

VOTE ON CORKER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Corker nomination?

Mr. COTTON. 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 39, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 216 Ex.]

YEAS—55

| | | |
|-----------|------------|------------|
| Alexander | Gardner | Portman |
| Barrasso | Graham | Risch |
| Blackburn | Grassley | Roberts |
| Blunt | Hawley | Romney |
| Boozman | Hoeven | Rounds |
| Braun | Hyde-Smith | Rubio |
| Burr | Inhofe | Sasse |
| Capito | Johnson | Scott (FL) |
| Cassidy | Jones | Scott (SC) |
| Collins | Kennedy | Shelby |
| Cornyn | Kennedy | Sinema |
| Cotton | Lankford | Sinema |
| Cramer | Lee | Sullivan |
| Crapo | Manchin | Thune |
| Cruz | McConnell | Thune |
| Daines | McSally | Tillis |
| Enzi | Moran | Toomey |
| Ernst | Murkowski | Wicker |
| Fischer | Paul | Young |
| | Perdue | |

NAYS—39

| | | |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| Baldwin | Hassan | Reed |
| Bennet | Heinrich | Rosen |
| Blumenthal | Hirono | Schatz |
| Brown | Kaine | Schumer |
| Cantwell | King | Shaheen |
| Cardin | King | Smith |
| Carper | Klobuchar | Smith |
| Casey | Leahy | Tester |
| Coons | Markey | Udall |
| Duckworth | Menendez | Van Hollen |
| Durbin | Merkley | Warner |
| Feinstein | Murphy | Warren |
| Gillibrand | Murray | Whitehouse |
| | Peters | Wyden |

NOT VOTING—6

| | | |
|--------------|---------|----------|
| Booker | Harris | Sanders |
| Cortez Masto | Isakson | Stabenow |

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Lynda Blanchard, of Alabama, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Slovenia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Blanchard nomination?

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Madam 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. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 217 Ex.]

YEAS—54

| | | |
|-----------|------------|------------|
| Alexander | Gardner | Perdue |
| Barrasso | Graham | Portman |
| Blackburn | Grassley | Risch |
| Blunt | Hawley | Roberts |
| Boozman | Hoeven | Romney |
| Braun | Hyde-Smith | Rounds |
| Burr | Inhofe | Rubio |
| Capito | Johnson | Sasse |
| Cassidy | Jones | Scott (FL) |
| Cornyn | Kennedy | Scott (SC) |
| Cotton | Kennedy | Shelby |
| Cramer | Lankford | Sinema |
| Crapo | Lee | Sinema |
| Cruz | McConnell | Sullivan |
| Daines | McSally | Thune |
| Enzi | Moran | Tillis |
| Ernst | Murkowski | Toomey |
| Fischer | Murphy | Wicker |
| | Paul | Young |

NAYS—40

| | | |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| Baldwin | Hassan | Rosen |
| Bennet | Heinrich | Schatz |
| Blumenthal | Hirono | Schumer |
| Brown | Kaine | Shaheen |
| Cantwell | King | Smith |
| Cardin | King | Smith |
| Carper | Klobuchar | Tester |
| Casey | Leahy | Tester |
| Collins | Leahy | Udall |
| Coons | Manchin | Udall |
| Duckworth | Markey | Van Hollen |
| Durbin | Markey | Warner |
| Enzi | Menendez | Warren |
| Feinstein | Merkley | Warren |
| Gillibrand | Murray | Whitehouse |
| | Peters | Whitehouse |
| | Reed | Wyden |

NOT VOTING—6

| | | |
|--------------|---------|----------|
| Booker | Harris | Sanders |
| Cortez Masto | Isakson | Stabenow |

The nomination was confirmed.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Donald R. Tapia, of Arizona, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Jamaica.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

TRADE

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, something I want to talk about today is

something that you and I both care a lot about, and that is farming families and trade. For those of us who grew up on or near farming families, we know that there are a lot of things that are beyond the control of families who farm. For farming and ranching families, the only real certainty is uncertainty.

The only thing you know for sure, if your mom or dad is a dairy farmer, like my mom and dad were, is that you don't know anything for sure. You don't know about the weather. You don't know absolutely for sure that all of your equipment is going to work exactly like you need it to and at exactly the time you need it to.

In some farming situations, you don't know whether the help you need is going to be available the day you need it. The watermelons can't wait. The strawberries can't wait. The tomatoes can't wait. But you can't have a staff on all the time, ready to pick the watermelon the 2 weeks they need to be picked, or whatever those farmers have to deal with.

