

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Mark R. Warner, Herb Kohl, Mark Udall, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Udall, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jeanne Shaheen, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Michael F. Bennet, Jeff Merkley.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Brian C. Wimes, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern and Western Districts of Missouri.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Mark R. Warner, Herb Kohl, Mark Udall, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Udall, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jeanne Shaheen, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Michael F. Bennet, Jeff Merkley.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Kristine Gerhard Baker, of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Mark R. Warner, Herb Kohl, Mark Udall, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Udall, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jeanne Shaheen, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Michael F. Bennet, Jeff Merkley.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of John Z. Lee, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Mark R. Warner, Herb Kohl, Mark Udall, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Udall, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jeanne Shaheen, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Michael F. Bennet, Jeff Merkley.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close the debate on the nomination of George Levi Russell, III, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Mark R. Warner, Barbara A. Mikulski, Herb Kohl, Mark Udall, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Udall, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jeanne Shaheen, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Michael F. Bennet, Richard J. Durbin, Jeff Merkley.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of John J. Tharp, Jr., of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Mark R. Warner, Herb Kohl, Mark Udall, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Udall, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jeanne Shaheen, Robert P.

Casey, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Michael F. Bennet, Jeff Merkley.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Jeffrey J. Helmick, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard Blumenthal, Dianne Feinstein, Charles E. Schumer, Al Franken, Christopher A. Coons, Robert Menendez, Amy Klobuchar, Herb Kohl, Richard J. Durbin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Daniel K. Akaka, Jeff Bingaman, Tom Udall, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Patty Murray.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Mary Geiger Lewis, of South Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard Blumenthal, Dianne Feinstein, Charles E. Schumer, Al Franken, Christopher A. Coons, Robert Menendez, Amy Klobuchar, Herb Kohl, Richard J. Durbin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Daniel K. Akaka, Jeff Bingaman, Tom Udall, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Patty Murray.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close the debate on the nomination of Timothy S. Hillman, of Massachusetts, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard Blumenthal, Dianne Feinstein, Charles E. Schumer, Al Franken, Christopher A. Coons, Robert Menendez, Amy Klobuchar, Herb Kohl, Richard J. Durbin, Sheldon Whitehouse, John F. Kerry, Daniel K. Akaka, Jeff Bingaman, Tom Udall, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Patty Murray.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now resume legislative session.

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

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HAGAN). The Senator from Illinois.

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

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I rise to speak about the issue of judicial

nominations. Our Nation faces a serious problem: 1 out of every 10 Federal judgeships is vacant. Yet we continue to see—unfortunately and sadly—unprecedented obstruction from the other side of the aisle when it comes to these nominations. Right now on the Executive Calendar of the Senate there are 22 judicial nominations pending. Twelve of these 22 were successfully voted out of the Judiciary Committee last year, 2 of them as far back as October, and 17 of the nominees currently on the calendar were voted out with strong bipartisan support. Additionally, 13 of the 22 nominees who are being held have the approval of the Republican Senator from the State where the nomination has been made.

Despite the fact these nominations are not controversial, that they passed by a bipartisan vote in the Judiciary Committee and out of the committee, they still languish on the calendar because of Republican objections.

I know people get tired and say: I wish you all weren't so partisan around here. Well, I hate to give a speech where most will say that is just a partisan speech, but we are talking about nominees who have bipartisan support, with a strong vote coming out of committee being held on the calendar. Despite the fact they are noncontroversial, there have been objections to up-and-down votes. All we ask for is to just give them a vote. It is not right. Unfortunately, it is a new development in the Senate.

It used to be when a noncontroversial district or circuit court nominee was reported out of the Senate Judiciary Committee with bipartisan support, that nominee would literally be approved on the Senate floor usually by voice vote within a matter of days. Even when there were battles over the controversial Supreme Court or appellate court nominees, the Senate never obstructed a noncontroversial nominee at the same time, especially at the district court level.

When President Obama took office, Senate Republicans adopted a new and disturbing strategy. They began refusing to give their consent to schedule votes on almost all judicial nominees. You say to yourself: Well, what is their strategy? It is very apparent. They are praying, of course, that a Republican will be elected President and they can fill the vacancies. They want them to continue to have empty seats on our judicial courts for the remainder of this year until the election. President Obama's nominees have been subjected to an unprecedented level of obstruction by the Republicans, more than any other President has received.

Listen to this: President Obama's district court nominees have waited an average of 93 days on the Senate Executive Calendar between a committee vote and a floor vote. How about George W. Bush? How long did his nominees sit on the calendar before Democrats would let them have a vote?