

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 Michelle Bowman, of Kansas, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of fourteen years from February 1, 2020. (Reappointment)

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, Mike Rounds, John Boozman, Thom Tillis, Richard Burr, James E. Risch, Jerry Moran, David Perdue, Roy Blunt, Kevin Cramer, Roger F. Wicker, Tom Cotton, John Barrasso, Steve Daines.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 335.

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

The clerk will report the nomination. The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Thomas Peter Feddo, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Investment Security. (New Position)

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 Thomas Peter Feddo, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Investment Security. (New Position)

Mitch McConnell, James E. Risch, John Boozman, Mike Crapo, John Cornyn, Pat Roberts, Richard Burr, Lindsey Graham, John Kennedy, David Perdue, Mike Rounds, Roy Blunt, Roger F. Wicker, Todd Young, Thom Tillis, Ron Johnson, Rick Scott.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 407.

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

The clerk will report the nomination. The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jennifer D. Nordquist, of Virginia, to be United States Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for a term of two years.

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 Jennifer D. Nordquist, of Virginia, to be United States Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for a term of two years.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, Mike Rounds, John Boozman, Thom Tillis, Richard Burr, James E. Risch, David Perdue, Roy Blunt, Kevin Cramer, Roger F. Wicker, Tom Cotton, John Barrasso, Steve Daines, John Thune.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions be waived.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 337.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BRAUN). Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of William B. Kilbride, of Tennessee, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for a term expiring May 18, 2023.

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Kilbride nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and 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.

TRIBUTE TO JANE TSCHETTER
LUCAS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Jane Tschetter Lucas. This month, she is leaving government service after serving her home State of South Dakota as a member of my staff for 10 years and, most recently, serving in the executive branch for the last 2 years.

In 2007, Jane graduated from South Dakota State University, SDSU, in her hometown of Brookings, where she was a Briggs Scholar and a student athlete.

After graduating from SDSU, Jane moved from South Dakota to Washington, DC, to take a position as a staff assistant in my office.

In the 12 years since then, a lot has happened for her both personally and professionally. She quickly moved on from the front office and went on to serve on my legislative team in several capacities, including as a legislative assistant, health policy counsel, and finally as legislative director.

Jane was a fierce advocate for rural healthcare and education priorities, and I know many South Dakotans benefited from her tireless work on these issues.

While working full time in my office, through healthcare debates and education reform, and all that came with them, Jane earned her law degree from Georgetown University. In 2017, Jane and her husband Chris welcomed a future SDSU Jackrabbit, their daughter, Grace. During that time, she transitioned to a senior role at the Department of Health and Human Services. Shortly after, she accepted a role in the White House Counsel's office. For the last 13 months, she has served the administration as a special assistant to the President in the White House Office of Legislative Affairs.

Since her days as an intern in the South Dakota State Legislature, Jane has demonstrated an affinity for public service and a knack for developing solid public policy. She is a natural leader, a patient mentor, and thoughtful and thorough in her work. I would like to thank her for her decade of

service to my office and the State of South Dakota and for her service to the American people.

I wish her continued success in her new endeavors,

DREAM CENTER

Mr. DURBIN.

“We’ve got a friend in Trump;
He’s lifting us out of our slump;
We were down—and life was rough;
Too many regs, were way too tough;
After so many years;
We’d just had enough, but;
Now, we’ve got a friend in Trump.”

Mr. President, that was a song, sung to the tune of Randy Newman’s “You’ve Got a Friend in Me,” written by a former lawyer for Dream Center Education Holdings about the prospects for their for-profit college enterprise under a Trump administration.

Earlier this month, House Education and Labor Committee Chairman Bobby Scott sent a letter to Education Secretary Betsy DeVos which revealed damning new details about just how far Dream Center’s “friends” at the Trump/DeVos Department of Education would go to assist as they collapsed.

Details, including that catchy little ditty, were later reported by the New York Times in an article entitled, “Emails Show DeVos Aides Pulled Strings for Failing For-Profit Colleges.”

I ask unanimous consent that the New York Times article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, July 23, 2019]

EMAILS SHOW DEVOS AIDES PULLED STRINGS FOR FAILING FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES

(By Erica L. Green and Stacy Cowley)

WASHINGTON.—Dream Center Education Holdings, a subsidiary of a Los Angeles-based megachurch, had no experience in higher education when it petitioned the federal Education Department to let it take over a troubled chain of for-profit trade schools.

But the organization’s chairman, Randall K. Barton, told the education secretary, Betsy DeVos, that the foundation wanted to “help people live better lives.”

The purchase was blessed despite Dream Center’s lack of experience and questionable finances by an administration favorable to for-profit education. But barely a year later, the company tumbled into insolvency, dozens of its colleges closed abruptly and thousands of students were left with no degree after paying tens of thousands of dollars in tuition.

Making matters worse, the college is accused of enrolling new students and taking their taxpayer-supported financial aid dollars even after some of its campuses had lost their accreditation, which rendered their credits worthless.

Company emails, documents and recordings show that part of why Dream Center kept going is that it thought the Education Department, which under Ms. DeVos has rolled back regulations on for-profit education, would try to keep it from failing. Mr. Barton emailed other Dream Center executives that the department’s head of higher education policy—Diane Auer Jones, a

former executive and lobbyist for for-profit colleges—had pulled strings to help the company’s schools in their effort to regain a seal of approval from an accreditor, despite their perilous positions.

