

change anytime soon. Here is what he said. Speaking of Republicans' desire to keep nominations at a trickle, the assistant Republican leader said last week: "It'll be a slow, steady pace." The pace certainly has been slow, but not steady—more like nonexistent. One circuit court nominee in more than 6 months is an embarrassment. That puts the Senate on pace to confirm fewer than four circuit court nominees this entire Congress. It does not matter that there are judicial emergencies all over the country.

But Republicans' inaction on nominees is not just hurting our judicial system; it is also hurting our Nation's ability to combat terrorism, including ISIS. One way to help stop ISIS and other terrorist organizations is to go after their funding. Republicans know that. But listen to this, Mr. President. Since April, Adam Szubin, President Obama's nominee to the Department of Treasury as Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes, has remained in limbo. It is so important to this country. We have the situation going on with Iran. We need people in the Treasury Department to help figure out all that is going on in regard to terrorism there and other places in the world. Yet Republicans will not confirm this good man. He cannot get a vote. And who knows why. Ask Republicans.

By any objective measure, the Republican Senate is failing in their basic constitutional responsibility to provide advice and consent. The American people deserve better. They deserve a Senate that does its work responsibly and completes it on time.

Mr. President, will the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

EVERY CHILD ACHIEVES ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. 1177, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1177) to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that every child achieves.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, if I could gain the attention of the Democratic leader for just a moment, before he leaves the floor. In a few moments, the Senator from Washington and I will make our opening statements on our proposed committee legislation to fix No Child Left Behind, but before we do that, I want to first express my appreciation to the majority leader for his putting it on the floor, bringing it

up. I know the majority leader has a variety of other options, and he is giving us a chance to take our bill, which we will be describing in a few minutes, and put it on the floor.

I also want to acknowledge and thank the Democratic leader because he has allowed the bill to come to the floor without delay so that we can move to the bill and allow Senators to begin to vote on it. We hope to begin having those votes tomorrow morning.

We have a good example of cooperation here with the majority leader bringing the bill to the floor, a unanimous bill by the committee. Senator MURRAY, a member of the Democratic leadership, played a major role in the legislation. In fact, it was her advice that I took which caused us I think to have success in the committee by presenting a bipartisan bill. But I specifically want to thank Senator REID for his attitude on the bill. I think that will create the environment in which we will have to frankly work through some contentious issues. This is not an issue-free piece of legislation. We are 7 years overdue. It should have been passed in the last two Congresses. But we have made a good start.

I thank both leaders for giving Senator MURRAY and me a chance to try to work in the next few days with other Senators to continue the amendment process, allow Senators to have their say, get a result, and work with the House to send a bill to the President that he is willing to sign.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my friend from Tennessee is an expert in education. Not only was he the Governor of the great State of Tennessee, he was also the Secretary of Education. He knows education. And he has a good partner to work with, PATTY MURRAY. The senior Senator from Washington is a legislator first class, and the work they have done as leaders of this important committee has been very, very good.

I appreciate the kind words of my friend from Tennessee, but this is an example of what I talked about a few minutes ago. We are not treating Republicans the way they have treated us. I repeat, every piece of legislation I brought to the floor we had to file a motion to proceed on—with extremely rare exception, everything. We wasted months going through this senseless 2 days, 30 hours, and on and on with all the time spent on this. It was an effort to embarrass President Obama, and they did their best to do that. But as cynical as it was, it helped them in the 2014 elections, and I acknowledge that, and that is too bad. But it is too bad we had to go through all that because it has really hurt the country.

I say to my friend, I have great respect for this man from Tennessee. He is a good legislator, and I look forward to moving forward on this important piece of legislation involving elementary and secondary education. We have

to do a better job, and I think there are no two better qualified people than the two managers of this bill to accomplish that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the Democratic leader. Senator MURRAY and I will make our opening statements, but I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, we begin debate today on a bill to fix the problems with No Child Left Behind, the Federal law that has been causing confusion and anxiety in 100,000 public schools in our country.

This week, Newsweek magazine called this the "law that everyone wants to fix." There is a broad consensus about that, and, remarkably, there is a broad consensus about how to fix it. This is the consensus: that we should continue the law's important measurements of students' academic progress but restore to States, school districts, classroom teachers, and parents the responsibility for deciding what to do about the results of those tests. In my view, this change should produce fewer tests and more appropriate ways to measure student achievement. We believe this is the most effective path toward higher standards, better teaching, and real accountability.

Our Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee—the Senate's education committee—obviously believes that too. The committee reported the bill unanimously. Senator MCCONNELL, the majority leader, noted earlier that committee has on it some of the Senate's most liberal Democrats and several of the Senate's most conservative Republicans. It was a surprise to many people that the committee reported it unanimously. But the committee understood that this was a problem we needed to solve and that we had a fair and open process, everyone had a chance to participate, and that the bill was good enough to come to the floor, where we could continue to work on it.

Not only is there a consensus about how to fix it within the U.S. Senate committee on education, there is outside of the Senate. This bipartisan bill, which has come to the Senate floor, has been supported by teachers, by school boards, by school superintendents, by chief State school officers, and by Governors.

The Presiding Officer is a former Governor, as am I. Both of us would have to go back a long time to remember something that was supported as enthusiastically by both the National