

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

BUSINESS MEETING

Thursday, March 27, 2025

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:05 a.m., in S-116, The Capitol, Hon. James E. Risch, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Risch, Ricketts, McCormick, Daines, Hagerty, Barrasso, Lee, Paul, Scott, Curtis, Cornyn, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Booker, Schatz, Van Hollen, and Rosen.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH, U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO

The Chairman: The business meeting will come to order.

First of all, this is our first legislative markup for the Congress, and I am pleased we are able to come together to consider a robust slate of legislation in addition to three critical nominations. There has been a request for a holdover on Mr. Johnson to be Ambassador of Mexico, so we will hold that one until the next regular meeting, which will be next Wednesday. And I am -- obviously the request for holdovers are not part of the rules, or the procedure we have used by the comity rule, I guess, and I am going to allow that for this one. Obviously, that doesn't hold it up. If we get future ones where it is for the whole -- the entire agenda to be held over, I am not going to get along with that in the future, but we will take that up one at a time as we get there.

So on the nominations, we will have Pete Hoekstra for Canada and George Glass for Japan, and I know Secretary Rubio is anxious to get these incredibly important ones on

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

the agenda. I have also had a request from Mike Huckabee to be added to the meeting. He has completed all his paperwork and got his questions in, and so I am going to ask unanimous consent that we put him on today's agenda. I understand that there is going to be an objection, and I appreciate that and I understand that, but anyway, I am going to ask you unanimous consent that we add Mr. Huckabee to the agenda.

Senator Shaheen: I will object to that, Mr. Chairman, not -- as you know, at the hearing, there were a lot of questions about Governor Huckabee's positions, and there is a lot of interest in that embassy post to start with, and I think moving him up without any advance notice to the committee is not a fair approach. I appreciate the effort to try and move nominees, and we are trying to do everything we can to help clear them, but this is one that I just -- I don't think we have given people adequate time to look at Governor Huckabee.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator. I appreciate that, and I will so note. Also, I am pleased we will be considering a few pieces of legislation. The first of these is the BUST FENTANYL Act, which would crack down on the import of deadly fentanyl and its precursors flowing from China to Mexico and across our borders. Senator Shaheen and I have joined in this effort. Both of our States and indeed every State have suffered greatly under the scourge of fentanyl. This bill will leverage the economic might of the United States against these criminals in China and make them think twice before exporting drugs and harming communities.

We will consider two bipartisan resolutions, which apparently have really upset the Chinese Communist Party. and, of course, that means we are probably doing the right thing. The first affirms that the One China policy in the United States, similar policies of

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

our partners, is not equivalent to the One China Principle pushes. The second resolution condemns the Chinese Government for its destruction of Hong Kong's autonomy under 2020 National Security Law and the 2024 Article 23 ordinance. Finally, another issue that the Ranking Member and I both care a great deal about is the ongoing political crisis in Georgia. I am glad we are able -- finally able to consider the MEGOBARI Bill which will give the U.S. tools to promote stability in Europe and help Georgians restore fairness to their political system. Beyond these, there are several other pieces of legislation being considered, including a number of amendments from Committee members. Thank you all for your efforts. With that, Senator Shaheen.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNE SHAHEEN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to all of the Committee members who are here. I think, and I know the Committee believes this, that it is in our national interest to approach American foreign policy in a bipartisan way, and I think Senator Risch and I are both committed to this in a way that is important as we look at the work of the Committee. I think today's agenda reflects those priorities. As Senator Risch said, it includes the MEGOBARI Act, which supports the Georgian people as their government abandons integration with Europe. We are considering the resolution condemning Beijing's crackdown on human rights in Hong Kong.

A key part of exposing China's influence in the region has been the work of Radio Free Asia. We heard yesterday at the hearing about the importance of Voice of America and Radio Free Asia and what is happening in the Indo-Pacific. That is why I am deeply concerned by the administration's attack on the U.S. Agency for Global Media, which oversees Radio Free Europe, and I hope we can work together on this Committee on a

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

bipartisan basis to stop efforts to dismantle what I think is one of our critical defenses against foreign disinformation.

