can put an end to this epidemic. Her leadership and expertise in this field is unprecedented, which is why I urge my colleagues to support the nomination of Dr. Deborah Birx to serve as the next U.S. Global Aids Coordinator.

VOTE ON MALINOWSKI NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Tomasz P. Malinowski, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON WU NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Portia Y. Wu, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON BIRX NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Deborah L. Birx, of Maryland, to be Ambassador at Large and Coordinator of United States Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS Globally?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume legislative session.

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I can still remember my first job as though it was yesterday. I worked as a busboy at a local family restaurant during our small-town fair. While that job only lasted a few days, I still remember how incredibly proud I was to have earned a few dollars myself. The next year that same family hired me to bus tables and wash dishes year-round at their family restaurant. I soon went from busing tables to bagging groceries and then stocking shelves at the local grocery store.

I grew up on a small farming and ranching operation. So whether it was drying dishes after dinner or helping my dad with the cattle, hard work was simply a requirement for every single member of my family. In addition to tending cattle, my dad worked as a utility lineman. And my mother worked in a factory inspecting wheels on the assembly line.

Like a lot of Americans, I learned the dignity of work long before I ever held a job. I learned at home.

Everyone deserves a fair shot at success in this country. That is at the heart of why raising the minimum wage truly matters.

Minimum wage workers are not just teenagers. They are single parents working two jobs to make ends meet. They are women working a minimum-wage job at a movie theater for 8 years waiting for a raise. They are students working toward a degree that they hope will make all the difference in their lives. They are mothers and fathers working 40 hours a week—sometimes many more—to support their families.

These are the Americans who work hard and earn the Federal minimum wage and still find it difficult—some would argue impossible—to get ahead.

At \$7.25 an hour, the Federal minimum wage has lost more than 30 percent of its value over the past four decades. Groceries and housing, education and energy costs all continue to rise, but the minimum wage simply has not kept pace.

This financial hardship is especially felt by women who make up a majority of minimum wage workers in this country. And stagnant wages hinder a family's chance to work their way into the middle class.

For many, raising the minimum wage means the difference between poverty and dignity. It can mean the difference between a trip to the food bank and a trip to the grocery store. It means the difference between earning enough to just barely get by and earning enough to at least think about the future.

That is why I am supporting the Minimum Wage Fairness Act to raise the Federal minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour by 2015.

According to recent estimates, more than 100,000 New Mexicans would receive a direct raise from this legislation, and another 43,000 would see their

pay increase as overall wages improve, dramatically increasing economic opportunities for New Mexico families.

Raising the minimum wage is not just good for those workers; it is good for business and it is good for the economy at large. A higher minimum wage helps reduce turnover, increases productivity, and boosts consumer demand.

A higher minimum wage puts more money in the pockets of people who spend locally and helps create a ladder of opportunity into the middle class.

Americans are no strangers to hard work and embrace the belief that if you work hard and you play by the rules, you should be able to get ahead, you deserve a fair shot.

There are cities in New Mexico that are already taking the initiative and raising the minimum wage on their own. The city of Santa Fe's minimum wage is \$10.51 per hour. As a city councilor myself, I fought to raise the minimum wage in Albuquerque. And today Albuquerque's minimum wage is still \$1.25 more than the current Federal rate.

In Las Cruces, there is a growing grassroots effort to raise that city's minimum wage.

I know this fight. We need to raise the national minimum wage so that all workers have a fair shot to get ahead. Because, the truth is, the deck has been stacked against working families for some time now. Too many working families are forced to make decisions that hurt the progress and strength of our Nation as a whole—such as taking on an extra shift instead of pursuing their education, or having to choose between paying the heating bill or the phone bill.

Raising the minimum wage is key to making this economic recovery work for all of us. But raising the minimum wage alone is not enough to constitute a middle-class economic agenda.

We need to put preschool within the financial grasp of every working family, and we need to address the outrageous increases in college tuition and loan costs. We must invest in vocational training and help build the modern American manufacturing economy of the 21st century. We must close the gender wage gap to ensure that women are paid what they deserve—paid equally with men.

Fair, livable wages, together with educational opportunities for middle-class families—that is a formula for a real opportunity agenda.

It is time to ensure that every New Mexican, every American has a fair shot. It is time to raise the minimum wage.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The Finance Committee is considering something we call in the Senate tax extenders. One of those is the wind production tax credit. For the next 10 minutes or so, I wish to address that