

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HURRICANES HARVEY AND IRMA

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, let me say that my heart goes out to the people of America who are, right now, dealing with Hurricanes Harvey and Irma and their aftermaths.

TRIBUTE TO STEVE GLEASON AND DONNA BRITT

Mr. President, ALS, which I think most of us refer to as Lou Gehrig's disease, has hit us hard in Louisiana. It has hit our world hard, but it has hit especially hard in my State.

A number of my colleagues and a number of Americans, I hope, were watching the night the New Orleans Saints returned to the field after our State was devastated by Hurricane Katrina. That night in the Superdome, a young man named Steve Gleason became a legend. I know it was just a football game, but he blocked a punt deep in the territory of the Saints' opponent, the Atlanta Falcons, for a touchdown. It was more than just a touchdown; it was a declaration that Louisiana was going to come back, that our spirit was not broken.

Today, Steve Gleason is battling ALS. The medical term for ALS is "amyotrophic lateral sclerosis." We call it, as I said, Lou Gehrig's disease. It is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that destroys nerve cells in the brain and in the spinal cord. Regrettably, there is no cure. Steve, however, is determined to thrive and help others who have ALS.

Within the past few weeks, we have also learned that another Louisianan has ALS—well-known Baton Rouge television news anchor Donna Britt. I will tell you, like Steve, Donna is showing true grit in the face of this horrible disease. Most of us would probably curl into a fetal position and cry if we were told we had a progressive neurodegenerative disease that is almost always fatal—but not Steve and certainly not Ms. Donna Britt. Their valor and their courage is inspirational to me and, I think, to all Louisianans. As Donna herself put it, she is going to continue living as a living person and not as a dying person.

There is a famous line in a famous movie in which the main character says: I have a choice here—it is time to get busy living or get busy dying. Donna has chosen to get busy living. She is going to keep going to work, and she is going to keep caring for her family. Donna is educating herself about ALS. She has ordered a state-of-the-art wheelchair with Bluetooth technology, and she is adding words to a voice bank for when she can no longer speak because of this horrible disease. Donna Britt—I am not surprised—is determined to meet every challenge.

Let me say it again. This is pure valor. It is the type of courage in the face of adversity that inspires us all. It

is also Donna. I do not know how to put that any other way. That is Donna Britt. Donna is a person who plays the oboe and who has survived breast cancer. She donates books to school libraries, and for charity she sings outside the Walmart during the holidays. She travels the world, and she delivers the news. She is a voice of comfort to all of those in her television media market, and she loves her family. She and her husband Mark Ballard have a son and a daughter. Her daughter Annie is a scientist working in DNA research, and their son Louie is a bright, young student in high school.

Donna has delivered the news in the Baton Rouge metropolitan area for 36 years. She spent her entire career, which is very unusual, at one television station—WAFB in Baton Rouge, which Donna has helped to make a powerhouse in Louisiana media. Donna has done her job so extraordinarily well that she has become a role model for young journalists—all journalists but particularly female journalists. I can tell my colleagues that folks in Baton Rouge feel Donna Britt is a part of their family. They trust her. That is because she is impartial, she is objective, and she is insightful. Since 1981, she has been on the air with the people of the Baton Rouge metropolitan area through storms, through inaugurations, through just about every major news event, good times and bad, that one can imagine. Donna also takes our people into the community and introduces them to interesting people.

A few months ago, Donna realized her health wasn't what it should be. There is no definitive test for ALS, as perhaps my colleagues know. Basically, the doctors have to rule everything else out before determining that one has ALS. As she struggled to figure out why she was losing the use of her fingers and her legs, Donna didn't keep her viewers in the dark. She brought them along for the journey in frank, candid Facebook videos. Along the way, she educated them—ever the journalist—on what it is like to have a degenerative disease.

At a family reunion this summer, Donna all of a sudden could not stand any longer. Now, that is a problem when you stand behind a desk to deliver the news—not for Donna. It was just another challenge to conquer. She promptly ordered a wheelchair that would adapt to her new reality.

Now Donna Britt is working with Louisiana State University to prepare for the day when her respiratory and diaphragm muscles are too weak for her to vocalize what she is thinking. With LSU's help, she is putting words into a voice bank for the future. Once again, it is just another challenge for Donna Britt to conquer.

