

Most women will tell you that they know of a female friend or acquaintance or relative who has experienced the horrors of sexual assault or domestic violence or even trafficking. Through my work with shelters back home in Tennessee, I have learned that the volunteers, the counselors, the advocates, and the attorneys who support these victims are of the utmost importance. They are who the victims need to see the minute they walk through that door, into their arms, and hear them say: How can we help you? This is a safe place.

These are the people who come around them to empower them, and the one thing I hear over and over in the wake of one's attack is that these victims need that type of support. This is why, in addition to providing funding for both prevention and educational programs, this year's authorization will do some important things. It will increase funding for the court-appointed special advocates by \$3 million. It will provide over \$1 million per year for Federal victim counselors. It will also help to provide transitional housing to victims, which is something they will desperately need. They need to know they have a safe place.

These resources—and this is important—are going to go directly into the hands of those who are providing these services, and this will have a direct impact on the lives of these women when they need it the most.

Just for a moment, I would like to highlight a portion of the reauthorization on which I have spent a good deal of time working this year. It has to do with a particular violent sexual crime that is so grotesque that most Americans prefer not to even acknowledge it. They don't want to admit that this exists. Yet, for the victims of female genital mutilation, the pain and the humiliation are nearly unbearable.

You would think that Federal prosecutors would be able to make short work out of such heinous charges, but due to a loophole in Federal criminal law, scores of victims have watched their abusers walk free. The Federal Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act of 2019, which is a separate bill that I sponsored earlier this year, is now a part of this year's reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. It will correct fatal constitutional flaws in the Federal statute that bans the practice of FGM. When this is done, under Federal law, prosecutions for mutilation and cutting will be able to continue.

I would be remiss if I did not say that in a perfect world, we would not have to worry about allocating resources for safe houses and for victim counseling. We should not have to do this, but this is not a perfect world. So, yes, indeed, we do have to step up and do this for the sake of the thousands of women who fall victim to sexual violence, trafficking, and sexual abuse each year.

I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to come together and

work on this. Let's pass the 2019 Violence Against Women Act.

I yield the floor.

#### VOTE ON ZUCKERMAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All postcloture time has expired.

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

Mr. ALEXANDER. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 65, nays 30, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 362 Ex.]

#### YEAS—65

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

#### NAYS—30

Baldwin	Feinstein	Reed
Bennet	Gillibrand	Schatz
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Schumer
Brown	Hirono	Smith
Cantwell	Kaine	Stabenow
Cardin	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Markey	Udall
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murray	Whitehouse
Durbin	Peters	Wyden

#### NOT VOTING—5

Booker	Klobuchar	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 majority leader.

#### 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 for the consideration of Calendar No. 503.

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 Dan R. Brouillette, of Texas, to be Secretary of Energy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

#### BACKGROUND CHECKS

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, last week, my colleague Senator BLUMENTHAL stood on the floor of this Chamber to talk about the epidemic of gun violence in our country. Gun violence is an issue that hits close to home for my friend from Connecticut.

Seven years ago, his home State was the site of one of the most horrific acts of gun violence anyone can imagine. A young man armed with an assault rifle opened fire in Sandy Hook Elementary School, murdering 20 first graders and 6 adults.

While he spoke on the floor of this Senate, Senator BLUMENTHAL was handed a note informing him that, at that very moment, an active shooter was on the loose at another school—this one in Santa Clarita, CA. This marked the 243rd instance of gun violence at a school in this country since the massacre at Columbine High School in 1999. Sadly, today, school shootings have become almost routine and commonplace. It has gotten to the point that students are fearful but, sadly, not surprised when a shooting occurs at their school.

Following an attack last year at Santa Fe High School in Texas that killed eight students and two teachers, 17-year-old student Paige Curry was asked whether there was a part of her that couldn't believe this happened at her school. Her response was heart-breaking. She said:

There wasn't.

She said:

It's been happening everywhere. I've always felt it would eventually happen here too.

This is the country we now live in: a country where we have more guns than we have people; a country where a mass shooting—that is a shooting involving the death or injury of four or more victims—occurs, on average, more than once every day; a country where school shootings occur frequently enough that students feel it will eventually happen at their own school.

This is not the country any of us should want to live in. Yet the U.S. Senate—one of the few institutions