

(Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), 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 52, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 72 Ex.]

YEAS—52

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

NAYS—40

Baldwin	Harris	Rosen
Bennet	Hassan	Schatz
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Schumer
Booker	Hirono	Shaheen
Brown	Kaine	Smith
Cardin	King	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Markey	Udall
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murray	Wyden
Feinstein	Peters	
Gillibrand	Reed	

NOT VOTING—8

Cantwell	Moran	Scott (FL)
Cruz	Perdue	Warren
Klobuchar	Sanders	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the Dandy nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, last week, Congress provided billions in funding to address the coronavirus outbreak. These funds will help support virus research, testing, and medical care. Congress is now looking at other

measures that may be required, including measures to address the economic impact of the virus. The House may consider an economic response measure today, but my understanding is that its bill does not yet reflect an agreement with the White House, which will be needed to move any stimulus package.

I want to echo the leader's comments from yesterday and say that this is not a time for partisanship, and it is very important that we work together on matters related to the coronavirus so that we can get needed legislation passed in a timely fashion.

More Americans are testing positive for the virus each day—including eight people in my home State of South Dakota—and it is our responsibility as Members of Congress to work together to ensure that our country has the resources it needs to combat and defeat this disease.

There is no doubt that things are stressful right now. Americans are understandably worried about their own health and the health of their loved ones. But we have a lot of dedicated people working to keep Americans safe, from nurses and doctors to public health officials. Everyone is focused on making sure we do what we need to do to limit the spread of this virus. And all of us, of course, can help in that effort by paying attention to the guidance we are given, whether it is advice about washing our hands or avoiding large gatherings or a request to stay home for a while.

It is a challenging time, but America has been through challenging times before and emerged from them stronger. I am confident that if we pull together, that is what will happen again.

I yield the floor.

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

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

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, this Women's History Month, we have the opportunity to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment of the Constitution, which gave women the right to vote.

We recognize the countless women who have put their own safety and comfort on the line in order to make this country more just, democratic, and inclusive. These include heroes like Margaret Brent, a daughter of Maryland who was the first to demand a vote for women in the colonial legislature, and Sojourner Truth, who advocated for a more diverse and intersectional women's suffrage movement. Thanks to their bravery and that of many other activists, our Nation wit-

nessed the largest expansion of suffrage in its history.

A century later, we ought to celebrate that monumental achievement. The ability to vote has empowered women to demand a government that represents them and their interests, and they have taken their power seriously. Women have voted in higher numbers than men in every national election for the last 55 years. In 2018, we saw the results that can happen when women raise their voices and fight for a more inclusive democracy as a record 117 women won elections to Congress across the United States.

We cannot overstate how dramatically the adoption of the 19th Amendment has changed our country for the better, but it is also incumbent upon us to take stock of the progress that still needs to be made.

Just a few years after women won the right to vote, a suffragette named Alice Paul introduced another critically important constitutional amendment, one that would go even further in guaranteeing the equal status of women. It was called the Equal Rights Amendment, or the ERA, which reads as follows: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." That is it. It is just 24 words. Yet those 24 words have the power to correct a 250-year silence in our Constitution when it comes to recognizing and protecting women's equality.

The ERA was ratified by the U.S. Congress in 1972, and with Virginia's ratification this past January, enough States have adopted the amendment to meet the threshold for it to be added to the Constitution. So what is the hold-up? Why isn't it a part of the Constitution yet? When Congress ratified the Equal Rights Amendment, it imposed a deadline for State legislatures to ratify. That deadline has passed.

There should never be a deadline on equality. The Constitution does not call for time limits for the ratification of amendments, and there is precedent for amendments being added to the Constitution as many as 200 years after having first been proposed.

Most importantly, just as Congress had the power to impose and extend the deadline by resolution, we have the power to remove it through the same means. That is why I have introduced a resolution with Senator MURKOWSKI to remove the ratification deadline for the Equal Rights Amendment. Representative JACKIE SPEIER introduced a companion resolution that has already been passed by the House of Representatives. We are closer than ever to making the Equal Rights Amendment a reality.

This measure has historically enjoyed bipartisan support. The vast majority of Americans—94 percent of them—is in favor of a constitutional equality amendment. Perhaps it is because they understand that this is an issue not of politics but of basic human

rights. If you have any doubt about that, just look at the rest of the modern world. Every constitution written around the globe since World War II recognizes the equal stature of men and women. Ours does not. That is shameful.

Among those who are hesitant to support the ERA, one of their most common arguments is that it is not necessary. People argue that women already enjoy equal rights and protections in our society, so what is the need to write it down? To them, I say think again. Although the wage gap between men and women has narrowed over time, it still exists today. In 2019, women earned only 79 percent as much as their male counterparts for similar work. This disparity is even worse for women of color. It affects women their entire lives, and it affects their retirements. Recent data show that women over 65 are twice as likely as men to live below the poverty line. We owe it to America's women—to our mothers, daughters, sisters, friends, and selves—to remedy this societal failure.

