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|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Harkin | Lugar | Rockefeller |
| Hatch | Manchin | Rubio |
| Heller | McCaskill | Sanders |
| Hoeven | McConnell | Schumer |
| Hutchison | Menendez | Sessions |
| Inhofe | Merkley | Shaheen |
| Isakson | Mikulski | Shelby |
| Johanns | Moran | Snowe |
| Johnson (SD) | Murkowski | Stabenow |
| Johnson (WI) | Murray | Tester |
| Kerry | Nelson (NE) | Thune |
| Klobuchar | Nelson (FL) | Udall (CO) |
| Kohl | Paul | Udall (NM) |
| Kyl | Portman | Warner |
| Landrieu | Pryor | Webb |
| Lautenberg | Reed | Whitehouse |
| Leahy | Reid | Wicker |
| Levin | Risch | Wyden |
| Lieberman | Roberts | |

NAYS—1

Lee

NOT VOTING—7

| | | |
|--------|--------|--------|
| Casey | Kirk | Vitter |
| DeMint | McCain | |
| Inouye | Toomey | |

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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session. The Senator from Minnesota.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2011—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

POSTAL REFORM

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I rise to discuss the importance of addressing the financial challenges now facing the U.S. Postal Service and our critical need to ensure that it remains a strong and reliable resource for the people of our country.

The American Postal Service was created over two centuries ago as a function of the Federal Government, acknowledged in the U.S. Constitution. In those last 220 years, the way we send mail and exchange correspondence has changed dramatically. We no longer need a stamp or an envelope; we can just shoot an e-mail or sign onto Facebook.

But even with all these changes, the fact remains that no matter who you are or where you live, odds are that the post office plays a vital role in your daily life. Seniors rely on the Postal Service to receive their medications, businesses rely on it to ship and receive goods, and countless jobs hinge on its services, both directly and indirectly.

No matter how far we have come with technology in this digital age, there are some things that simply cannot be sent by e-mail. That is why reliable timely mail service is something all Americans should be able to count on.

I have heard from numerous people in my State about the negative impact the closure of certain post offices or

mail processing facilities would have on their communities. I have heard from State and local leaders about the impact of closing the mail processing facilities in Duluth and Bemidji. I have heard from farmers who actually get their goods and ship their products through those mail processing centers.

That is why I have worked with Senator SANDERS and roughly 25 of my colleagues in the Senate, including Senator DURBIN—one-fourth of the entire Senate—to negotiate changes to this original bill. I thank Chairman LIEBERMAN and Senators COLLINS and CARPER for their great leadership. I am glad about some of the changes they have made.

The substitute amendment would, in fact, keep at a minimum 100 mail processing plants that are currently scheduled to close, and they would remain open for at least 3 years. Overnight delivery standards in regional areas will be protected. A large number of rural post offices that are being studied for closure will remain open.

I am a cosponsor of the amendment to the legislation that would provide important safeguards before closing mail processing facilities, and I have also cosponsored the McCaskill-Merkley amendment that would establish a 2-year moratorium on closing rural post offices and recognize the concerns of rural residents.

There is no doubt that changes need to be made to the Postal Service to make it more competitive in the digital world. I think a lot of those changes are contained in the substitute amendment. We can even make it stronger. I strongly believe we can reach a balance that makes necessary reforms, while maintaining the quick service on which Americans have come to rely.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

NLRB RULES

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I come to the Senate floor this evening to express my strong opposition to the resolution of disapproval filed by Senate Republicans that seeks to overturn critical new NLRB rules that will protect workers across America. I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose it. Some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle frequently complain about how we spend our time on the Senate floor. Today, I have to say I am disappointed that we are being forced to spend valuable time on this issue.

Middle-class families across America are continuing to struggle in this very tough economy, and it is hard to understand why Senate Republicans want to spend time attacking an agency's mission to protect workers and employers and is critical to protecting access to the middle class for workers and families.

Thankfully, as we all know, our economy seems to be stepping back from the precipice. But for so many workers today paychecks still have not caught

up, benefits continue to slip away, hours are getting cut, and job security is eroding. That is why I was very glad that at the end of last year, the NLRB voted to adopt modest commonsense rules that would make it easier for workers to fight for fair treatment in the workplace and help bring NLRB into the 21st century.

These new rules aren't going to solve every problem, but they are a step in the right direction and will help workers and families across the country. The new NLRB rules will strengthen and streamline the voting process by reducing unnecessary litigation and intentional delays. It will streamline pre- and postelection procedures, and it will facilitate the use of electronic communications and document filing. Those are all commonsense steps that should not be controversial.

I am extremely disappointed that Senate Republicans want to now eliminate these rules and roll back the clock on worker protections. The resolution we are going to vote on would eliminate steps to standardize and add transparency to the employee election process. It would eliminate steps that reduce frivolous litigation and create a more cohesive and productive workplace for workers and businesses. It will fundamentally weaken NLRB processes and procedures that workers and businesses rely on when they are trying to settle disputes.

It is bad for business, bad for working families, and it should not pass. Workers across this country deserve a fair process in the workplace. The NLRB rule this resolution would eliminate removes some of the unfair and unnecessary roadblocks so many workers face every day. I have to say that while we are discussing this issue, I want to express my disappointment and anger at the recent report from the inspector general about improper and politicized activities by a current Republican member of the NLRB board, an individual who previously worked for another board member who is a former staffer for a Republican Member of the Senate. That report details multiple instances of ethics misconduct, including the sharing of confidential information with outside parties. I am hopeful that issue will be fully investigated. I am deeply worried about the actions some people will take to undermine an agency with a mission to protect the rights of workers and employers. And honestly, I find it to be a sad statement about the nature of our politics today, because the NLRB is doing a lot of good work for workers in America and it shouldn't be tarnished with this sort of ethics issue.

This agency has borne the brunt of political attacks over the last year from special interest groups and elected officials trying to score political points at the expense of workers and families. Many of these attacks have been inaccurate; many have been unfair. Some have used the case involving Boeing and workers in my home State