

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY,  
DECEMBER 6, 2017

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Wednesday, December 6; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate 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.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of our Democratic colleagues.

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

The Senator from Delaware.

CONFIRMATION OF KIRSTJEN  
NIELSEN

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, we just concluded a few minutes ago the confirmation of the President's nominee for the next Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

As it turns out, the Presiding Officer is the chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, which has jurisdiction over the Department of Homeland Security. I have the privilege of being the immediate past chairman of the committee. The Presiding Officer and I have worked together on a wide range of issues that actually pertain to the jurisdiction of the Department of Homeland Security.

I don't want to speak out of turn, but I believe both the Presiding Officer, who is as well the chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and I believe that one of the most important ingredients of success of any organization—I don't care whether it is a football team, a body such as the U.S. Senate, a hospital, a school, a State, a country—the key is always leadership. The key is leaders who are always interested in figuring out what is the right thing to do; people who believe in the Golden Rule, treating other people the way they want to be treated; and leaders who focus on excellence in everything they do. They surround themselves with the best people they can find. They embrace the idea that if a program or whatever is not perfect, let's make it better. The best leaders with whom I have been privileged to serve are those who just don't give up. When they are sure they are right, they just don't give up.

We have had a series of leaders, and I have been privileged to know every

Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security since the very beginning of time, when I served as Governor and when I served in the Congress. I served with the first Secretary we had and others who have succeeded him—most recently, John Kelly, retired Marine four-star general who came from his command in SOUTHCOM to become Secretary of Homeland Security. He is now at the White House serving as the Chief of Staff to the President. We are grateful to him for his service.

Since he has moved on to that post, it has left a vacancy to lead the Department of Homeland Security. I think Elaine Duke is filling in quite nicely as the Acting Secretary. She was previously Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security. Now that Kirstjen Nielsen has been confirmed, we will see whether Elaine Duke will step back and be the Deputy. I think a number of us hope that she will, but that is not our decision to make.

The vote today in favor of Kirstjen Nielsen's confirmation was, I believe, 62 ayes and 37 nays. Every now and then, we have the opportunity to vote and it is a close call. Not all of our votes are easy; some are more difficult than others. But for a number of us, this was a close call.

I think Kirstjen Nielsen is arguably bright. She is well-spoken. She has appeared before our committee and taken any number of questions. She was asked and has answered hundreds of questions from committee members and questions for the record. She has been good enough to meet with me not once but twice. I said to her yesterday when we met that I think she is a person with a good heart and good values—again, well-spoken and bright. She is especially strong with respect to cyber security.

The real question mark for me—one of the question marks for me, among others—was, for someone who has at best only led organizations with maybe a couple dozen people to now be thrust into—or selected to serve in this position, where she will be leading 240,000 people at the Department of Homeland Security, spread out all over the world, is a daunting challenge. As someone who has been privileged to spend 23 years of my life in the Navy as a naval flight officer, then as a treasurer, a Congressman, a Governor, a Senator, and I led the National Governors Association—for me, leading an organization of that size would be daunting. I would expect that the same is true for Kirstjen Nielsen.

John Kelly, who for 6 months was our Secretary, has a lot of confidence in her, and I have a lot of confidence in John Kelly. JOHN MCCAIN and I introduced him as the ranking member and the chairman when General Kelly was nominated to be Secretary. JOHN MCCAIN sat on one side of the nominee, and I sat on the other. I think we have taken his recommendation to heart, and that was maybe the tie-breaker for some of us.

When I spoke with Kirstjen yesterday, we talked about her core values and what guides her in making decisions. I think some of it is faith-based, which I find encouraging; the idea of treating other people the way we want to be treated; the willingness to welcome people to our home, our country, who are strangers.

So we will see how it plays out. I think it is critically important that—just as I try to surround myself with people who have strength and fill in for my weaknesses, my hope is that is exactly what will happen when she assumes the responsibility to lead the Department of Homeland Security.

So I would say to Kirstjen Nielsen: Congratulations on your confirmation, and we look forward to working with you, hopefully agreeing a lot more often than we disagree. Good luck and God bless.

REPUBLICAN TAX BILL

Mr. CARPER. Next, Mr. President, I have a couple of charts here. I don't know whether the Presiding Officer can see them from where he is sitting. I can barely see them from right here.

The first chart we are going to take a look at deals with the—on this side over here, we have median household income for Americans since 1987. Over on this side, we have corporate profits in the billions of dollars.

When we come back here to 1987, we look at the orange line here, and that is median household income in 2016 dollars. The median household income in 1987 was just a shade over \$50,000. All of these years later, in 2017, it is just a little bit higher. It has gone up a little bit but not a whole lot—maybe close to \$60,000, but I don't know that it is any higher than that. It has gone up a little bit, really, over the last few years.

The green line here on our chart is corporate profits. When we go back to 1987, corporate profits were equal to about—it looks like \$30,000 billion, and if I am not mistaken, that would be maybe \$30 trillion. I hope I have that right. That was 1987. If you look at what has happened, it has gone up and down. This is during the great recession when we fell off the cliff and almost fell off the world. In 2007, 2008, we started to climb back out of it. Today, the corporate profits have roughly doubled in this country since 1987—roughly doubled—while median household income is growing a tiny bit but actually not that much.

Let's look at the next chart, and then I will not speak from the charts. I guess the lesson here again is that corporate profits have gone up rather nicely. There were some ups and downs because of the great recession, but they are on an uptick now.

This is a look at the national deficit and debt. I know the Presiding Officer has a great concern about this.

I came to the House I guess in 1983. I had been State treasurer for a State