

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

WORKING TOGETHER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, let me say that it has been a long, long road for both sides. Each side had sincere convictions, and we are at this point.

I want to say three things. First, I suggest that we turn the page. It is time to turn the page.

I say to my dear friend the majority leader that we are not celebrating. We are relieved that millions and millions of people who would have been so drastically hurt by the three proposals put forward will, at least, retain their healthcare, be able to deal with pre-existing conditions, deal with nursing homes and opioids that Medicaid has paid for.

We are relieved, not for ourselves, but for the American people. But as I have said over and over again, ObamaCare was hardly perfect. It did a lot of good things, but it needs improvement. I hope one part of turning that page is that we go back to regular order, work in the committees together to improve ObamaCare.

We have good leaders—the Senator from Tennessee, the Senator from Washington, the Senator from Utah, the Senator from Oregon. They have worked well together in the past and can work well together in the future. There are suggestions we are interested in that come from Members on the other side of the aisle—the Senator from Maine and the Senator from Louisiana.

So let's turn the page and work together to improve our healthcare system, and let's turn the page in another way. All of us are so inspired by the speech and the life of the Senator from Arizona, and he asked us to go back to regular order, to bring back the Senate that some of us who have been here a while remember. Maybe this can be a moment where we start doing that.

Both sides will have to give. The blame hardly falls on one side or the other, but if we can take this moment—a solemn moment—and start working this body the way it had always worked until the last decade or so, with both sides to blame for the deterioration, we will do a better job for our country, a better job for this body, a better job for ourselves.

Finally, I am glad that the leader asked us to move to NDAA. We need to do it. I can say that on this side of the aisle, we will move expeditiously. I know that the Senator from Rhode Island has worked with the Senator from Arizona on a list of amendments that can be agreed to, and we can finish this bill up rather quickly. As I mentioned to the majority leader, there are some other things we can do rather quickly, including moving a whole lot of nominations.

We can work together. Our country demands it. Every place in every corner of the country where we go, the No. 1 thing we are asked—and I know this because I have talked to my colleagues from the other side of the aisle—is: Can't you guys work together? Let's give it a shot. Let's give it a shot.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I just want to announce to all my colleagues that the next vote will be at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, on cloture on Kevin Newsom to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit. There will be no more votes tonight.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 172, Kevin Newsom to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kevin Christopher Newsom, of Alabama, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Kevin Christopher Newsom, of Alabama, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

Dan Sullivan, John Barrasso, John Cornyn, Orrin G. Hatch, Ron Johnson, Chuck Grassley, Tom Cotton, Richard Burr, James Lankford, Lamar Alexander, John Kennedy, Cory Gardner, James M. Inhofe, Michael B. Enzi, John Thune, Richard C. Shelby, Mitch McConnell.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Sen-

ate 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.

SERVICEMEMBER STUDENT LOAN AFFORDABILITY ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, student loan borrowers currently carry about \$1.4 trillion in student loan debt. This breaks down to about 44 million borrowers holding student loan debt with an average balance of \$30,000. This crushing debt has pushed many borrowers to delay important life decisions, including marriage, having children, or buying homes. Despite that, some still choose careers in public service to give back to their community and support our country.

However, the immense burden of student loan debt is not put on pause while individuals choose to forgo other work opportunities to serve our Nation in the military or public service. Recognizing this, the Federal Government established two ways to alleviate some of this burden for those who serve our country.

The Servicemember Civil Relief Act protects our servicemembers from interest rates above 6 percent on all loans while they are on Active Duty. This protection extends to both public and private student loans taken out preservice.

Public service loan forgiveness encourages people to become public servants by forgiving student loan debt after 10 years of public service, including military service. Under this program; borrowers must enroll in a qualifying repayment plan and make 10 years of payments while working in public service before the loan is forgiven. Additionally, borrowers with Perkins or Federal Family Education Loans must consolidate their loans into a Direct Consolidation Loan.

However, the act of consolidating these loans carries an unintended consequence for servicemembers. Currently, if a servicemember chooses to consolidate his or her preservice loans to qualify for public service loan forgiveness, those loans are no longer eligible for the 6 percent interest rate cap provided under the Servicemember Civil Relief Act. The act of consolidating old debt for the purpose of enrolling public service loan forgiveness is treated as creating a new loan under current law, effectively forcing servicemembers to choose between the 6 percent interest rate cap while they are on Active Duty and enrolling in a program that will forgive their loans after 10 years of service and steady payments.

Requiring servicemembers to give up the interest rate cap while on Active Duty for a chance to earn loan forgiveness in the future was never the intention of Congress. Rather, in enacting the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program and the Servicemember Civil