

Fleming to be our Assistant Secretary for Economic Development at the Department of Commerce. In that role, Dr. Fleming would oversee the Economic Development Administration—we call it the EDA. In my home State, we benefited a great deal from EDA in recent years. We are grateful for them. EDA provides money used to leverage other moneys for economic development purposes. If I had more time, I would be able to give you some good examples.

When Dr. Fleming was a Member of the House of Representatives, he voted repeatedly to eliminate the Economic Development Administration. That is why I initially held deep reservations about his nomination. When Dr. Fleming and I met before his hearing last year, he assuaged most of my concerns. In the end, I decided to vote my hopes over my fears and voted to approve his nomination out of committee. Today I will again vote in support of his nomination.

As the senior Democrat on the Environment and Public Works Committee in the Senate, I will work to ensure that EDA programs are protected and promoted, and I hope Dr. Fleming will be leading in those efforts. Today I will be leading the efforts to get him confirmed for his post and put him to work.

The last thing I would say, if I have a few more seconds—I think I may. One of the things I do is customer calls, and I suspect the Presiding Officer does this back in his home State of Indiana. I do them often. I visit businesses large and small. I ask three questions: How are you doing? How are we doing? What can we do to help?

One of the questions I asked once while visiting a large auto dealership was, how are you doing?

He said: Well, you know, we sell plenty of vehicles, but we have a hard time attracting and getting people to work as technicians to maintain the vehicles we sell.

I said: Maybe you need to pay them more money.

He said: No, we start people at about \$50,000 and pay them up to \$80,000, \$90,000 a year.

I said: You are still having a hard time attracting people?

He said: Yes, we are.

We worked with EDA to get a Federal grant to create a center for automotive excellence in the middle of Delaware, in the Delmarva Peninsula. They are working with Delaware Technical and Community College, and a year from now they expect to open that Center for Automotive Excellence and provide the workforce that is needed not just in Delaware by our auto dealers but by companies that have large trucks and similar kinds of employers throughout the Delmarva Peninsula, in the Eastern Shore of Maryland, Virginia, and throughout the State of Delaware. That is the kind of thing EDA can do to help.

We are excited about this prospect and looking forward to meeting our

workforce needs and grateful for the assistance of this Federal Agency, which Dr. Fleming has been nominated to head. I hope he will have that opportunity. We will vote in just a few minutes.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PAUL. 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. PAUL. We yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. I am happy to yield back. I think we have 1½ minutes left. I am happy to yield it back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

Mr. PAUL. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 67, nays 30, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 40 Ex.]

YEAS—67

Alexander	Ernst	Portman
Barrasso	Feinstein	Reed
Blackburn	Fischer	Risch
Blunt	Gardner	Roberts
Boozman	Graham	Romney
Braun	Grassley	Rosen
Burr	Hassan	Rounds
Capito	Hawley	Rubio
Cardin	Hoeven	Sasse
Carper	Hyde-Smith	Schumer
Casey	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Isakson	Scott (SC)
Collins	Johnson	Shaheen
Cooms	Kennedy	Shelby
Cornyn	King	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Cramer	Manchin	Toomey
Crapo	McConnell	Whitehouse
Cruz	McSally	Wicker
Daines	Murkowski	Young
Duckworth	Murphy	
Enzi	Paul	

NAYS—30

Baldwin	Cantwell	Hirono
Bennet	Durbin	Kaine
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Klobuchar
Booker	Harris	Leahy
Brown	Heinrich	Markey

Menendez	Schatz	Udall
Merkley	Sinema	Van Hollen
Murray	Smith	Warner
Peters	Stabenow	Warren
Sanders	Tester	Wyden

NOT VOTING—3

Jones	Moran	Perdue
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas are a 67, the nays are 30.

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.

