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Senate

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Patrick Pizzella, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Labor.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote on the confirmation of Patrick Pizzella to be the Deputy Secretary of the United States Department of Labor, DOL. The Department of Labor is charged with enforcing laws to keep workers safe on the job, ensuring workers are paid the wages they are owed, helping to develop our workforce, and keeping critical data on our employment market.

Patrick Pizzella brings a wealth of relevant experience in both Democratic and Republican administrations. President Trump designated Mr. Pizzella as acting Chairman of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, FLRA, in January 2017, a position which he held through December 2017. President Obama appointed Mr. Pizzella to the FLRA in August 2013, after which he was confirmed by the U.S. Senate by voice vote on October 16, 2013.

Mr. Pizzella served under President George W. Bush from 2001 to 2009, as Assistant Secretary of Labor for Administration and Management at the Department of Labor. Mr. Pizzella was nominated by President Bush in April 2001—approved in May without a hearing by the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, HELP, under Senator Ted Kennedy—and confirmed by the full Senate 2 days later.

Mr. Pizzella also served at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and the U.S. General Services Administration.

This day is long overdue. President Trump initially nominated Mr. Pizzella to be the Deputy Secretary of Labor on June 20, 2017. The Senate HELP Committee received Mr. Pizzella's HELP Committee application on June 29, 2017. On June 23, 2017, the committee received Mr. Pizzella's Office of Government Ethics, OGE, paperwork, including his public financial disclosure and ethics agreement. Based on these documents, OGE determined that Mr. Pizzella "is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest." Mr. Pizzella completed all paperwork in accordance with the HELP Committee's rules, practices, and procedures. The HELP Committee held Mr. Pizzella's hearing on July 13, 2017, and reported his nomination favorably on October 18, 2017.

Pursuant to Senate rules, Mr. Pizzella's nomination was returned to the President at the end of the first session of the 115th Congress. In fact, Mr. Pizzella was one of nearly 100 of President Trump's nominees who were returned to the President. It is unfortunate the Department of Labor has had to operate without its second most senior official for more than 9 months since Mr. Pizzella's initial nomination.

President Trump again nominated Mr. Pizzella to be the Deputy Secretary of Labor on January 8, 2018. The HELP Committee again favorably reported Mr. Pizzella's nomination on January 18, 2018.

The Department will greatly benefit from Mr. Pizzella's leadership and experience, and I look forward to supporting his confirmation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, all time is yielded back.

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

The Senate met at 9:15 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Most High God, our Heavenly Father, Your loving kindness fills our hearts with gratitude. We are grateful for this opportunity to work in our government's legislative branch, striving to contribute to the progress of this great Nation.

Lord, we thank You for our lawmakers and for those who support them. Bless our Senators with Your wisdom, enabling them to make decisions that will benefit our Nation and world for generations to come.

We ask You, also, Eternal God, to bless the American people. Place Your shield of protection around them, providing them with the inspiration in their pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness. Fill them with the gift of Your peace.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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