

forward, with hope and optimism, to the next 50 years of space exploration and America's continued strong leadership in space.

I thank my friend Senator PETERS for his leadership on this legislation that we have just passed through the Senate. It is legislation that ensures that those artifacts, those footprints, made by those historic pioneers for humanity will not be disturbed, will not be violated, will not be destroyed but, rather, that they will be preserved for future generations so that decades and centuries from now those shrines to the incredible imagination and the unstoppable potential of the human spirit will be preserved for all of history.

This is a time of partisan division on many, many issues. Yet I am encouraged when it comes to space and America's leadership in space that we continually see the bipartisan cooperation of Democrats and Republicans working hand in hand.

I also commend NASA, in particular, for announcing the Artemis Project. Artemis, as you know, is the twin sister to Apollo in Greek mythology, and Artemis will be the next journey to the Moon that the United States will be undertaking.

I am particularly grateful that the Administrator of NASA has committed that when we, once again, land on the surface of the Moon in the coming years, among those astronauts to land on the Moon will be the first woman ever to set foot on the surface of the Moon. As the father of two young daughters, after 50 years, I say it is about time that we land a woman on the Moon. I am particularly proud that it will be an American astronaut whose boots will return to the Moon and that we will continue to make history together.

This is a moment to celebrate American leadership, but this is a moment, even more fundamentally, to celebrate what mankind can do—the frontier spirit of discovery and exploration. It is a spirit that should unite us all.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the rollcall vote scheduled for 1:45 p.m. start at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

Ms. COLLINS. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

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

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), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 66, nays 26, as follows:

(Rollcall Vote No. 218 Ex.)

YEAS—66

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

NAYS—26

Baldwin	Heinrich	Schatz
Bennet	Hirono	Schumer
Blumenthal	Kaine	Smith
Brown	Klobuchar	Tester
Cantwell	Markey	Udall
Casey	Merkley	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murray	Warner
Feinstein	Peters	Wyden
Gillibrand	Reed	

NOT VOTING—8

Booker	Isakson	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Moran	Warren
Harris	Sanders	

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 PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to move to proceed to nominations reported out of the Armed Services Committee today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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. 374.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Mark T. Esper, of Virginia, to be Secretary of Defense.

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 senior assistant legislative 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 Mark T. Esper, of Virginia, to be Secretary of Defense.

James M. Inhofe, John Hoeven, Mike Rounds, Joni Ernst, Kevin Cramer, Ben Sasse, Pat Roberts, John Boozman, Mike Crapo, Steve Daines, John Cornyn, James E. Risch, Roger F. Wicker, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, Roy Blunt, Mitch McConnell.

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. 371.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Stephen M. Dickson, of Georgia, to be Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration for the term of five 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 senior assistant legislative 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 Stephen M. Dickson, of Georgia, to be Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration for the term of five years.

James M. Inhofe, John Hoeven, Mike Rounds, Joni Ernst, Kevin Cramer, Pat Roberts, John Boozman, Mike Crapo, Steve Daines, John Cornyn, James E. Risch, Roger F. Wicker, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, Roy Blunt, Shelley Moore Capito, Mitch McConnell.

#### 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. 45.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Wendy Williams Berger, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

##### 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 senior assistant legislative 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 nomination of Wendy Williams Berger, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

Mitch McConnell, Bill Cassidy, David Perdue, John Thune, Roy Blunt, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Braun, James E. Risch, Mike Rounds, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Marco Rubio, Kevin Cramer, Pat Roberts.

#### 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. 53.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Brian C. Buescher, of Nebraska, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nebraska.

##### 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.

##### 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 Brian C. Buescher, of Nebraska, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nebraska.

Mitch McConnell, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, Chuck Grassley, John Cornyn, Tom Cotton, David Perdue, Ron Johnson, Joni Ernst, Mike Braun, Martha McSally, John Boozman, Richard Burr, Lindsey Graham, Shelley Moore Capito, Johnny Isakson, Thom Tillis.

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.

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

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

##### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 1327

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, the men and women who responded to the horrific events of September 11, 2001, are among the great heroes of American history. Whether fighting the deadly flames, rescuing people who were injured or dying, or removing the destructive debris from the 9/11 attack sites, the 9/11 volunteers and rescue workers displayed the courage and the sacrificial service that has earned them universal respect and admiration.

Tragically, their heroism came at a cost. Their heroism, at exactly these same dangerous sites we are describing, earned them, in addition to great respect, also health challenges in the years since.

In 2001, in response to those challenges, Congress established the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund to compensate both the survivors of the attacks and also the residents who lived near the site. It was authorized for 2 years, and it paid out about \$7 billion in benefits and then closed.

In 2011, Congress revived and expanded the program to cover a larger universe of victims and responders, and

it authorized that fund to spend \$2.7 billion over 5 years.

In 2015, citing a growing need, Congress reauthorized the fund for another 5 years and an additional \$4.6 billion. Of that \$7.4 billion authorized since 2011, the fund has now paid out \$5.2 billion.

With money getting tight, in February of this year, the fund began temporarily reducing the claimants' benefits until Congress reauthorized and replenished it until such time as we can make those beneficiaries whole.

I support that effort. I support it wholeheartedly. The bill before us today authorizes the program not for 2 years, as it was in 2001, or for 5 years, as we did in 2011 and 2015, no, it authorizes the program for an additional 72 years and does not specify a dollar amount.

In Washington, this is a recipe for trouble. As we all know, finite authorizations are how Congress ensures that taxpayer money actually gets to its intended beneficiaries and not simply lost in government bureaucracy somewhere. It is how we make sure this is about protecting those who are supposed to benefit rather than government bureaucrats themselves.

Since 2011, the 9/11 victims fund has always had finite authorizations, and, by all accounts, it has had an excellent record of avoiding waste and abuse. These two things are not coincidental. They go together, and 9/11 survivors and first responders deserve no less moving forward. They deserve no less than to make sure the program created in their honor for their benefit, in fact, benefits them. This is why I would like to offer a simple amendment to this bill that would authorize \$10.2 billion in additional funding for the 9/11 victims fund over the next 10 years. That is the amount the Congressional Budget Office has estimated is necessary for covering all valid claims between now and 2029.

My amendment would further authorize an additional \$10 billion beyond that time. My amendment would not block or delay the bill's consideration, let alone its passage.

This is something we could vote on in a matter of minutes, 15 minutes or so, and then move on to final passage. We could, in fact, accomplish this today before we adjourn for the weekend. This is, in fact, what I prefer. I think finishing our work on this bill to protect victims and first responders is worth 15, 20, 30 minutes of our time. That is what I prefer.

I have had conversations with my colleagues, including colleagues across the aisle. In order to accommodate requests from some of my colleagues, I have agreed, with their mutual assent, to negotiate a different arrangement—one that would make sure we get to final passage on this bill and that we consider my amendment and that of Senator PAUL's within the next few days.