Uncertainty is part of farming. That is why trade agreements with other countries are so important to America's agriculture. This is a part of our economy that not only feeds our country but goes so far toward feeding the whole world. Trade agreements can provide a little bit of certainty about markets and the opportunities people have to sell the products they are able to grow.

In Missouri, agriculture is an \$88 billion industry. It employs nearly 400,000 people in our State. Missouri farmers and ranchers export more than \$4 billion worth of products every year.

Trade deals that lower tariffs that are paid by Missouri farming and ranching families are a good deal now. I could go a long way beyond this, too, because not only does the agricultural sector impact people who make agricultural products but seeds and chemicals that we need fewer and fewer of all the time because people who make and repair machinery get more effective all the time. So both in the seed and chemical area but also people in transportation, people in insurance, people whom the school district depends on for those property taxes are all benefited by a strong agricultural sector.

We make lots of other things in our State too. We make airplanes. We make pickup trucks. We make cars. We make beer cans. We make all kinds of things that are impacted by trade, but I say to the Presiding Officer, particularly when you and I are out talking in our neighboring States with the communities we deal with in agriculture, trade is a top-of-the-line issue.

It is just an important part of the economy of most of our States, frankly. Because of our location, where we live, infrastructure is critical. We are also the hub for products that go all over North America. Integrating that infrastructure—water, rail, cars, and

trucks—makes a difference in how we compete.

Canada and Mexico are our two biggest trading partners in, I am sure, our State and in the country. In recent months, Mexico has become the biggest trading partner we have. Canada is the next biggest trading partner we have. These are not inconsequential relationships.

When the United States signed the North America Free Trade Agreement 25 years ago, it did a lot to open those markets for our products and to not only strengthen our economy but to strengthen the neighborhood. Our exports of food and agricultural products to Canada and Mexico quadrupled under the NAFTA agreement. The treaty also helped to strengthen ties among our countries.

You know, a strong Mexico is actually good for us. We have these problems at the border right now that Mexico is trying to help us solve. Almost nobody is coming from Mexico; they are coming through Mexico. And why aren't they coming from Mexico like they did 25 years ago? Because the Mexican economy is an economy that works for people who live there. A strong Canada is good for us. The daily trade over that Canadian-U.S. border—things passing back and forth—is incredible and has been for a long time, but it is also much stronger than it used to be. Keeping these connections strong is essential.

Trade increases our economic security, but it also increases our national security. Living in a good neighborhood is what we all want to do, and that is the value we have seen out of this agreement for the last 25 years. The agreement could have been better, and the President has made it better. The USMCA is going to be better than NAFTA. No NAFTA would be a bad thing; NAFTA replaced by USMCA would be a good thing.

It is time that we begin to build on what we have learned in those 25 years and move into this century with a new agreement that works for farming families, for ranching families, for workers, for people who make automobiles, airplanes, and other things. This leads to more American jobs, and it leads to great benefit for us economically.

But, again, let me repeat, the national security impact of having two neighbors that want to work with us. What we just saw the President negotiate with Mexico, where they are helping secure that much narrower border at the southern tip of Mexico more than we would be able to do at the much bigger northern border, that is helpful. Where they are working to help people stay there as their cases are being heard, that is helpful to our country. It is easier to keep people there and have their cases heard than let them disperse throughout the entire United States.

Certainly, we hope to gain from the new USMCA treaty, but we hope our neighbors also benefit from that treaty

and know they will. The three countries all signed this agreement in November. Mexico has ratified it already. The Prime Minister of Canada says they stand ready to call their Parliament back into session to ratify it. As soon as it is clear, they are going to.

Trade is essential. All three of our countries agree on that. Democrats and Republicans agree on that. Members of the House and Senate agree on that. Now what we need to agree on is how to have a time to vote and approve this deal. Let's give our economy the boost it needs. Let's give our neighborhood the strength we have seen develop over the last 25 years.

We hope our friends in the House bring this to the floor. It will be a bipartisan vote. It will be a comfortably passed vote. But you have to decide to have a vote for that to happen, and I hope we are close to that moment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

BROWSER ACT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, today I rise and seek my colleagues' support for the BROWSER Act, which is a bipartisan piece of legislation that will protect consumers' data privacy and offer tech companies the freedom they need to innovate.

This is something we are hearing so much about. How do you protect your privacy online, or do you have privacy online? The BROWSER Act is the bipartisan solution to that.

