

did not bother to pursue as they assembled their case, or he wants to proceed without giving any organizational resolution whatsoever. As I said, we remain at an impasse on these logistics.

For myself, I continue to believe that the unanimous bipartisan precedent that was good enough for President Clinton ought to be good enough for President Trump. Fair is fair.

Now, of course, there is the matter of the Articles of Impeachment themselves. It is a highly unusual step. The House continues to hem and haw about whether and when she intends to take the normal next step and transmit the House's accusations over here to the Senate. Some House Democrats imply they are withholding the articles for some kind of leverage so they can dictate the Senate process to Senators.

I admit, I am not sure what leverage there is in refraining from sending us something we do not want; but, alas, if they can figure that out, they can explain it. Meanwhile, other House Democrats seem to be suggesting they prefer never to transmit the articles. That is fine with me, and the Speaker of the House herself has been unclear on this. Her message has been somewhat muddled.

So here is where we are, Mr. President. We have a curious situation where, following House Democrats' rush to impeachment, following weeks of pronouncement about the urgency of the situation, the prosecutors appear to have developed cold feet. The House Democrat prosecution seems to have gotten cold feet and to be unsure of whether they even want to proceed to the trial.

As I said, a very unusual spectacle and, in my view, certainly not one that reflects well on the House. So we will see whether House Democrats ever want to work up the courage to actually take their accusations to trial.

Let me close with this: I am proud that the Senate came together today to confirm more well-qualified nominees and to pass major legislation for the American people.

I wish all of my colleagues a merry Christmas, happy holidays, and a joyous new year. I hope everyone enjoys this important time with their families and loved ones. We will see you in 2020.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, finally, for the information of all of our colleagues, the Senate will convene on Friday, January 3, to kick off the 2nd session of the 116th Congress. However, no rollcall votes are expected that day, and Members should be prepared to be back and voting on Monday, January 6.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

SECURING AMERICAN NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AGAINST TERRORISM ACT OF 2019

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, as we all know, there have been increased incidents of violence and threats against some of our faith-based institutions over the past decade. The FBI has been able to monitor this and unfortunately tells us that these attacks are likely to continue. We need to do a better job of figuring out how to disrupt these attacks but also to harden these facilities.

When the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh was attacked, it was the worst anti-Semitic violence in the history of our country. Shortly after that, I went to Youngstown, OH, which is very near the Pittsburgh synagogue that was attacked. It was within the next week or two afterwards, and there were very raw feelings, as you can imagine. We talked about what was needed to provide better protection for houses of worship—our synagogues, our churches, our mosques—and we came up with an idea to provide for a grant program from the expertise of the Department of Homeland Security where they could provide best practices, consulting, placement of cameras, you know, where it is necessary to harden facilities, where it is necessary to have a door with locks—simple things that can save lives.

That program has now been appropriated. In the legislation we just passed, there was a \$90 million appropriation for this program. The Jewish community, the Christian community, the Muslim community, the Sikh community, the Hindu community, and others are very supportive of this program.

H.R. 2476 is the legislation I am talking about this evening, called the Securing American Nonprofit Organizations Against Terrorism Act. Tonight, I am hopeful that we can pass, by unanimous consent, this legislation. In the appropriations bill, there is a \$90 million appropriation from Congress for the program for this fiscal year. Our authorization bill is at \$75 million. Again, it is a very important program.

I am pleased that the Department of Homeland Security has recently changed its rules to allow these institutions to use the funds not just for cameras, locks, and other hardening but also for armed guards where necessary. Sadly, it is necessary to disrupt and stop some of these hate crimes that are occurring.

Senator MIKE LEE had some concerns about the cost. I understand his concern. We are going to keep the cost in an efficient and effective manner—going to the organizations that really need it. I appreciate his talking to me about that tonight and his willingness to allow us to move forward on this legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 2476 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2476) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide funding to secure nonprofit facilities from terrorist attacks, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. PORTMAN. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (H.R. 2476) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

FALLEN WARRIOR BATTLEFIELD CROSS MEMORIAL ACT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, another bill has been cleared tonight that I would like to ask the U.S. Senate to provide unanimous consent for. This is legislation called the Fallen Warrior Battlefield Cross Memorial Act. This comes out of a situation in Ohio where some of our veterans were not permitted to have a battlefield cross at their grave site.

