

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON CHILDRESS NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Mark Bradley Childress, of Virginia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the United Republic of Tanzania?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table. Under the previous order, the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT—
MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 345, S. 2199.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2199) to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

CLOTURE MOTION

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 motion to proceed to calendar No. 345, S. 2199, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Barbara A. Mikulski, Patty Murray, Richard J. Durbin, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Brian Schatz, Heidi Heitkamp, Martin Heinrich, Tammy Baldwin, Barbara Boxer, Debbie Stabenow, Mazie Hirono, Kay R. Hagan, Mary Landrieu, Claire McCaskill, Jeanne Shaheen, Dianne Feinstein, Amy Klobuchar.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Colorado.

WIND ENERGY

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about jobs and about one sector in particular that has created tremendous economic growth in Colorado and across the United States, and that is wind energy and the jobs it has brought to our State.

During last Thursday's markup in the Finance Committee, we worked in a bipartisan fashion to include a 2-year extension of the production tax credit, known as the PTC, and the investment tax credit, known as the ITC, for wind energy.

The wind credit has enjoyed broad bipartisan support from both sides of the aisle over a number of years, ranging from its original champion—who continues to be a champion—Senator GRASSLEY from Iowa, to my friend and colleague from Colorado Senator MARK UDALL, who has been a tireless and relentless supporter over the years for wind energy jobs in Colorado. I know he will be a supportive advocate when the extenders bill reaches the floor. If enacted into the law, the extension of the production tax credit and investment tax credit will continue to drive job growth in my State of Colorado.

Sometimes I hear people say the government should not pick winners and losers in their critique of the wind energy tax credits. I actually agree with that notion, but what I would say to people who are listening to this on the TV is that when you hear someone in Washington say you shouldn't pick winners and losers, that is when you should hold onto your wallet. They say that is as if those decisions haven't already been made—as if winners haven't already been produced somewhere deep in the Tax Code in the last century or the regulatory code or the statute books. It is a reminder to ask yourself: Who is more likely to have benefits in this town? Is it the incumbent industries that have been working on these for decade after decade or is it the innovators in our economy? And, of course, time and time again it is the legacy firms that have the upper hand in these debates. I don't blame them for fighting for that advantage. But I also know they are not necessarily going to be the industries that are going to create the 21st century jobs we need, and whether we know it or not that is fundamentally the debate we are having. It is not a left-right debate in this town. It is future versus past debate, and it is critically important to the next generation of Americans that we get this right.

This is an updated version of a chart I have been bringing to the floor for the last 4 years that shows some interesting relationships of lines relating to our economy. The top chart is GDP growth in the United States, and that is the green line. Here is the recession right here. You can see we are actually producing much more as an economy today than when we went into the recession. There is much greater gross domestic product.

This is the unemployment level. You can see at the depths of the recession the destruction in jobs the Presiding Officer saw in his home State, and we saw it in my home State. We were in a very difficult period at that time. We have actually begun to add jobs again, and we are almost back to where we

were. I think we are back to where we were in terms of job creation.

This is a very stubborn and difficult issue for the people at home and the people I represent. This shows what has happened to median family and household income over periods of economic growth and over periods of economic decline. A way of thinking about that line is: What is happening to the middle-class income in this country? What is happening is the growth of middle-class income has decoupled from our economic growth. That, among other causes, has produced the worst income inequality we have seen in this country since 1928, I would argue, with the educational outcomes we have seen for kids, the most significant opportunity gap we have had in our lifetimes.

Why has this happened? There are a variety of reasons, but let me call your attention to this line. This is the productivity index in the United States. This shows how productive and efficient our economy has become. It has become incredibly efficient partly because of the use of technology, that is true, partly because of reaction to competition from overseas from China and India, and partly because the recession itself, which you can see, drove the line straight up because firms had to figure out how to get by with fewer people. That is our challenge. That is our central economic dilemma as we move into the second decade of this 21st century.

It is my view that there are two principal answers to that challenge. The first is education. I am not here to talk about that tonight, but just as a reminder, we are not going to recognize ourselves in this new century if we continue to perpetuate a set of outcomes in our K-12 system where if you are born poor in the United States, your chances of graduating with the equivalent of a college degree are roughly 9 in 100. That is completely unsatisfactory and outrageous, particularly for the kids we are talking about.

The other is innovation. We have to make sure we have the most innovative economy in the United States, and whether we are willing to lead the world; it is the companies that will start next week, the week after that, and the week after that, and the venture-backed companies that are somebody's bright idea today in their garage, but tomorrow could become the next Apple or Google. That is where the job growth and the wage growth is going to come from.

In my view the wind credit cuts right to the core of whether we are going to compete in a global economy. We are not talking about a fly-by-night experimental industry. This credit has triggered tremendous economic growth in Colorado and across the country. In Colorado alone, these tax credits directly support 5,000 jobs.

Vestas, which manufactures wind turbines, employs over 1,400 workers across four factories in our State from Pueblo all the way up I-25 to Brighton

and Windsor. They have hired 400 new workers this year with another 450 projected to be added before the end of 2014. This is it. Right here. Bricks and mortar. Real jobs. Made in America. It is not just manufacturing and design jobs near urban centers; it is also construction and operation jobs at the actual wind farms.

