

Bill Cassidy, John Thune, Richard Burr, John Barrasso, Rob Portman, Dan Sullivan, Mitch McConnell.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 394.

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 legislative clerk read the nomination David L. Norquist, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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 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 David L. Norquist, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Lamar Alexander, Thom Tillis, Martha McSally, John Cornyn, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Susan M. Collins, Tom Cotton, Roy Blunt, Roger F. Wicker, Bill Cassidy, John Thune, Richard Burr, John Barrasso, Rob Portman, Dan Sullivan, Mitch McConnell.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session and consideration of the veto messages as under the previous order.

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED TRANSFER TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA, THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN, AND THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC OF CERTAIN DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES—VETO

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED EXPORT TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, AND THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE OF CERTAIN DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES—VETO

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED EXPORT TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND OF CERTAIN DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES—VETO

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the veto messages to accompany S.J. Res. 36, 37, and 38, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Veto message to accompany S.J. Res. 36, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed transfer to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Kingdom of Spain, and the Italian Republic of certain defense articles and services.

Veto message to accompany S.J. Res. 37, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed export to the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Republic of France of certain defense articles and services.

Veto message to accompany S.J. Res. 38, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed export to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland of certain defense articles and services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I just listened with interest to the remarks of the majority leader and his accounting of history—his very defensive remarks, based on an attack from, I guess, some journalist. The majority leader, I would say, was liberally using words like “McCarthy” and “McCarthyism” and “liar” and how he proudly stood up to the Soviet Union in the wake of Brezhnev and Chernenko and Andropov. They are fascinating words, but you don’t need x-ray vision to notice a few things about the discussion the majority leader launched. First of all, this weekend, the Director of National Security resigned in frustration that

his boss, the President of the United States, has chosen to believe Russia instead of his own intelligence officials.

One of most embarrassing moments in my lifetime was when the President of the United States stood next to the dictator of Russia and said that he believed Putin and not his own intelligence officials and the consensus of his intelligence officials when it comes to influencing our 2016 elections.

So I hear that the majority leader always has an acute sense of history and his place in it. I am hopeful the majority leader, using his knowledge of history, understands the influence Russia continues to have in our country and on our elections and that this body will actually address that instead of denying the obvious.

OPIOIDS

Mr. President, America is in the middle of a public health crisis. In my State, 14 people die, on average, every single day of a drug overdose. The numbers are not much better in most of the other 49 States. We have known for a long time that addiction so often starts in the family medicine cabinet and that drug companies were all too eager to push these addictive drugs on the American people, but the evidence we have seen in the past couple of weeks is staggering.

New data from the DEA released this month reveals that drug companies flooded the country with 76 billion oxycodone and hydrocodone pills from 2006 to 2012—76 billion pills in a nation of slightly more than 323 million people. Seventy-six billion pills is enough to supply every person in the United States with 36 pills every one of those years from 2006 to 2012. This evidence makes clear these companies, these corporations knew exactly what they were doing.

One wholesale drug distributor in Ohio wrote an email that the opioid pills were “flyin’ out of there. It is like people are addicted to these things or something. Oh wait, people are.”

Can you believe that? He acknowledged they are addicted, and he joked about it. If that is not bad enough, then the drug company representative responded: “Just like Doritos, [people] keep eating. We’ll make more.”

They certainly did make more. That is what Big Pharma does. They push their drugs on the American people to line their own pockets and the cost in empty bank accounts and ruined lives be damned.

If that isn’t bad enough, these corporations can actually write off the cost of advertising these drugs on their taxes. In other words, all of us as taxpayers subsidize this drug company advertising. All those years that Big Pharma was pushing more and more opioids on the country, selling them ad after ad, they were getting a tax break to do it. Yet does this body do anything about that? Of course not.

For years, I tried to track down drug company ads. It is why I introduced an amendment at our Finance Committee