Furthermore, as it stands, women in the United States have no Federal recourse for gender-based violence. Because of that, the courts have allowed police officers to refuse to defend victims of domestic abuse and have even struck down the protections offered by the Violence Against Women Act. The Equal Rights Amendment would require the Federal Government to prohibit and penalize this type of discrimination.

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg once said that, if she could choose an amendment to add to the Constitution, it would be the Equal Rights Amendment because she would like her granddaughters, when they pick up the Constitution, to see that notion—that women and men are persons of equal stature—as being a basic principle of our society. As a grandfather of two granddaughters myself, I couldn't agree more. I want them to know that, in America, they will enjoy the same protections and opportunities as anyone else.

I want every young person to grow up understanding that her dreams are within reach, that her autonomy is respected, and that her life is significant. In order to make that a reality, women need more than the right to vote, as fundamental as that is; they need a promise that they will be free from all forms of discrimination and injustice. That is why men, women, Republicans, and Democrats must come together in order to correct that silence in our Constitution—a silence that speaks volumes. We must all unite to support the Equal Rights Amendment.

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

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

HONORING OFFICER BRENT SCRIMSHIRE

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise to honor Hot Springs Police Officer First Class Brent Scrimshire, who was killed in the line of duty on Tuesday, March 10.

A native of Malvern, AR, Brent Scrimshire graduated from Malvern High School and Henderson State University.

Officer Scrimshire was an exemplary member of law enforcement. He had served on the Hot Springs police force for a number of years and was recognized as the department's Employee of the Quarter just recently in acknowledgment of his unique dedication, work ethic, and professionalism.

Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge also named him the Southwest Region Officer of the Year in 2016, which, according to media reports, he earned in part because of his lifesaving action when he helped to control the bleeding of a stabbing victim.

"Scrim" was known for treating his brothers in blue, as well as those he encountered while doing his job, with kindness and dignity. He also enjoyed being outdoors, hunting and fishing.

Officer Scrimshire deeply loved his wife and two children, who are now left behind to go through life without the devoted husband and dad they adored.

Our hearts break for them, the rest of his family and friends, and his entire family at the Hot Springs Police Department. His death is a tragic reminder of the risks our law enforcement officials face each time they put on the uniform.

I send my deepest condolences to Officer Scrimshire's loved ones. We honor his service and his sacrifice and pray all those fortunate enough to have known him will find comfort in his legacy and in the outpouring of love and support from so many.

On behalf of all Arkansans, we celebrate Officer Scrimshire's life and example of courageous, willing, and selfless public service. May he rest in peace.

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

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, earlier today, as the Senate knows now, Leader MCCONNELL announced that we would cancel our State work period so we could continue to work on legislation here in Washington, DC, to help families and our communities get

through the economic effect of the coronavirus's spread. I am glad he made that decision, and I look forward to continuing to work on those issues for the benefit of our constituents and the Nation.

This situation calls for an all-of-government response, and it will allow us additional time to hammer out a bipartisan agreement to respond to the ripple effect that this outbreak is having in Texas and across the country.

As we continue our discussions on this legislation, I would just urge my colleagues that this is a time to put partisanship aside and stop playing politics, if there ever was one.

There is actually precedent for that. At the height of the Ebola crisis in 2014, Republicans in the Senate worked with our Democratic colleagues and President Obama to ensure we were ready to treat Texans and other Americans who needed care from that particular disease.

We need to come together to do the same now, not to use the opportunity to attack or score political points or to try to damage our opponents. Unfortunately, that seems to be the first impulse of some of our friends across the Capitol Chamber.

Most of the public concern is focused on the elderly, on cruise ship travelers, and those with underlying medical conditions, but we need to think of every family, every college student, and to make sure that everyone who is worrying about how to make ends meet during this particular crisis because they had to stay home and miss work has their concerns addressed as well. This virus could disrupt everyone's daily routine in one way or the other, and as we have seen from the departure of some of our colleagues for self-quarantining, we are truly in this together.

I am glad we will be staying in session to try to bring as much relief and reassurance as we can in this uncertain time, and I look forward to all of us, Republicans and Democrats, the House and the Senate and the White House working together to get every American ready for what is to come.

It is not just the Senate that is altering its plans due to the coronavirus. Across the country, serious measures are taking place out of an abundance of caution to keep the American people safe. Some schools are choosing to close their doors, nursing homes are barring visitors, and major events like South by Southwest in Austin are canceling.

On the global scale, we are seeing an unprecedented action, including all of Italy—some 60 million people—going on a complete lockdown.

For many Americans, it seems like this public health crisis has escalated incredibly quickly. We went from never having heard of this new virus to constant news coverage about its growing reach within a matter of weeks.