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BUSINESS MEETING

Wednesday, April 9, 2025

U.S. Senate

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 12:14 p.m.,
in Room S-216, The President's Room, Hon. Jerry Moran,
Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Moran [presiding], Boozman, Cassidy,
Tillis, Sullivan, Blackburn, Cramer, Tuberville, Banks,
Sheehy, Blumenthal, Murray, Hirono, Hassan, King, and
Slotkin.

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR MORAN

2 Chairman Moran. I recognize that we have a quorum
3 present. This business meeting will come to order. As
4 specified in the notice provided to committee members, the
5 items on our agenda today include; the nomination of Samuel
6 Brown to be the Under Secretary of Memorial Affairs at the
7 Department of Veterans Affairs, the nomination of James
8 Baehr to be the General Counsel of the Department of
9 Veterans Affairs, and the nomination of Richard Topping to
10 be the Chief Financial Officer at the Department of Veterans
11 Affairs.

12 I will be supporting each of these nominations. In
13 light of Senator Murray's suggestions, I'll leave the
14 reasons for that out of my remarks.

15 [Laughter.]

16 Senator Murray. You're welcome.

17 Chairman Moran. So, my understanding is that there
18 will be holds placed or there are holds placed upon these
19 nominees, so I don't expect them to be considered in the
20 United States Senate until those holds are lifted. But
21 thank you for the cooperation in reporting them out of
22 committee.

23 And I yield to the Ranking Member, Senator Blumenthal.

24

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1 STATEMENT OF SENATOR BLUMENTHAL

2 Senator Blumenthal. Well, I have put a hold on these
3 nominees because I feel that the firings that have occurred,
4 the freezes on hiring, and the cuts in funding have not been
5 justified. They have impacted the VA in ways that we're
6 hearing from our constituents.

7 We were all assured by the Secretary it would not
8 happen. We've received no responses to the inquiries we've
9 been making about why it's happening, and what the strategy
10 and the plan is. And so, I will oppose these nominees.

11 Chairman Moran. I was trying to get Senator Murray to
12 hold you to the same standard that she was holding me, and
13 you did it on your own.

14 Do we not need a motion?

15 Senator Blackburn. I move for the consideration of the
16 nominees.

17 Chairman Moran. Thank you. It's been moved as it
18 seconded.

19 Senator Tillis. Seconded.

20 Chairman Moran. We'll now proceed to a roll call vote.
21 The clerk will call the roll, tally the votes, and announce
22 the outcome once it has been concluded.

23 Senator King. Is this on Mr. Brown?

24 Chairman Moran. This one -- excuse me. Yes, I should
25 say that. The first vote will be the motion has been made

1 to we consider and move all three, but the first vote will
2 occur on Mr. Samuel Brown.

3 The Clerk. Mr. Boozman?

4 Senator Boozman. Yes.

5 The Clerk. Mr. Cassidy?

6 Senator Cassidy. Aye.

7 The Clerk. Mr. Tillis?

8 Senator Tillis. Aye.

9 The Clerk. Mr. Sullivan?

10 Senator Sullivan. Aye.

11 The Clerk. Mrs. Blackburn?

12 Senator Blackburn. Aye.

13 The Clerk. Mr. Cramer?

14 Senator Cramer. Aye.

15 The Clerk. Mr. Tuberville?

16 Senator Tuberville. Aye.

17 The Clerk. Mr. Banks?

18 Senator Banks. Aye.

19 The Clerk. Mr. Sheehy?

20 Senator Sheehy. Aye.

21 The Clerk. Mr. Blumenthal?

22 Senator Blumenthal. No.

23 The Clerk. Mrs. Murray?

24 Senator Murray. No.

25 The Clerk. Mr. Sanders?

1 Senator Blumenthal. No, by proxy.

2 The Clerk. Ms. Hirono?

3 Senator Hirono. No.

4 The Clerk. Ms. Hassan?

5 Senator Hassan. No.

6 The Clerk. Mr. King?

7 Senator King. No.

8 The Clerk. Ms. Duckworth?

9 Senator Blumenthal. No, by proxy.

10 The Clerk. Mr. Gallego?

11 Senator Blumenthal. No, by proxy.

12 The Clerk. Ms. Slotkin?

13 Senator Slotkin. No.

14 The Clerk. Mr. Chairman?

15 Chairman Moran. Aye.

16 The Clerk. On this vote the yeas are 10, and the nays

17 are 9.