The majority leader is recognized.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 19.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Paul B. Matey, of New Jersey, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill 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, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Paul B. Matey, of New Jersey, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, Roy Blunt, John Cornyn, Joni Ernst, Lindsey Graham, John Boozman, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Steve Daines, James E. Risch, John Hoeven, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, John Thune, Pat Roberts, Jerry Moran.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 107.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Neomi J. Rao, of the District of Columbia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill 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, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Neomi J. Rao, of the District of Columbia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Johnny Isakson, John Cornyn, John Barrasso, Roger F. Wicker, James E. Risch, Steve Daines, John Thune, Lindsey Graham, James M. Inhofe, Tim Scott, Pat Roberts, Thom Tillis, John Hoeven, David Perdue, Mike Crapo.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 98.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on the agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of William Beach, of Kansas, to be Commissioner of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor, for a term of four years.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The bill 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, do hereby

move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of William Beach, of Kansas, to be Commissioner of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor, for a term of four years.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, John Boozman, Thom Tillis, Mike Rounds, John Hoeven, John Barrasso, Chuck Grassley, Roy Blunt, Johnny Isakson, Lamar Alexander, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, John Cornyn, Richard Burr, John Thune, Roger F. Wicker.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO GENERAL RAYMOND A. THOMAS

• Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, today I wish to honor my friend, GEN Raymond A. Thomas III, commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command, for his dedication to military service in the U.S. Army. General Thomas will retire from active military duty on March 29, 2019, after serving 39 years defending our national security.

Born in Philadelphia, PA, General Thomas graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and was commissioned as an infantry second lieutenant in 1980. Throughout his career, General Thomas has grown as a well-respected leader and a vital asset to the special operations community.

Prior to assuming command of U.S. Special Operations Command, General Thomas served as commander, Joint Special Operations Command—JSOC—Fort Bragg, NC. His other general officer assignments include Associate Director for Military Affairs at the Central Intelligence Agency; commanding general, NATO Special Operations Component Command—Afghanistan; deputy commanding general, JSOC; Deputy Director for Special Operations, the Joint Staff in the Pentagon; assistant division commander, 1st Armor Division in Iraq; and assistant commanding general, JSOC.

Prior to his promotion to brigadier general, General Thomas served as the JSOC Chief of Staff and Director of Operations. He also faithfully served in key joint and special operations assignments all around the globe to include commander, Joint Task Force—Bravo, Soto Cano, Honduras; commander, 1st

Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Savannah, GA; and commander, B Squadron, 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment—Delta, Fort Bragg, NC.

I ask my colleagues to join me as I proudly recognize the remarkable military career of GEN Raymond A. Thomas III. I wish General Thomas, his loving wife, Barbara, and their extended family the very best as they embark on the next chapter of their journey together.●

TRIBUTE TO MATTHEW SHUMAN

• Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I am proud to recognize in the RECORD the American Legion's director of the national legislative division, Matthew Shuman, who has a long record of service to our Nation's veterans.

Mr. Shuman has not only dedicated his career to serving veterans, he is a veteran himself. He served in the U.S. Army from 2008 to 2012, most notably as a military police officer. Mr. Shuman concluded his military career serving on the Arizona Army National Guard Honor Guard, providing military funeral honors for our Nation's fallen soldiers.

Mr. Shuman began serving veterans with the American Legion in 2015, starting as an assistant legislative director with the veterans employment and education portfolio in Washington, DC. In his current role as director of the national legislative division, Mr. Shuman is the chief advocate for the 2-million-member organization, working with Federal agencies, the White House, and the media to share what the American Legion is doing in Congress on behalf of the 20 million American veterans.

During his time with the American Legion, Mr. Shuman had a role in the creation and passage of significant legislation impacting America's veterans. These include the VA MISSION Act, the VA Appeals Modernization Act, the VA Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act, the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act, and The American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coin Act. These efforts have contributed to improving the quality of life and strengthening healthcare and benefits for servicemembers, veterans, and their families.

Today I am honored to pay tribute to Mr. Shuman for his service to our country and his steadfast commitment to advocating on behalf of veterans throughout his career. Congratulations to Mr. Shuman on his lasting legacy of advocacy for veterans, and I wish him the best in his future endeavors.●

• Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the service and career of veteran and dedicated advocate Matthew Shuman.

The American Legion is a cornerstone in countless American communities, helping our veterans get the care, benefits, and recognition they earned while giving back through