Innovation really puts the words and the wisdom of the world at our fingertips. Think about it. A click of a mouse, a touch of the screen, and everything you want to know appears right there in front of you. Now that we have all downloaded a myriad of apps and we are using search engines every single day, it is commonplace. But what we have learned and what people are aware of now more than ever is that in the process of doing this, they have given away something vitally important and precious; that is, their privacy and their information. I call it your "virtual you" because it is you, your presence, that is right there online.

As your transactional life has grown online—you pay your bills, you do your shopping, you order your groceries, you order dinner to be delivered—every time you do that, you are giving these apps a peek into your privacy, into your habits, and there is really quite a battle going on. Who owns the "virtual you"? Is it you or the bank or the insurance company or the app that is providing that service?

Data is the bedrock of most tech companies' revenue streams. The higher the quality of that data, the more money they are going to get for the ad space they sell. The more money they get for the ad space they sell, the more profit they are going to put into their pocket.

When you look at all these apps—Facebook, YouTube, Instagram,

Google, Snapchat—all of these apps are taking your information. They mine your information, and it gets sold—sold for those that are placing ads on your screen.

There is a reason companies provide convoluted, pages-long disclosure, full disclosure and privacy policies in tiny print so small you can't read it. It is the same reason that watchdogs warn consumers that if the service is free, you are the product. If the service is free—take a look at these—you are the product. You are because it is your information that they want.

Now, I will tell you this: We have come to a season in our society where we have a different story just about every single day of some type of bad behavior from one of these companies. The current story today is about FaceApp, and I think that if I went around the room and asked those who are younger if they have used any of these face-altering apps, they would probably say: Yeah, we downloaded one. They are really a lot of fun to play with.

Here is the danger: That app—these face-altering apps and FaceApp—is not limited to just bits of personal information that are going to be appended to a data set. It could be your image used publicly—with your consent, of course, if you agreed to the fine print by clicking "download" or "get." With that, you give your privacy away.

Consumers have really grown accustomed to clicking the "get" button. They say: I don't have time to read all of this. It would take too long. I don't understand what it means. I just want to use this app. It is convenient.

A quick scroll through an average Instagram feed this morning revealed post after post of artificially-aged faces, all thanks to FaceApp, which now owns those images and can do whatever it wants with those images because you unintentionally, when you clicked "get," gave them the permission to use them.

This is one of those things where you have to say: Buyer beware and know what you are getting into. Ask anybody who downloaded that app last night, and I bet you they have a little bit of buyer's remorse going on, and they probably wish they hadn't done it and opened those photos to being used by people they will never ever know.

Over the past few years, we have watched tech companies lose control of their own narrative, and that is for good reason. Customers feel invaded and are demanding a more satisfying response to the current parade of controversy—something more than just "Oh, we are going to do better in the future." It is clear that the tech company can no longer regulate itself. Big Tech does not have the appetite for self-regulation.

That is why I welcome my colleagues on each side of the aisle to sign on to the BROWSER Act. This bill really has been years in the making. I first introduced it in the House of Representatives during the 115th Congress, but my

work on the issue began long before that, as I chaired the Privacy Working Group in the House.

What this legislation, the BROWSER Act, would do is it would set up a Federal compliance framework that tech companies would use as a guide. It would require companies to secure a clear opt-in from you, the consumer, before collecting sensitive information about your health, your finances, or your Social Security numbers—things that are important and personal to you. They would have to get your explicit permission in order to use those. For less sensitive information, like an IP address or your browsing history or your search and your purchase history, companies would have to give customers the opportunity to opt-out so that they would not have the permission to share that.

Companies won't be able to deny service to anyone refusing to waive their privacy, but the Federal Trade Commission will keep the playing field level by applying the rules equally across the entire internet ecosystem.

To recap that, you would have opt-in for sensitive information and opt-out for nonsensitive information and one set of rules, with one regulator, for the entire internet ecosystem and a tech platform that would not be able to throw you off because you said: Hey, I want to protect myself and my family.

I think it is important, too, to realize that the BROWSER Act does not over-regulate the industry, but what this does is it says: Let's have guidelines. Let's have some guardrails up here. Let's have a light-touch regulation that is going to protect the consumer and allow the consumer to protect their "virtual you," their presence online.