We are also considering the FENTANYL BUST Act. This is a bill that addresses what has been a critical issue in New Hampshire: the flow of fentanyl precursor chemicals from China. And also, we are taking up the bipartisan resolution recognizing International Women's Day, which reflects the same spirit as the Women, Peace, and Security Act, which was signed into law by President Trump during his first term. I appreciate the support from the Committee on this legislation, which we have worked on for a number of years.

Going forward, Senator Risch and I, I think, are committed to putting on the agenda bills that have agreement regardless of whether they are Democrat-led or Republican-led, that we are going to try and judge bills on their substance. I am encouraged by that and by all of the bipartisan work that has been done on these bills that we are considering today.

That goes for nominees. One of the issues that Senator Risch and I have talked about and are -- I am hoping we can work to try and move career nominees so that we can put our ambassadors on the ground as quickly as possible. Our career Foreign Service Officers are public servants. They are the backbone of the American diplomatic corps, and the sooner we can get people on the ground, the better the benefit for America's interests abroad. So I know that Senator Risch has committed to working with me on that, and I look forward to the discussion in today's business meeting on the bills that are before us. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Shaheen, and as far as career nominees, I could not agree with you more. You and I were both governors, and I think we are both committed to the proposition that you cannot govern unless you have your representatives in place, and that is certainly something we want to do. We have discussed that. We are going to continue to discuss it. Obviously, the White House has priorities that I discuss with them all the time, but the Committee has priorities, too, and we are going to -- we are going to continue to try to move them.

So let's start out with the nominations. We have the holdover request on Johnson, so he will be on the calendar next Wednesday, April 2. I would consider a -- I would consider a motion to move Steve Hoekstra and George Glass.

Senator Hagerty: So moved.

The Chairman: This motion has been made.

Voices: Second.

The Chairman: The motion has been made and seconded. Any debate on the nominations?

Senator Schatz: Chairman, this is not specific to the nominees, but I am just going to say this once just regarding, I have a blanket hold on nominees because of what is happening to USAID, and I want to be clear about why. Lindsey and I are Chair and Ranker of the State Foreign Ops Subcommittee on Approps that puts together the budget for foreign aid, foreign assistance, and then the USAID budget. There is pretty broad bipartisan, not total, but pretty broad bipartisan consensus in favor of saving the enterprise. There is also a broad bipartisan consensus in favor of reforming the enterprise.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

My complaint is twofold. One is, what is happening is just flatly unlawful. The other is that we are -- as we reform -- a lot of you are former chief executives. As we reform the enterprise, we are trashing it, and we may not be able to reconstitute it in any meaningful way anytime soon, and that is harming our immediate foreign policy interests. So I really appreciate the bipartisan support to try to wrangle this, but neither the Appropriations Committee nor the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has been able to talk with Marco Rubio.

A lot of us are texting and calling with him, but we deserve a conversation with the Secretary of State about what kinds of reforms we are going to collectively institute. And I just want you to do the thought experiment of a Democratic President doing whatever the hell they want with an enacted law and not talking to us, and sending a relatively low-level middle manager, progressive ideologue, to do whatever the hell he wants, and then deliver us 10,000 line items and say it is a searchable PDF, you can figure out what is going on. And so to maintain the power of this Committee and the power of the Article I branch, we need Marco Rubio here. He is a colleague, he is a friend, he agrees with us, and if we are going to land this airplane without absolutely catastrophic human and foreign policy consequences, we have to continue to work in a bipartisan manner. That is all for now.

The Chairman: Thank you, sir. Your blanket hold is on the floor, on the nominations. Is that right?

Senator Schatz: Yes.

The Chairman: Okay. Thank you very much. Senator Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: I would like to speak to both of these nominees, who I intend to support. I think I have grave concerns about the President's continued attacks on

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

Canada. Like Idaho, New Hampshire borders Canada. We have the highest percentage of Canadian Americans as constituents in my State, and people are deeply troubled by a decline in the relationship with Canada. Now, I was reassured and -- both in public and private that Ambassador Hoekstra has said the right things, that he will respect Canada's sovereignty. He has underscored the importance of improving people-to-people ties. Despite the declining U.S. popularity, he said he wants to work cooperatively with the Canadian Government, so I am certainly -- I am willing to give him the benefit of the doubt, knowing that he heard loud and clear from our Committee the concerns we have about the declining relationship with Canada.