In another instance, Dream Center’s chief operating officer told faculty at an endangered campus that Ms. Jones was changing departmental regulations to help the schools obtain accreditation retroactively.

Although the Trump administration did eventually cut off federal aid to the chain of colleges and precipitate their collapse, Democrats say the department failed to respond to warning signs.

Representative Robert C. Scott, a Virginia Democrat who is the chairman of the House Education Committee, unveiled a trove of documents, including internal communication between executives from Dream Center, in a letter to Ms. DeVos this month. He said the documents suggest that Ms. Jones misled Congress about her efforts to help shield Dream Center from its misdeeds.

“The actions of Dream Center and the Department of Education’s execution of its responsibility to protect students raise grave concerns,” Mr. Scott wrote.

Instead of requiring Dream Center to take action, “the department informed Dream Center executives that it would work to retroactively accredit the institutions during the periods they had lied to students—rewriting history to erase Dream Center’s deceptive marketing practices,” Mr. Scott wrote.

The Education Department has maintained it did nothing wrong.

“This story is based entirely on a wrongful premise,” the department wrote in a statement. “The full and complete timeline shows Dream Center did not receive any unique benefits from policy decisions made by the department. We simply worked to try and get as many students into a new program as possible. While we did not achieve a perfect outcome, our actions helped thousands of students land on their feet.”

In a response letter to Mr. Scott on Monday, the department’s acting general counsel, Reed D. Rubinstein, submitted documentation that he said contradicted the committee’s “unfair suggestions” that the department tailored its policies to assist Dream Center and was not forthcoming with Congress. “The Department categorically rejects these allegations,” he wrote.

“Dream Center’s management received no special treatment,” he said.

President Trump has moved to deregulate any number of industries, from mining and offshore oil exploration to chemicals and Internet providers. But Ms. DeVos’s efforts to get the government off the backs of for-profit colleges have come under particular scrutiny, in part because of the spectacular implosions of for-profit college chains only a few years ago, in part because people who once worked in the sector have led the DeVos deregulatory push.

Dream Center’s collapse was the first of the new deregulatory era. Yet Education Department officials insisted, repeatedly, that its demise had nothing to do with the administration’s policies or efforts. Ms. Jones told Congress that she did not even know of Dream Center’s accreditation problems at the time the company said she was working to get it out of its jam. She also told lawmakers the policy change extending retroactive accreditation had “nothing to do with the Dream Center.”

Those assurances are now being questioned.

“The documents further suggest that department officials were not forthcoming to Congress and the public about the information they had about Dream Center’s status

and practices,” Mr. Scott wrote. He is requesting emails, text messages and interviews with several department officials, including Ms. Jones.

The letter and documents “raise questions about whether the department took steps to allow Dream Center to mislead students,” Mr. Scott said.

From the start, the Education Department overlooked red flags when, in late 2017, Dream Center took control of more than 100 campuses with 50,000 students from a for-profit higher-education company, Education Management Corporation. Around that time, Dream Center’s accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission, notified the organization that it was about to change two of its schools’ accreditation status. Two Education Department officials, including the agency’s director of accreditation, were copied on the letter.

In January 2018 the accreditor published a notification on its website stating that the two Dream Center schools were not accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. It ordered Dream Center to tell students that their courses and degrees “may not be accepted in transfer to other colleges and universities or recognized by prospective employers.”

Yet for five months, Dream Center kept advertising, “We remain accredited.”

By July 2018, Dream Center was running out of cash and knew its accreditation problems could worsen its financial strain. Emails from that month obtained by the House Education Committee indicate that Dream Center officials believed that the Education Department was maneuvering to help it stave off catastrophe.

In written responses to questions from Congress, the Education Department said Ms. Jones was first made aware that the two Dream Center institutions were not accredited on July 10, 2018. She was unaware of the public notice that the Higher Learning Commission had issued nearly six months earlier, according to the agency. She was notified a week later that the institutions were misrepresenting their accreditation status and ordered them the next day to stop, the department said.

Ms. Jones was asked during a House Oversight Committee hearing this spring whether a policy she had issued later that month that allowed accreditations to be granted retroactively was aimed at helping Dream Center. “Absolutely not. It had nothing to do with the Dream Center,” she answered.

But in company emails, Dream Center executives indicated the Education Department tipped them off on July 3, 2018, that a new retroactive accreditation policy was coming, a week before Ms. Jones said she even knew Dream Center had a problem.

“We just got off the phone with DOE,” Mr. Barton wrote. “It appears HLC is in sync with retro” accreditation.

He said Ms. Jones—whom he directly cited by name—had worked with accreditors, and “they will all agree to one plan with department blessing.”

Mr. Barton did not respond to requests for comment on his emails.

On July 11, Dream Center’s chief operating officer told faculty in a meeting on an Illinois campus that the department would allow the schools’ accreditor to grant retroactive accreditation. He said department officials “changed their regulation to open the door to letting it happen,” according to a recording of the meeting obtained by the committee. He referred to a conversation with Ms. Jones the week prior where “she said everybody was going to be accommodating.”

Weeks later, on July 25, Ms. Jones finalized the plan allowing retroactive accreditation, which was a major win for Dream Center.