Lately, what we have seen is some blowback from some very public mistakes that have chased some of these big tech companies into the arms of the regulators, making them all too happy to accept government-mandated rules in lieu of internal standards. You have heard it. You have heard some people like Facebook saying: Oh, my goodness. We will accept regulation now. We want the Federal Government more involved. What they are trying to do is block out innovation and competition and new startups because they control the marketplace.

Google. Ninety percent of search is done by Google.

Recently, Facebook got a \$5 billion fine from the Federal Trade Commission. I said that actually wasn't enough. It should have been more like \$50 billion when you look at the business Facebook has built and the valuation they have built. They are a big advertising company. They have this platform. They get you on that platform. They build their valuation off the number of eyeballs they capture to that, the users they have and, remember what I said earlier, the high quality of the data. That is money in their revenue stream, and it is profit in their

pockets. Their bad behavior will not change unless we change the way they are going to be able to do business.

Understanding the business of Big Tech is half the battle. I have been at this for years, going back to my days in Tennessee, my home State, as we looked at film and entertainment and music and moving from analog to digital in the economy, coming to Congress, working in the House on this issue.

I will state that the ins and outs of this industry is not something that can be learned in a day or something you can be briefed on and then all of a sudden you are an expert in that area. If you think you know it all—what I have learned in tech is, the more you learn the less you know, and you have to keep working on it if you are going to properly regulate the industry.

I thank my colleague Senate Judiciary Chairman LINDSEY GRAHAM for recognizing the need for institutional knowledge by this body and for asking me to lead the committee's new technology task force. This is a bipartisan group. We will meet regularly with leaders in the tech industry, and we will talk a good bit about data, privacy, competition, prioritization, censorship, and other issues that will arise. Our first meeting is actually going to be later today. I would encourage my friends in the Senate to use this time and use this task force as a resource and study up because these issues are not going to go away. It is time for us to do something on the issues of privacy, data security, censorship, and prioritization.

To my colleagues who are really very skeptical that we can use a lighter touch in regulating Big Tech, I want to say this: Washington is historically very bad at culture change. They are very bad at it. What we do know is, when looking at the technology that now underpins every single industrial sector in this country, that technology goes through a life cycle, if you will, in about 18 months. We know there cannot be heavy-handed regulation. We know we cannot regulate to a technology. We know that the guidelines need to be put in place, and the guardrails need to be laid down.

We need to make certain businesses are looking at their consumers, and they are saying: You can trust us to be a good steward of your information. Consumers, citizens—Tennesseans, in my case—need to know I have asked the tech companies to work to restore the trust and confidence that is needed by the online consumer and to move away from having it understood by people—understood in the negative—that if the service is free, you are the product.

Let's join together, in a bipartisan fashion, and give the American online consumer the ability to control and to own their virtual "you," which is them and their presence online.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNT).

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ONE SMALL STEP TO PROTECT HUMAN HERITAGE IN SPACE ACT

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, 50 years ago, more than 650 million men, women, and children from nearly every corner of the Earth gathered around radios and televisions with wide eyes and quickly beating hearts. They gathered to witness one of the greatest triumphs of ingenuity and cooperation in human history. Scrawled across television screens were the words never seen before: "Live from the Moon."

I remember that moment vividly. I was 10 years old, and I was in France with my mother and my French family, my grandma and grandpa, and we huddled around a little black and white TV in my grandma's home on July 20, 1969. It was evening in France when the landing occurred. Our eyes were glued to the screen and we saw this grainy video, and there was little prickly audio broadcast of Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin as they were attempting to do what no human had ever attempted to do before.

Almost 2 hours after the landing, as we held our breath and saw the landing, Commander Armstrong created the first human boot print not on planet Earth. In that moment, I remember thinking that the astronauts on the Moon didn't just represent America at that moment. They also represented my family who lived in France and their excitement. They really represented everybody around the world. They were representing humanity and what is achievable when you dream big.

I have come to the floor today to honor the incredible achievement of Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins, as well as the 400,000 people around the world who made the *Apollo 11* landing possible. Among those were NASA's now-famous "Hidden Figures"—African-American women pioneers—including Katherine Johnson, Mary Jackson, and Dorothy Vaughn, who were responsible for calculating trajectories to get Apollo astronauts to and from the Moon.

Ultimately, this achievement was the result of the perseverance of countless individuals and, of course, the American taxpayers who, after numerous high-profile failures, including the loss of the very first Apollo crew, continued to support the Apollo Program.

Over the last few months there have been celebrations of this anniversary around the world because the achievements of Apollo were achievements for humanity. Here in the Senate I was