I am very proud of Steve Gleason, and I am also very proud of Donna Britt. As angry as I am that anyone has to live with this dreadful disease ALS, I am proud they are inspiring an army of ALS sufferers by meeting

every challenge and battling to thrive. I am proud that Steve and Donna are inspiring all of us with their valor and their courage.

Thank you.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECESS

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until 2:15 p.m.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:05 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kevin Allen Hassett, of Massachusetts, to be Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 20 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, on the campaign trail, Donald Trump promised working families that he would subject every proposal he saw in the White House to a simple test: "Does it create more jobs and better wages for Americans?" He claimed he wasn't "going to let Wall Street get away with murder," and he said he was going to "drain the swamp."

Such great talk—and then he got to Washington. His first order of business was to put together a team of people who had spent decades as executives at big banks and large corporations—people who are determined to tilt the playing field in favor of Wall Street and against working families. You don't need to look very far to see them. His most senior economic advisers—Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn, and the senior counselor for economic initiatives, Dina Powell—together, those three have spent nearly a half a century combined working for Goldman Sachs. When it comes to our economy, this isn't the Trump administration; this is the Goldman Sachs administration.

Now President Trump has lined up another top economic adviser, Kevin Hassett, who has been nominated to serve as the Chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers. Mr. Hassett hasn't worked at Goldman Sachs. No, his "fresh perspective" is that he has spent his career advocating for policies that favor the wealthiest Americans.

The Council of Economic Advisers plays a critical role in developing this country's economic policies. It was created by Congress to, as Dr. Hassett has put it himself, give the President "unbiased, scientific, and objective advice" about the economic impact of the President's policies on the American economy. They have their fingers in all sorts of policies from trade to healthcare, to taxes, to financial regulation.

So what kind of an economy does Dr. Hassett want? He hasn't been shy in telling us. Dr. Hassett wants an economy that keeps working great for those on top, and if it leaves working families further behind, that is just too bad.

Start with taxes: Dr. Hassett gets really excited about cutting taxes on giant corporations. In fact, when he was working for Mitt Romney's Presidential campaign, he wrote that the new President's top priority—the No. 1 act, the first thing he should do when he stepped into the Oval Office—was cut the corporate tax rate. His argument was that if we cut taxes for big businesses, they will give those savings to their workers and be more productive, improving the economy for everyone. That is just plain old trickle-down economics: Give more money to corporations and the wealthy, and they will surely pass it along to everyone else. It hasn't worked so far, and it isn't going to work in the future. Well, it isn't going to work for anyone who isn't already wealthy. For them, that works great.

On trade, Dr. Hassett also sings the corporate tune. Dr. Hassett wants to double down on the same kind of trade agreements that enrich giant corporations and leave the workers eating dirt. Dr. Hassett embraces trade deals that make it harder for small businesses to compete, trade deals that weaken public safety, and trade deals that undercut environmental rules. Dr. Hassett's approach really makes one wonder: Does Donald Trump not know who this guy is, or does he just not care? Either way, it is American workers who will take another punch to the gut delivered by Team Trump.

And how about on financial regulation? Nine years ago, Wall Street brought the economy to its knees and had to be bailed out to the tune of \$700 billion. The crash cost millions of Americans their jobs and their homes. Congress then passed bipartisan financial reforms to stop another crisis. Dr. Hassett was not enthusiastic. In public, he called those new rules "lamebrained" and described the legis-

lation as "horrifying" and "the worst piece of legislation that I've seen in my entire life." He sounded the alarm that the financial reform "needs to be repealed as soon as possible."

He has since said that he regrets his tone. Tone isn't the problem here. The problem is what he said, not how he said it.

If Dr. Hassett has his way and Wall Street reform gets repealed, the same behavior that caused the 2008 financial crisis would be unleashed again. I cannot understand how, just 9 years after the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, Dr. Hassett would want to turn the banks loose so they have a clear shot at cheating consumers and building up risks that could blow up the financial system again.

