

Udall	Warner	Whitehouse
Van Hollen	Warren	Wyden

## NOT VOTING—6

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Johnson
Booker	Inhofe	Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 43. The motion is agreed to.

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Daniel P. Collins, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

## TRIBUTE TO SISTER JANE GERETY

Mr. REED. Madam President, I am pleased to join my colleague Senator WHITEHOUSE in celebrating the tenure of Sister Jane Gerety as president of Salve Regina University. Sister Jane has served the Salve Regina University community since 1995. First, she was a member of the board of trustees, and, starting in 2009, she became its seventh president. She has been an extraordinary leader, educator, and friend. We will miss her dearly in Rhode Island as she retires and embarks upon her next venture.

Salve Regina University is a special institution. Founded by the Sisters of Mercy, its original charter authorized establishing a college to “promote virtue, and piety and learning.” In 1947, after the acquisition of Ochre Hall, Salve Regina College enrolled its first class of 58 students. In doing so, it opened the gates of some of the mansions of America’s gilded age to serve a new and better purpose of expanding educational opportunities in the pursuit of wisdom and universal justice.

It comes as no surprise that Senator Pell made Salve Regina University his home away from home upon his retirement from the Senate. Senator Pell was committed to a just and harmonious world. He was a man, born of privilege, who dedicated his career in public service to expanding educational and cultural opportunities that had previously been reserved for the elite to all Americans.

Senator WHITEHOUSE and I share a keen sense of responsibility to protect and build on Senator Pell’s legacy. In Sister Jane, we had a true partner in that effort, and we are grateful for her service.

Sister Jane embodies the founding principles of Salve Regina College, now Salve Regina University. On campus, she is known as the students’ president, perhaps the highest praise for a university leader.

She has been a real presence in student life on campus. From the athletic fields to the dining halls to her office, where the doors were always open, students knew that she had their back. She was their president.

It was only fitting that the university has dedicated Wakehurst Hall, the

hub of student activities and home to the office of community service, the student government association, and the campus activities board, in her honor. It is now called Gerety Hall, a name that in Sister Jane’s reflection on her family speaks to love, fidelity, and perseverance.

Under Sister Jane’s presidency, Salve Regina University has grown, thrived, and helped address vital needs in the community. Sister Jane oversaw the expansion of academic programs, including a new doctorate program in nursing, a master of fine arts degree program in creative writing, additional experiential learning opportunities in business, ground-breaking research programs in the sciences, and a new campus in Warwick, Rhode Island to serve the academic needs of working adults in graduate and continuing education programs.

She improved the campus infrastructure, spearheading the renovation of the O’Hare academic building, creating spaces for collaborative learning, and renovating laboratories for programs in science and nursing. Sister Jane also worked to ensure that the university addressed emerging areas of need, opening a digital forensics lab and incorporating cyber education across the undergraduate curriculum.

Even more significantly, Sister Jane worked to ensure that students from all walks of life could afford a Salve Regina education. She led the campaign “Scholars and Scholarships” to reach 100 gifted, endowed funds valued at over \$15 million to support students, faculty, and research. Over the last 10 years, Salve Regina’s annual Governor’s Ball for Scholarships nearly doubled in support, raising more than \$500,000 in 2019 alone as the university’s signature event.

Sister Jane’s accomplishments at Salve Regina University are but some of her many professional and academic achievements. She earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in French and a doctorate in English. She is a William Butler Yeats scholar. She has been a teacher at many levels—junior high, high school, and college and an academic dean.

She had a notable career in the healthcare sector, serving as a senior administrator for St. Joseph’s Health System in Atlanta before coming to Salve Regina University. In each of these roles, Sister Jane answered her vocation to live a life of mercy. In her words and in her deeds, she promotes universal justice and works for a world that is harmonious, just, and merciful. We are all better off for knowing Sister Jane.

I will miss her advice and counsel and wish her well in her next endeavors. As she told the students when she announced her retirement, “Looking forward, we all share a bit of fear for the unknown and also hope for the excitement that is to come.”

