

Safety of the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 24, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. in room 406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to hold a hearing entitled, "Three Mile Island—Looking Back on Thirty Years of Lessons Learned."

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that on Wednesday, March 25, at 12 noon, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 27, the nomination of David S. Kris to be an Assistant Attorney General, and that the Senate then immediately vote on the confirmation of the nomination; that upon confirmation, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, no further motions be in order; that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate resume legislative session.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 33, the nomination of Gary Locke to be Secretary of Commerce; that the nomination be confirmed and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; that no further motions be in order; that any statements relating to this nomination be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Chair hears none, and it is so ordered.

The nomination considered and confirmed is as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Gary Locke, of Washington, to be Secretary of Commerce.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NOMINATION OF GARY LOCKE

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise to thank my colleagues for the expeditious approval of former Washington Gov. Gary Locke as the 36th Secretary of Commerce.

I have known Gary Locke for more than 20 years and I can say to my colleagues you did the right thing tonight by approving him for this job.

He has helped our State with broadband service delivery to rural communities. Under his leadership, Washington State used E-rate funds to help develop a K-20 network, a high-speed, high-capacity network linking K-12 schools and universities across the State of Washington.

He has been involved with both public and private sector trade missions in helping to promote U.S. products abroad. At the International Trade Administration within Commerce, he will put that experience to good use. Part of that agency's mission is to provide for advocacy for American companies abroad, and it can mean the difference between whether major foreign sales opportunities go to U.S. companies or to foreign competitors.

At NOAA, which is over half the Department of Commerce's budget, Governor Locke's prior experience with the complexities of Puget Sound, endangered salmon species, and the hazards of oil spills, will all be invaluable. As Governor, Gary Locke dealt with many of our most trying fishing issues and was in charge of appointing members to the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.

Fisheries in the North Pacific have been recognized by many organizations, including the U.S. Oceans Commission and the Pew Oceans Commission, as some of the best managed fisheries in the world.

In addition to that effort, Governor Locke has dealt with the complexities of endangered salmon species and getting the first locally developed regional salmon recovery plan for Washington State. I know that this expertise will be put to good use at NOAA.

Many of my colleagues understand that there are challenges at the Department of Commerce, including management challenges—from the set-top box program for the digital television transition, to getting the NOAA satellite program back on track, to wisely investing the \$4.7 billion of broadband grants as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

I know Governor Locke, who has never shied away from management challenges, will put his expertise to good work in making sure these programs are implemented effectively.

He worked with Democrats and Republicans in our State after the tech bubble crisis to come up with a budget and spending reduction proposals that were certainly unpopular at the time,

but what the State budget needed. I know he will continue in the same bipartisan fashion as Secretary of Commerce.

I believe Governor Locke will help round out the President's economic team. He is someone who understands the challenges many Americans face as we try to stabilize our economy. Governor Locke was born and raised in public housing. He combined an intense work ethic with part-time jobs and financial aid, and graduated from Yale University and received a subsequent law degree from Boston University.

He became the first Chinese American elected Governor in the United States when he was elected to be Governor of the State of Washington.

He is a testament to the American dream.

So I hope that as we have approved this nomination, he will get started immediately on helping our economy return to robust growth and use the great resourcefulness he has demonstrated as Governor of Washington State. He will make sure the Commerce Department plays a key role in getting our economy moving.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I join my colleague from Washington State, Senator CANTWELL, this evening to congratulate Gary Locke on his confirmation now as our next Secretary of Commerce. This confirmation comes at an important time in our Nation's history as we all work very hard to recover from the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. We need a Commerce Secretary with the dedication and expertise to carry out policies that are going to strengthen our economy far into the future. Gary Locke is uniquely qualified for that task because he does have a lifetime of experience built on hard work, a wealth of knowledge, and a unique appreciation of the American dream.

Governor Locke understands the importance of the American dream because he lived it. His grandfather emigrated from China, and he worked as a servant about a mile from the Governor's mansion in Olympia that one day his grandson would call home. There are a lot of reasons why Governor Locke is an ideal Commerce Secretary, but I wish to tell a personal story this evening that I think illustrates his commitment to public service and to making sure we make the best decision for our taxpayers.

I first met Governor Locke when he was in the Washington State legislature and he was chair of the House Appropriations Committee and I was a new State Senator trying to get a piece of legislation passed that was critical to my constituents. As part of getting that bill passed, I had to go before then-Gov. Gary Locke as chair of that Appropriations Committee, and it was one of the toughest political experiences of my lifetime. He knew the

budget inside and out. He ran me through the paces. He grilled me about what my bill would do and how much it would cost and what kind of impact it would have on the taxpayers. He was very tough. But ultimately, because he asked those hard questions and made me defend my legislation, we improved the focus of that legislation and we got it passed. Governor Locke has brought that level of expertise and dedication to the taxpayers in every single position he has held, and it makes him an ideal person now to lead the Commerce Department.

