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BUSINESS MEETING

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

U.S. Senate
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:47 p.m., in S-216, The Presidents Room, Hon. Jerry Moran, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

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

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR MORAN

Chairman Moran. Thank you all for being here. I call the meeting to order. We have a quorum and we will proceed. I think on our side we're only missing one member. We'll do the nomination last.

As specified in the notice provided to committee members, the items on our agenda this afternoon include; the nomination of Honorable Paul R. Lawrence to be the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Fiscal Year of 2025, Major Medical Lease Committee Resolution, and the PACT Act Major Medical Lease Committee Resolution.

Before we move to vote on these resolutions, are there any comments or debate? And we're just talking about the extension of the lease arrangements. If no committee member seeks recognition the question that is before the committee in order to favorably report the Major Medical Lease Committee Resolution en bloc. We'll take that vote by voice. And all those in favor, please say aye.

[Voice vote. Chorus of ayes.]

Chairman Moran. All those opposed, please say no. Feels like the old Veterans Committee to me.

[Laughter.]

Senator Hassan. We should be here more often.

Chairman Moran. Yeah, let's meet here more often. It was a theory I had. And then --

Senator Hassan. Nomination.

Chairman Moran. Oh, excuse me, I didn't finish that. The ayes have it. The ayes appear to have it. The ayes do have it. They do have it. And the motion to report is favorably agreed to.

We'll, now take up the nomination of Mr. Lawrence to be the Deputy Secretary at the Department of Veterans Affairs. I will be voting in support of Mr. Lawrence's nomination and I've already voted in favor of both resolutions. I'll now yield to the ranking member should you wish to offer any statements or comments.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR BLUMENTHAL

Senator Blumenthal. I will be opposing this nomination. I think we have seen what the leadership of the VA looks like despite the promises that were made to us by Secretary Collins before his hearing and during his hearing. And I will be voting against Mr. Lawrence.

Chairman Moran. Do any other members of the committee wish to make a statement? I would indicate that I think there's still value in -- I'm not pointing at anybody.

[Laughter.]

Chairman Moran. There's still value to having people in place that we can then attempt to get additional information from. If no other committee member seeks recognition, we will move to a roll call vote on the nomination of Paul R. Lawrence to be the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs. The clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk. Mr. Boozman?

Senator Boozman. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Cassidy?

Senator Cassidy. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Tillis?

Senator Tillis. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Sullivan?

Senator Sullivan. Aye.

The Clerk. Mrs. Blackburn?

Senator Blackburn. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Cramer?

Senator Cramer. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Tuberville?

Senator Tuberville. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Banks?

Senator Banks. Aye.

The Clerk. Mr. Sheehy?

Senator Sheehy. Yes.

The Clerk. Mr. Blumenthal?

Senator Blumenthal. No.

The Clerk. Mrs. Murray?

Senator Blumenthal. No, by proxy.

The Clerk. Mr. Sanders?

Senator Blumenthal. No, by proxy.

The Clerk. Ms. Hirono?

Senator Hirono. No.

The Clerk. Ms. Hassan?

Senator Hassan. No.

The Clerk. Mr. King?

Senator Blumenthal. No, by proxy.

The Clerk. Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Blumenthal. No, by proxy.

The Clerk. Mr. Gallego?

Senator Gallego. No.

The Clerk. Ms. Slotkin?

Senator Slotkin. No.

The Clerk. Mr. Chairman?

Chairman Moran. Aye.

The Clerk. The yeas are 10, and the nays are 9.

Chairman Moran. The motion to report is favorably agreed to. And if there's no member who wishes to make any additional comment, no other business that I know of is to come before the committee. And I now declare the meeting adjourned. Thank you-all.

[Whereupon, at 2:52 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]