May we all follow her example and work to make what is to come harmonious, just, and merciful.

I yield to my colleague, Senator WHITEHOUSE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, it is an honor and a true pleasure to join Rhode Island’s senior Senator here on the floor today to honor the work of Salve Regina University’s seventh president, Sister Jane Gerety. Like Senator REED, I have enjoyed Sister Jane’s friendship, companionship, wise counsel, encouragement, and occasional course-correction suggestions over many years.

She will retire next month, capping a decade of service to her university, to the Newport community, and to Rhode Island. Sister Jane has accomplished remarkable things in her tenure. She established a new satellite campus in Warwick to help working Rhode Islanders take graduate and continuing education courses. She helped establish online study options, bringing the university’s many offerings directly to Rhode Island students in their homes. She launched new programs of study, including a master of fine arts and creative writing, experiential learning opportunities in a range of fields, and a doctoral program in nursing. She raised millions of dollars in funding to strengthen Salve’s endowments, supporting every facet of university life. She supervised numerous improvements to Salve Regina’s beautiful Newport campus, including a \$46 million renovation of the O’Hare Academic Building.

Sister Jane’s work has contributed much to the city of Newport and the State of Rhode Island. Newport is home to an array of legendary Gilded Age mansions and other culturally significant buildings set atop cliffs overlooking the shining Atlantic Ocean. Many of these architectural masterpieces now belong to her university and have needed significant upkeep. From the outset, Sister Jane recognized the value of Salve’s stewardship of the architectural heritage of Newport, RI. The beautifully maintained campus, replete with the newly dedicated Gerety Hall, named in honor of Sister Jane, is a gem of an asset for the city and for the State.

Sister Jane’s work has extended beyond our State’s border. Under her management, Salve strengthened its Pell Center for International Relations and Public Policy. Today more than ever, the Pell Center is a fitting reflection of its namesake, Senator Claiborne Pell, for whom our democratic ideals held limitless power. The center’s academic programs, publications, and forums spread important ideas around the globe, advancing American domestic and foreign policy, cyber security, and diversity in leadership.

As impressive and praiseworthy as those professional accomplishments is the immediate personal and lasting difference Sister Jane has made in the individual lives of so many around her, including Senator REED and myself. A

member of the 2019 Salve class says he will remember Sister Jane en route to “bring candy and snacks to student athletes for conference games” and her willingness to meet with any student in her office. Indeed, when visiting Newport, young alums in search of graduate school advice or a word of encouragement have known that they are welcome to stop by Sister Jane’s office to find an open door, a warm heart, and wise counsel.

Over the course of her career, Sister Jane embodied the values of her Catholic order, the Sisters of Mercy. The Sisters were founded with a mission to spread the gift of education and care for those in need in their community. Last year, Sister Jane told Newport Daily News she sees the institution she led as “imbued with mercy,” adding, “I hope I’ve helped to cultivate that spirit.”

I should note that with regard to the legacy of the Sisters of Mercy, in her service, Sister Jane also honored an extraordinary tradition of extraordinary female leadership.

As I am giving these remarks, I am so glad that the Presiding Officer in the U.S. Senate is a woman Senator.

Sister Therese, who was Sister Jane’s predecessor, was a skilled and beloved leader of Salve Regina, and Sister Lucille—before Sister Therese and before Sister Jane—was another powerful and effective leader. This impressive tradition of leadership by women is worth celebrating on its own as we celebrate the achievements of Sister Jane, and Sister Jane has shown herself well worthy and advanced that tradition.

Sister Jane, it is clear to all who know you—and that is pretty much all who love you—that the spirit of mercy has flourished at Salve Regina and has been enhanced in our State under your leadership. We wish you well in your next chapters.

I join my senior Senator in these sentiments.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Madam President, at some point during the course of these remarks, I expect the majority leader to come to the floor to put the Senate through its closing paces. When that happens, I ask unanimous consent that the part of my remarks prior to his statement be moved to join with the remainder of my remarks in the RECORD so that they are combined.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The majority leader is recognized.