There is no end to Dr. Hassett's bad judgment. He is wrong on the minimum wage, calling the proposal to raise the minimum wage to \$9 an hour "wrongheaded" and saying that raising the minimum wage was a "dishonest approach" to alleviating poverty.

He is wrong on the environment. In a column, he advised President Obama to "frack away."

And, most of all, he is wrong about the fundamental problems in our economy, calling income inequality a myth and saying it was "ludicrous" to believe that our society is "rigged or fundamentally unjust." He sounds as if he thinks that it is just great that this economy works for those at the top and pretty much for no one else.

Dr. Hassett has consistently advocated for the interests of corporations over working people. If he is confirmed, I am confident that he will be one more voice in the White House speaking up for the rich and the powerful. No doubt he will fit right into the Goldman Sachs administration.

But Congress has a say in this. The last thing we need is another economic adviser who wants to tilt the playing field even further in favor of corporate America.

I oppose this nomination, and I hope other Senators will too.

I yield the floor.

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. BROWN. 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. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 5 minutes on the Hassett nomination.

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the nomination of Kevin Hassett to be Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. Dr. Hassett came through the Banking Committee with a mixed vote, not so much because of him and his qualifications but

because of some of his past statements and because of the economic philosophy of the person who nominated Dr. Hassett.

After meeting with him and being impressed with his integrity and openness, I hope he will not forget where he came from. I hope he will approach the job in a thoughtful way. I hope that he will stay grounded in sound research and that he will be transparent about his methods. I would caution him about embracing ideas about economic growth that are not supported by empirical evidence. I hope his new colleagues will listen to him.

For too long, our trade policy and tax policy have encouraged a corporate business model that shuts down production in Hamilton or Middletown or Mansfield or Toledo or Youngstown, gets a tax break, cashes in a tax break, then moves production overseas and then to China or Mexico, and then ships production back into the United States. Fundamentally, that has become the business plan of far too many companies—that sort of outsourcing.

I had a long discussion with Dr. Hassett about that. As I said, I hope he remembers where he came from. He saw that happen as he was growing up, if I recall, in western Massachusetts, where production was shut down in his communities, moved overseas for production, and then the goods were made overseas, and then sent back to the United States.

I am concerned about the White House in which he will work. I am concerned that at that White House, it often looks like a retreat for Goldman Sachs executives. The President's tax proposal benefits the wealthiest Americans and the largest corporations. Its budget is based on GDP predictions that are unrealistic. In fact, when it came to the issue of Social Security solvency years ago, Dr. Hassett found a sustained 3-percent growth rate too optimistic for planning purposes. That is the same rate—that same rate is what the Trump budget uses to gloss over its true costs.

I plan to support Dr. Hassett. I think he is an honorable man. I disagree fundamentally on a lot of these issues. I again implore him, as I cast my vote in support of him—because the President is entitled to an adviser and to choose within a band, of course, of support from whom he wants—but I am hopeful, especially, that Dr. Hassett remembers what it was like when he grew up in Greenfield, MA. Greenfield is a town not much different from my hometown of Mansfield, OH, where bad tax policy and bad trade policy have dashed the dreams of far, far too many people in those communities.

I count on Dr. Hassett to do the right thing. I am hopeful that he will help President Trump see what these communities look like, not from standing in a rally in front of thousands of people but by meeting people and individually talking with them and understanding what happens with the trade policy and the tax policy.

More trickle-down economics, more tax cuts for the rich are not the ways to build an economy. We build an economy by building from the middle class out. That means a tax system and a trade system that works for Greenfield, MA, and works for Mansfield, OH.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I support the nomination of Mr. Kevin Allen Hassett to serve as Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. His nomination received wide bipartisan support, not only in the Banking Committee, but also from other esteemed members of his profession.

Mr. Hassett was voted out of our committee on a voice vote with widespread support. We received a letter in favor of his nomination signed by a bipartisan group of 44 economists, including 14 former Chairmen of the Council of Economic Advisers and two former Federal Reserve Chairmen. At Mr. Hassett's confirmation hearing, he expertly fielded questions on a wide range of economic issues and provided insights on progrowth policies that would support all members of the economy. In my office, we discussed at length his extensive experience in economic and tax policy modeling.