With respect to George Glass, our alliance with Japan is critical for our national security. We heard again yesterday in the Indo-Pacific hearing just how important Japan is, and as we look at the heightened tensions in the region, it is important for us to have an ambassador on the ground. Mr. Glass, I thought, indicated that he understands the importance of strengthening our security partnership, so I do intend to support him as well.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator. Is there objection to considering the two en bloc?

Senator Coons: Could we have separate roll call votes, please?

The Chairman: Separate roll call votes on each of them?

Senator Coons: Yes.

The Chairman: Okay. First question is on Peter Hoekstra. The clerk will call the roll.

Voice: Sir, there are a couple of members outside.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Chairman: I guess that means we don't have the numbers. Is what you are telling me?

Voice: Very, very close, sir. Too close for my comfort.

[Laughter.]

The Chairman: All right.

Voice. Glass half full [inaudible].

[Laughter.]

Senator Shaheen: Well, we have 15. That is -- is that not --

The Chairman: Well, I --

Senator Shaheen: We have a quorum.

The Chairman: Come on in.

Voice: We need you.

The Chairman: We need you, John.

Voice: Senator Scott will back in just a minute.

The Clerk: We are good. We are good.

The Chairman: All right. The clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

Senator Lee: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: Aye.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Booker: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Schatz: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Van Hollen: No.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Chairman: Senator Scott is recorded as voting aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chair, the ayes are 14. The noes are 8.

The Chairman: The motion is passed. The nominations will be referred to the full Senate.

We now have the Honorable George Glass to be Ambassador to Japan. Is there a motion?

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

Senator Shaheen: So move.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Chairman: Moved by Senator Shaheen. Second by Senator Ricketts, and is there debate?

[No response.]

The Chairman: If there is no debate, the clerk will call roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

Senator Lee: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Booker: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Schatz: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Van Hollen: No.

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: Aye.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the ayes are 17, and the noes are 5.

The Chairman: The motion is passed. The nomination will be reported to the full Senate.

We are going to move now to the business meeting, the portion that refers to and includes the pieces of legislation we have in front of us. I have six en bloc pieces of legislation, which I believe we have agreed we can handle en bloc. They are -- Senator Shaheen and I have worked these over -- Senate Res. 86, Senate Res. 106, Senate 821, Senate 8555, Senate 842, and Senate Res. 52. Is there any discussion of any of those six items?

Senator Paul: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Yes?

Senator Paul: Eighty-six was part of this?

Senator Shaheen: Yeah.

The Chairman: Number 86 is, yes, part of this.

Senator Paul: I would just like to be reported in opposition to this. I think that inflammatory language towards China doesn't help Taiwan. It actually makes it more likely that there will be a -- eventually military force against Taiwan. I think it is better to use different language rather continue to inflame the situation, so I will vote no. I have remarks I would like to submit for the record.

The Chairman: Those will be submitted and included in the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. RAND PAUL, U.S. SENATOR FROM KENTUCKY

Statement in opposition to S. Res. 86, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 (XXVI) and the harmful conflation of China's "One China Principle" and the United States' "One China Policy."

I oppose this resolution as it unnecessarily inflames relations with the People's Republic of China over the sensitive issue of Taiwan, with no tangible benefit to U.S. interests or Taiwan.

We all understand Taiwan's precarious predicament. However, as is often the case in Congress these days, this legislation will not promote a peaceful cross-strait resolution, nor will it deter Chinese aggression, rather it will needlessly stoke further suspicion in Beijing that Washington seeks to interfere in regional Asian affairs.

Such suspicion is liable to enflame the nationalist passions in China that may precipitate an effort to conquer Taiwan by force. If we value Taiwan as a partner, the last thing the United States should do is further degrade China-Taiwan relations with symbolic acts of defiance.

If we seek to make China less aggressive toward Taiwan, perhaps Washington should try to engage in meaningful diplomacy with Beijing. True diplomacy is transactional in nature. To get something, one must give something.

