

me about: Corey continues to make progress after an IED explosion December 4, 2005.

How do you say to a kid who served his country, who is raising a family: One, we had to turn you in so you can never own a gun. And, two, that gun your father handed down to you, Corey, you have to get rid of it. You cannot hand it down to your child, because even if you handed it down today to your son living in your home, they cannot have that gun, because the Veterans Administration says you cannot.

But if a fiduciary was assigned to Corey's father or to his mother, the Social Security Administration does not send that in to the NICS list to deprive them of their second amendment right. This is the most unfair thing I have seen this country do. It is time we end this practice. It is time we respect our veterans. It is time we treat them fairly. It is time we uphold the Constitution of this United States.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. KLOBUCHAR.) The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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—CONFERENCE REPORT TO ACCOMPANY H.R. 2996

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate considers the conference report to accompany H.R. 2996, Interior appropriations, there be 2 hours of general debate on the conference report, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees; that if any points of order are raised against the conference report, then any motion to waive the point of order be debated within the time limits provided for debate on the conference report; that upon the use or yielding back of time, and disposition of points of order, if the motions to waive are successful, then the Senate vote on adoption of the conference report, with no further motions in order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Madam President, I will be brief. I know the Republican leader is busy, but I just wish to make a couple of comments on a couple of nominations.

A woman by the name of Tara O'Toole has been nominated to be Under Secretary of Science and Technology at the Department of Homeland Security. This woman has such won-

derful qualifications. She is presently the CEO and director for the Center for Biosecurity at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. She is a professor of medicine and public health at the University of Pittsburgh. The Center for Biosecurity is an independent organization dedicated to improving the country's resilience to major biological threats.

Dr. O'Toole is internationally known for her work on biosecurity and on health and safety issues. She has written volumes, literally. She is published in areas of Anthrax, smallpox, plague, biological attacks, containment of contagious disease epidemics, biodefense research, hospital preparedness. These are areas that she has written in. She is coeditor in chief of the Journal of Biosecurity and Bioterrorism. She was a principal author and producer of "Dark Winter," an influential piece of work done in 2001. She has served on numerous government and advisory committees. Her education is significant: a bachelor's degree from Vassar College, a medical degree from George Washington University, and a master of public health degree from Johns Hopkins University. She has completed an internal residency at Yale and a fellowship in occupational and environmental medicine at Johns Hopkins. This is a remarkably powerful foundation for someone who is going to be the Under Secretary, the deputy, second in charge at the Department of Homeland Security. It is such an important job, Under Secretary of Science and Technology.

I had a call on Monday from the Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, saying: I am desperate for this woman. My staffing for bioterrorism is depending on her. She is a person I am going to depend on for the pandemic that the President declared with the H1N1 flu. So I am really concerned about not being able to get this woman confirmed.

I ask unanimous consent, therefore, that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 331, the nomination of Tara O'Toole to be Under Secretary of Science and Technology at the Department of Homeland Security; that the nomination be confirmed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no further motions in order; that the President of the United States be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. McCONNELL. We do have some objections on this side; therefore, I must object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I would renew my request and inquire about the possibility of a 2-hour time limit of debate on the nomination or any reasonable time agreement, or I will even take an unreasonable time agreement at this stage.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. McCONNELL. There are objections on this side; therefore, I must object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Madam President, I am going to ask unanimous consent that the Surgeon General be confirmed. This is a wonderful woman who has dedicated her life to taking care of the poor and underprivileged. She has done that for two decades on the gulf coast rather than going to some fancy place and seeing how much money she could make. She didn't do that. She has garnered nationwide praise for founding a rural health plan in Bayou La Batre, AL.

More than 40 percent of the town's 2,500 residents have no health insurance. In 2002 she became the first African-American woman to be president of the Medical Association of the State of Alabama. She would be a terrific Surgeon General. Her family situation directs attention to the need for taking care of people who need help. Her father died of diabetes and hypertension. Her brother died at 44 with HIV-related illness. Her mother died of lung cancer. She certainly is qualified and needed during this crisis.

I, therefore, ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 477, the nomination of Dr. Regina M. Benjamin to be Surgeon General of the Public Health Services of the United States; that the nomination be confirmed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no further action in order; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I think there is a good chance this nomination will be cleared. I need to hotline this nomination. If it comes out the way I anticipate, we should be able to confirm this nominee in wrap-up. Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. I thank the Chair.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 3548

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time be yielded back—and we are talking about the unemployment extension bill—and the motion to proceed be agreed to; that once the bill is reported, the following be the only first-degree amendments in order to the bill; that debate time on the listed first-degree amendments be limited to 60 minutes each, except the Baucus-Reid substitute, which would be debated within