One Thursday night I left this floor, as I do almost every week—or it was a Friday morning, I guess. I flew back to Colorado. I got in the car and drove up to Peetz, where we have a wind farm. I climbed up to the top of a wind turbine. I thought that was it. I was in the pod at the top. That is not the technical term, but that is what it was. I thought I could then go home. When I got up there, they opened a trap door in the ceiling, and then I had to climb out on the roof of this thing, swaying over the Wyoming border, in the very shoes I wear on the floor of the Senate. That was an uncomfortable feeling, even though I was clipped in.

There was a guy up there who was one of the operators, one of the workers. He said: I would never have had this job in this community if it were not for this wind farm. If it were not for a vision somebody imagined several years ago but was unimaginable a decade ago, I would not have this job in this community.

This industry drives economic growth across our State from the conference rooms of tech startups in Boulder and Denver and all the way to 6,000-acre Kit Carson Wind Power Generating Site just west of the Kansas State line.

These are good jobs. In 2012, median household income for a single male in this country was just under \$37,000. Compare this figure to jobs in the wind industry—and these are all from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Crane and wind tower operators have a median annual wage of over \$47,000. These are jobs that can't be exported overseas. They can't be exported overseas. The electricians on wind projects average nearly \$50,000 annually. Land acquisition specialists who secure the land where wind projects are located have a median salary of \$74,000, and site managers for wind projects make over \$100,000 a year.

So if we are looking for a way to say we would like to see median family income start to rise again in this country instead of going down whether we are in a period of economic growth or decline, we might start to look at things such as the wind industry. These are good-paying jobs, and we are seeing it more and more in Colorado and all across the country.

The production tax credit has driven \$105 billion in private investment, opened 550 industrial facilities, and provided \$180 million in lease payments to farmers, ranchers, and landowners who host wind farms. Wind power accounts for more than a third of all new U.S. electric generation in recent years. It has moved our State toward a

more diversified and cleaner energy portfolio. Colorado is in the lead in many ways, and we are proud of that. Most importantly, 70 percent of a U.S. wind turbine is produced right here in the United States, and that creates 80,000 American jobs. When we travel the highways of my State, we see the component parts of these wind turbines moving from one plant to another, reflecting manufacturing jobs right here in the United States of America.

So I am delighted, I am glad, that we are moving to restore the wind credit that expired at the end of last year. We have seen this before where the PTC expired without a prompt extension, and it doesn't end well. Each time the credit has expired in the past, new installations fell between 76 and 93 percent, dealing a blow to the industry and its employees—and a reminder once again that what we don't do here actually matters out there in the real lives of people.

I know I sound like a broken record, but the world is not waiting for us to get out of our own way. We can't keep going through this unnecessary political boom-and-bust cycle. I am pleased the Senate Finance Committee took an important first step last week by reporting out a 2-year extension. We need to follow that with good work by bringing the extenders package to the floor and passing it into law. That outcome will give much-needed certainty to our industries and help secure the economic future for Colorado families who work in the wind industry.

With that, I thank the Chair for allowing me to speak this evening, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

DENYING ADMISSION TO THE UNITED STATES

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, the nomination of Hamid Aboutalebi to be the Ambassador from the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations is a deliberate and unambiguous insult to the United States. Mr. Aboutalebi was an active participant in the terrorist group that took 52 Americans hostage on November 4, 1979, and held them for 444 days. There are no circumstances under which the United States should grant such a person a visa, and our immediate concern is to prevent Mr. Aboutalebi from ever setting foot on American soil.

But this nomination is not an isolated incident that is taking place in a vacuum. It is part of Iran's clear and consistent pattern of virulent anti-Americanism that has defined their foreign policy since 1979.

Given the larger strategic threat to the United States and our allies represented by Iran's nuclear ambitions, this is not the moment for diplomatic niceties. We need to send Tehran an equally clear message: The Senate is not going to ignore this most recent insult but, rather, is going to give our

President the authority to affirmatively reject it. Unanimous passage of the bill I have introduced, which specifies that engaging in terrorism against the United States is a basis to deny a foreign U.N. ambassador a visa to enter our country, will do just that, while also signaling to other unfriendly nations that we see this kind of offensive behavior for what it is, and we will not tolerate it.

I wish in particular to thank Senator COATS, who is a cosponsor of this bill, as well as Senator GRAHAM, Senator MCCAIN, and Senator KIRK for their leadership. I also wish to thank my friends across the aisle and, in particular, Senator SCHUMER, Senator LEAHY, and Senator MENEZES for working together with my office to reach bipartisan agreement. I am proud to join with all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in this effort, and I am encouraged that we can all come together in a bipartisan manner on this national security issue that transcends political parties. I am encouraged that the Senate can speak unanimously in a bipartisan voice defending the interests of our Nation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 2195 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2195) to deny admission to the United States to any representative to the United Nations who is engaged in espionage activities against the United States, poses a threat to United States national security interests, or has engaged in a terrorist activity against the United States.

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

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Cruz amendment at the desk be agreed to, the bill be read a third time and passed, the Cruz amendment to the title be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The amendment (No. 2960) was agreed to, as follows:

On page 2, line 4, insert "been found to have been" after "has".

The bill (S. 2195), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2195

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. VISA LIMITATION FOR CERTAIN REPRESENTATIVES TO THE UNITED NATIONS.

Section 407(a) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991 (8 U.S.C. 1102 note) is amended—

(1) by striking "such individual has been found to have been engaged in espionage activities" and inserting the following: "such individual—