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, at 2:15 tomorrow, all postcloture time on the Collins nomination be considered expired; further, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

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.

#### NATIONAL MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, the month of May is nationally designated Military Appreciation Month, so named because, in the month of May, we also observe Memorial Day, Military Spouse Appreciation Day, and Armed Forces Day. Last week, my friend from the State of Oklahoma, Mr. INHOFE, the distinguished chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, organized a floor event around National Military Appreciation Month. I would like to take a moment to lend my voice to this significant commemoration.

In the State of Alaska we like to think of military appreciation month as every month, military appreciation day as every day. Alaska is proud to host more than 19,000 Active-Duty servicemembers, more than 4,600 members of the Reserve Component, and about 5,000 appropriated funds civilians across all of the services. That number will grow significantly as the Air Force begins the beddown of the F-35A Joint Strike Fighter, at Eielson Air Force Base, its first F-35 operating base in the Pacific Area of Responsibility.

At first blush, Alaska is a difficult place to serve. It is dark in the winter, light all night in the summer, prone to temperature extremes, and geographically distant from family. Some military families who receive orders to Alaska are apprehensive at first, but when they speak with other military families that have served in Alaska, they come to understand that Alaskans treat our military families like no other people, and the opportunity to live in Alaska, while serving, is a once in a lifetime wonderful experience.

I could offer many examples of the ways in which Alaskans make life wonderful for those who serve here. The one that is freshest in my mind is the annual Military Appreciation Banquet in Fairbanks. It is one of two that Alaskans put on each year. The Fairbanks banquet tends to occur in May; the other major banquet is Salute to the Military in Anchorage each February. Both attract senior military leaders as keynote speakers. During each, the services honor outstanding members from within their ranks and thank the community for its extraordinary support.

I would like to speak to the history of the Fairbanks banquet for a moment. It began 51 years ago—1968 to be exact—when Jim and Rosemary Messer started small dinner in the home parties for friends in the military; 1968 was a pretty controversial year in the Nation’s history with the country torn over our participation in the Vietnam conflict, but the Messers were determined to show those who came from around the country to serve in Alaska some love and home-cooking.

The idea quickly outgrew the confines of the Messer home, and the Fairbanks Military Appreciation Banquet is its successor. The banquet is held in the Carlson Center, which is the convention center for Fairbanks. Capacity is about 600 people, and the banquet sells out every year. Following in the Messer legacy, each community member buys two tickets, one for themselves and another for a servicemember to host at their table.

In addition to recognizing exemplary servicemembers, the Fairbanks community recognizes one local individual each year who has done the most to promote civilian-military relations with an award. That award is named the Messer Award, in honor of the couple that inspired the annual banquet.

This year, the keynote speaker was VADM Michael J. Dumont, U.S. Navy, Deputy Commander of U.S. Northern Command. I am told he was a big hit. Last year, for the 50th anniversary, we had Gen. Joseph Lengyel, U.S. Air Force, Chief of the National Guard Bureau. We are grateful that our senior leaders travel a great distance to celebrate the military presence in Alaska’s Interior, and I know that the participants are as well.

This is an example of what we view as the golden contract between the community and the military. Each year, Alaskans go out of their way in big ways and small ones to make life for our servicemembers and their families extremely comfortable. Each year, in the presence of a distinguished senior leader, we break bread together to renew these bonds.

I am proud of those who serve in Alaska and the Alaskans who serve them, and I am proud that we observe military appreciation month every month of the year.

#### TRIBUTE TO CHRISTOPHER E. O’CONNOR

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I am proud to recognize in the RECORD the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, VA, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, OCLA, Christopher E. O’Connor, in honor of his upcoming retirement. Mr. O’Connor recently received the VA’s Exceptional Service Award for his long record of service to our Nation’s veterans.

Mr. O’Connor has advised four VA Secretaries, four acting VA Secretaries, and their legislative teams as