18 Chairman Moran. The motion has been adopted.

19 It's been moved and seconded. We move to the

20 nomination of James Baehr. The clerk will call the roll.

21 The Clerk. Mr. Boozman?

22 Senator Boozman. Yes.

23 The Clerk. Mr. Cassidy?

24 Senator Cassidy. Aye.

25 The Clerk. Mr. Tillis?

1 Senator Tillis. Aye.
2 The Clerk. Mr. Sullivan?
3 Senator Sullivan. Aye.
4 The Clerk. Mrs. Blackburn?
5 Senator Blackburn. Aye.
6 The Clerk. Mr. Cramer?
7 Senator Cramer. Aye.
8 The Clerk. Mr. Tuberville?
9 Senator Tuberville. Aye.
10 The Clerk. Mr. Banks?
11 Senator Banks. Aye.
12 The Clerk. Mr. Sheehy?
13 Senator Sheehy. Aye.
14 The Clerk. Mr. Blumenthal?
15 Senator Blumenthal. No.
16 The Clerk. Mrs. Murray?
17 Senator Murray. No.
18 The Clerk. Mr. Sanders?
19 Senator Blumenthal. No, by proxy.
20 The Clerk. Ms. Hirono?
21 Senator Hirono. No.
22 The Clerk. Ms. Hassan?
23 Senator Hassan. No.
24 The Clerk. Mr. King?
25 Senator King. No.

1 The Clerk. Ms. Duckworth?

2 Senator Blumenthal. No, by proxy.

3 The Clerk. Mr. Gallego?

4 Senator Blumenthal. No, by proxy.

5 The Clerk. Ms. Slotkin?

6 Senator Slotkin. No.

7 The Clerk. Mr. Chairman?

8 Chairman Moran. Aye.

9 The Clerk. On this vote the yeas are 10, and the nays

10 are 9.

11 Chairman Moran. That nomination has been approved by

12 the committee. It'll be reported to the Senate.

13 The nomination that's now before us of Richard Topping

14 has been moved and seconded. The clerk will call the roll.

15 The Clerk. Mr. Boozman?

16 Senator Boozman. Yes.

17 The Clerk. Mr. Cassidy?

18 Senator Cassidy. Aye.

19 The Clerk. Mr. Tillis?

20 Senator Tillis. Aye.

21 The Clerk. Mr. Sullivan?

22 Senator Sullivan. Aye.

23 The Clerk. Mrs. Blackburn?

24 Senator Blackburn. Aye.

25 The Clerk. Mr. Cramer?

1 Senator Cramer. Aye.
2 The Clerk. Mr. Tuberville?
3 Senator Tuberville. Aye.
4 The Clerk. Mr. Banks?
5 Senator Banks. Aye.
6 The Clerk. Mr. Sheehy?
7 Senator Sheehy. Aye.
8 The Clerk. Mr. Blumenthal?
9 Senator Blumenthal. No.
10 The Clerk. Mrs. Murray?
11 Senator Murray. No.
12 The Clerk. Mr. Sanders?
13 Senator Blumenthal. No, by proxy.
14 The Clerk. Ms. Hirono?
15 Senator Hirono. No.
16 The Clerk. Ms. Hassan?
17 Senator Hassan. No.
18 The Clerk. Mr. King?
19 Senator King. No.
20 The Clerk. Ms. Duckworth?
21 Senator Blumenthal. No, by proxy.
22 The Clerk. Mr. Gallego?
23 Senator Blumenthal. No, by proxy.
24 The Clerk. Ms. Slotkin?
25 Senator Slotkin. No.

1 The Clerk. Mr. Chairman?

2 Chairman Moran. Aye.

3 The Clerk. On this vote the yeas are 10, and the nays
4 are 9.

5 Chairman Moran. The nomination of Richard Topping to
6 be the Chief Financial Officer has been approved by the
7 committee. It'll be reported to the Senate.

8 That concludes our business today. If no other members
9 seek recognition, the meeting will be adjourned.

10 [Whereupon, at 12:19 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.]

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