So let me say a few words about the experience Governor Locke brings to this position. One of the most critical jobs the Commerce Secretary performs is finding markets for American products and technologies. He understands how important this is, and he knows how to do it successfully. As the two-term Governor of the Nation's most trade-dependent State, he spent 8 years breaking down trade barriers and promoting our American products, from airplanes to apples to operating systems. He has led numerous successful delegations to our Asian trading partners to help build those relationships. He also understands that the health of the environment has a direct impact on our quality of life and on our economy.

All of Governor Locke's experience means he is going to hit the ground running as our Commerce Secretary as we confront global climate change and other environmental concerns, including the management of our fisheries. So I was very pleased to help support the confirmation of Gary Locke. He won unanimous approval from our Commerce Committee, and today he won unanimous approval from the Senate. He has served the people of Washington State well, and he will bring that same level of commitment and intelligence to this administration.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

HONORING GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY ESTABLISHMENT AUTHORIZATION

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Con. Res. 12, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 12) recognizing and honoring the signing by President Abraham Lincoln of the legislation authorizing the establishment of collegiate programs at Gallaudet University.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to re-

consider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

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

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 12) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The concurrent resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 12

Whereas in 2009, the United States honored the 200th anniversary of the birth of President Abraham Lincoln;

Whereas on July 4, 1861, President Lincoln stated in a message to Congress that a principal aim of the United States Government should be "to elevate the condition of men—to lift artificial weights from all shoulders—to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all—to afford all, an unfettered start, and a fair chance, in the race of life";

Whereas on April 8, 1864, President Lincoln signed into law the legislation (Act of April 8, 1864, ch. 52, 13 Stat. 45) authorizing the conferring of collegiate degrees by the Columbia Institution for Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind, which is now called Gallaudet University;

Whereas that law led for the first time in history to higher education for deaf students in an environment designed to meet their communication needs;

Whereas Gallaudet University was the first, and is still the only, institution in the world that focuses on educational programs for deaf and hard-of-hearing students from the pre-school through the doctoral level;

Whereas Gallaudet University has been a world leader in the fields of education and research for more than a century; and

Whereas since 1869, graduates of Gallaudet University have pursued distinguished careers of leadership in the United States and throughout the world; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) congratulates and honors Gallaudet University on the 145th anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln's signing of the legislation authorizing the establishment of collegiate programs at Gallaudet University; and

(2) congratulates Gallaudet University for 145 years of unique and exceptional service to the deaf people of the United States and the world deaf community.

NATIONAL CEREBRAL PALSY AWARENESS DAY

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 83, which was submitted earlier today.

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

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 83) designating March 25, 2009, as National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day.

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

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition today to submit a resolution to designate March 25, 2009, as National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day.

Cerebral palsy is a group of chronic, neurological disorders that appear in

infancy or early childhood and permanently affect body movement and muscle coordination necessary to maintain balance and posture. Cerebral palsy is caused by damage to one or more specific areas of the brain, usually occurring during fetal development; before, during or shortly after birth; or during infancy. The top two risk factors for the disorders are premature births and multiple births, and despite the introductions of modern prenatal testing, improved obstetric care, and newborn intensive care technologies, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, estimates that every year 10,000 babies born in the United States will develop cerebral palsy. These disorders are not caused by problems in the muscles or nerves but, instead, damage to motor areas in the brain.

Cerebral palsy currently affects children at a rate of 1 in 278 and an estimated 800,000 Americans. The majority of children who have cerebral palsy are born with it, rather than developing the disorder over time; however, it may not be detected for months or years. Over 75 percent of individuals with cerebral palsy also have one or more additional developmental disability including epilepsy, intellectual disability, autism and visual impairments or blindness. The disorders are not progressive and are noncommunicable.

Currently, there is no cure for cerebral palsy. There are treatments, however, which can serve to alleviate some of the symptoms. Treatments now include physical and occupational therapy; speech therapy; drugs to control seizures, relax muscle spasms, and alleviate pain; surgery to correct anatomical abnormalities or release tight muscles; braces and other orthotic devices; wheelchairs and rolling walkers; and communication aids such as computers with attached voice synthesizers.

It is essential that more research be conducted on ways in which to prevent and treat cerebral palsy. As chairman and ranking member of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee, I led the effort to successfully double funding for the National Institutes of Health, NIH. Funding for the NIH has increased from \$11.3 billion in fiscal year 1995 to \$30 billion in fiscal year 2009. In addition, I cosponsored an amendment to H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to provide an additional \$10 billion to the NIH. In 2008, the NIH provided \$28 million for cerebral palsy research, which is a \$16.5 million increase over 2000, when the NIH provided \$11.5 million. The Department of Health and Human Services' "Healthy People 2010" report identified cerebral palsy as one of the important public health conditions to be monitored, and the CDC regularly conducts studies on the prevalence of cerebral palsy across the nation. This report will help the CDC to provide a more comprehensive picture of cerebral palsy and advance efforts to provide better services for these children.