Mr. Hassett brings a wealth of relevant experience in academia, government, and policy. His counsel, insight, and expertise will be invaluable as the administration addresses initiatives like tax reform, which undoubtedly will have a large impact on the macro economy.

Thank you.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to support the nomination of Dr. Kevin Hassett to be Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. Kevin is exceptionally qualified to be Chairman of the CEA, where he will play an integral role in tax reform and shaping this administration's progrowth economic policies.

I have known Kevin for quite some—beginning when he served as the chief economic adviser to my Presidential campaign in 2000. The only time I have doubted his intellect was when he agreed to return to advise for my 2008 Presidential campaign.

He has an extensive economic career spanning multiple administrations, including those of Presidents Clinton and George H.W. Bush. Currently, Kevin works at the American Enterprise Institute, AEI, as the State Farm James Q. Wilson Chair in American Politics and Culture and director of Research for Domestic Policy. Before joining AEI, Kevin served as a senior economist at the Federal Reserve and did a stint at Columbia Business School teaching economics and finance.

To understand fully how smart he is, Kevin's former colleague told me the story of how he printed out a 400-plus page technical paper at the request of Kevin, only to realize he had printed out the original German version rather than an English translation. Without batting an eye, Kevin said "no problem" and went about reading the scholarly report in German.

Kevin's nomination has received support from an ideologically diverse group of notable economists, including past CEA Chairmen. Additionally, the Senate Banking Committee approved his nomination by voice vote.

I am pleased to support Kevin's nomination today. I wish him, his lovely wife, Kristie, and their sons, John and Jamie, all of the best in this new chapter of their lives.

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

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

All time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Hassett nomination?

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 81, nays 16, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 194 Ex.]

YEAS—81

Alexander	Feinstein	Murkowski
Baldwin	Fischer	Murphy
Barrasso	Flake	Murray
Bennet	Franken	Paul
Blunt	Gardner	Perdue
Boozman	Graham	Peters
Brown	Grassley	Portman
Burr	Hassan	Reed
Cantwell	Hatch	Risch
Capito	Heitkamp	Roberts
Cardin	Heller	Rounds
Carper	Hoeven	Sasse
Casey	Inhofe	Scott
Cassidy	Isakson	Shaheen
Cochran	Johnson	Shelby
Collins	Kaine	Stabenow
Cooms	Kennedy	Strange
Corker	King	Sullivan
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Tester
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Leahy	Tillis
Cruz	Lee	Toomey
Daines	Manchin	Van Hollen
Donnelly	McCain	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young

NAYS—16

Blumenthal	Duckworth	Heinrich
Booker	Gillibrand	Hirono
Cortez Masto	Harris	Markey

Merkley
Sanders
Schatz

Schumer
Udall
Warren

Wyden

NOT VOTING—3

Menendez

Nelson

Rubio

The nomination was confirmed.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I rise today to oppose unauthorized, undeclared, and unconstitutional war. What we have today is basically unlimited war, anywhere, anytime, anyplace upon the globe.

My amendment would sunset in 6 months the 2001 and 2002 authorizations for use of force. What does that mean? This was legislation passed many years ago to go after the people who attacked us on 9/11. I supported that battle, but I think the mission is long since over. I don't think anyone with an ounce of intellectual honesty believes these authorizations from 16 years ago and 14 years ago—I don't think anyone with intellectual honesty believes they authorized war in seven different countries.

Not only is it lives we are losing, the American soldiers, the brave young men and women who are sent to distant lands and asked to give their lives for their country without the Senate taking the time to authorize the war—I think that is terribly unjust and should end.

There are some who argue that we don't even need to vote at all. Some of the Presidents, Republican and Democratic, have said they have article II—this is the second article of the Constitution—they say that by the Constitution, they can do what they want, when they want, where they want, and that Congress never has to approve their authorization and never has to give authority to go to war. These advocates of perpetual war argue that these powers are implicit and that no one can stop a President who wants to go to war.

This is diametrically opposite of what our Founding Fathers thought. Madison in particular disagreed. Madison wrote that the executive branch is the branch most prone to go to war; therefore, the Constitution, with studied care, vested that power in the Congress. Our Founding Fathers saw the