Senator BROWN, myself, and other Members have been supportive of this legislation, and tonight I am pleased to say that we now have unanimous consent from the other side of the aisle to proceed with it.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1424 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1424) to amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure the Secretary of Veterans Affairs permits the display of Fallen Soldier Displays in national cemeteries.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. PORTMAN. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 1424) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session and to the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 497.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of LaJuana S. Wilcher, of Kentucky, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Federal Agricultural Mortgage Corporation.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; 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; that no further motions be in order and that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from PN1228 and the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: PN1228, Executive Calendar Nos. 492 and 496.

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

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Thomas B. Chapman, of Maryland, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2023; Michael Graham, of Kansas, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2020; Michael Graham, of Kansas, to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2025. (Reappointment)

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's actions; that no further motions be in

order; and that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Chapman, Graham, and Graham (Reappointment) nominations, en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 553.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of J. Brett Blanton, of Virginia, to be Architect of the Capitol for the term of ten years.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; 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; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

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

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

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged and the Senate proceed to the consideration of PN1318, 1319, and 1321; that the nominations be confirmed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements to the nominations be printed in the RECORD and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

The following-named Members of the Foreign Service of the Department of State to be a Foreign Service Officer, a Consular Officer, and a Secretary in the Diplomatic Service of the United States of America:

Shon Stephen Belcher, of the District of Columbia

Charles C. Blake III, of the District of Columbia

David L. Bruns, of Florida

Pedro G. Campo-Boue, of Florida

Hsiao-Ching Chang, of California

Jasmin S. Cho, of Washington

Nurit S. Einik, of Florida

Michael H. Elliott, of Wyoming

Lindsay C. Fair, of Texas

Leslie M. Fenton, of California

Owen P. Fletcher, of California

William West Follmer, of Maryland

Jean M. Foster, of Colorado

Nicholas J. Geboy, of the District of Columbia

Elizabeth A. Gee, of Florida

Juliana E. Hanson, of North Carolina

Richard E. Heater, of Texas

Dennie S. Hoopingarner, of Michigan

Jeffrey A. Jackson, of Connecticut

Joshua W. Kamp, of New York

Joseph J. Kim, of the District of Columbia

Olena A. Krawciw, of Virginia

Laura A. MacArthur, of California

Caroline J. Mann, of Florida

Brian C. McKean, of Florida

Keavy C. Nahan, of Texas

Paul A. Roelle, of Pennsylvania

Jennine R. Rudnitski, of Minnesota

Timothy C. Sarraile, of Virginia

Adam L. Schick, of Washington

Cigdem Zeynep Soyluglu-Hoyt, of California

Tyler J. Stoddard, of Idaho

Shravan Surendra, of Virginia

Brittany D. Thompson, of Virginia

Aaron D. Tiffany, of Washington

Dimitri Varmazis, of Massachusetts

Jonathan Blake Vaughan, of Tennessee

Tamara Lyn Picardo Rivera Wilson, of Virginia

Kathryn M. Wiseman, of Texas

The following-named Career Members of the Foreign Service for promotion into the Senior Foreign Service, as a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, and a Consular Officer and a Secretary in the Diplomatic Service of the United States of America:

Gharun S. Lacy, of Maryland

David Mango, of New York

The following-named Members of the Foreign Service of the Department of State to be a Consular Officer and a Secretary in the Diplomatic Service of the United States of America:

Kara Miriam Abramson, of the District of Columbia

Eunice O. Ajayi, of Maryland

Dane Dixon Allen-Bryant, of the District of Columbia

Robert Steven Baker, of Virginia

Daniel Dee Barelo, of Virginia

Kevin Silas Barlow, of Georgia

Nikki Barnes, of Maryland

Tyra Zuri Hayes Beam, of Virginia

Aaron Walter Becker, of Virginia

Rami Lowell Blair, of Rhode Island

Joseph Thorel Bodell, of Virginia

Miguel Alexander Boluda, of the District of Columbia

Samantha R. BonenClark, of Florida

Stefanie Michelle Braswell, of the District of Columbia

Daniel John Buchman, of New York

Thomas Adams Buckley, of Virginia

Robert Scott Bunch, of Virginia

Taryn E. Burton, of Virginia

Randall Eugene Bussman, of Virginia

Coleman David Butterworth, of Virginia

Corinne Denise Calabro, of Virginia

Nichelle I. Carter, of Maryland

Caitlin Marie Cassot, of Washington

Eduardo Castillo, Jr., of Texas

Min-Ling Chang, of Maryland

Lillian Katharine Chreky, of Virginia

Anthony Cyprian Christian, of Maryland

Matthew Franklin Clark, of Virginia

Kempton J. Cox, of Idaho

Cory David Curran, of Virginia

John R. Daniliuk, of the District of Columbia

Daniel Alan DeGroff, of Florida

Alexandra R. Del Solar, of the District of Columbia