But instead, Congress seems hell bent on doubling down. Congress doubles down on punitive measures, like sanctions, and Congress continues to double down when it comes to our hostile rhetoric against China.

I abhor communism and detest the authoritarian nature of the CCP. But as policymakers, we have a responsibility to contend with reality and pursue policies that make our country, the United States, more secure and prosperous.

The path we have been on over the last decade has done the exact opposite. And simmering tensions between the United States and China have certainly not benefited Taiwan's security and prosperity either. Taiwan benefits from improved U.S.-China relations.

Unfortunately, the steady deterioration of our bilateral relationship with China suggest that our current stick-first approach is not working. I therefore oppose this resolution and urge my colleagues to oppose it too.

The Chairman: Is there any other discussion?

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

[No response.]

The Chairman: If not, is there any objection to having an en bloc vote with a recorded vote for you, Senator Paul, and anyone else who wants to be recorded on any of these individuals? Is there any objection to that?

[No response.]

The Chairman: If not, is there a motion to approve the six pieces --

Voice: So moved.

The Chairman: It has been moved --

Voice: Second.

The Chairman: -- seconded that these six pieces of legislation be reported out from the Committee affirmatively.

All those in favor, signify by saying ayes.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The Chairman: Opposed, nay?

[No response.]

Senator Paul will be recorded as no on Senate Res. 86. Are there any other people who want to be recorded on any of these?

[No response.]

The Chairman: If not, that will take care of that. We are going to move to Senate Bill 860, the BUST FENTANYL Act, and we will now consider that. Is there discussion? Senator Murphy.

Senator Murphy: Mr. Chairman, I have two amendments, and I call up First Degree Murphy Number 1 right now. We are -- we are engaged in a pretty unprecedented

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

assault on Congress' spending authority, and that should be particularly relevant to this Committee because we spend an awful lot of time working with the Appropriations Committee to make sure that we are authorizing and appropriating programs that protect this Nation. That is a broader conversation, but with respect to this specific work, I think important, commendable work that the Committee is doing to combat fentanyl trade, the President recently noticed that he is going to suspend, impound illegally about \$2.5 billion of money that was authorized by Congress for foreign policy and national security purposes. That was part of the 2023 national security supplemental, and included in that impoundment is \$115 million for counter fentanyl operations. And so we are passing a bill that is supposed to support the administration's work to combat fentanyl, and at the same time, the President is telling us that he is going to ignore a congressional appropriation to help combat fentanyl trading in the United States.

So this amendment is just pretty simple. Again, I hope it is one that we can all get behind. It is just a sense of Congress that says the executive branch is required to spend funds appropriated by Congress to counter fentanyl production and distribution. This amendment doesn't cover the breadth of the seizure of spending power. It just says on this narrow issue, if we have appropriated dollars to counter fentanyl coming into this country illegally, the President is obligated under law to spend that money, and I hope that we can get a bipartisan vote for this amendment.

Senator Shaheen: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Senator Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: I would just like to add to that the report that we got this morning about the cuts to health programs, including recovery programs for substance

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

misuse, that is going to have a huge impact in New Hampshire. And we are hearing that it is not just programmatic funds going forward, but for entities that have already spent money, they are not going to be reimbursed for what they have spent. I think, again, as you said, Senator Murphy, it is an egregious override of what Congress has already decided, and it is important to let the administration know that we don't support that.

The Chairman: Well, I am going to oppose the amendment. I think, really, we have a good bipartisan bill here. This brings in the political fight that is going on over the presidential power. That is in court right now. That is going to be decided by authorities beyond our reach, so I would like to keep this clean and keep this out of there, keep it away from a political issue, which this is, so I am going to oppose it. Is there further discussion?

[No response.]

The Chairman: If not, we will have a vote on --

Senator Daines: Mr. Chairman, I want --

The Chairman: Senator Daines.

Senator Daines: -- I want to call up my amendment --

The Chairman: Well, wait. Let us vote on this.

Senator Daines: On the amendment first? Okay.

The Chairman: Let us vote --

Senator Murphy: I would ask for a roll call.

Senator Van Hollen: If I -- if I could just speak to this after your comments, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman: Yes. Senator Van Hollen?

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

Senator Van Hollen: It seems to me that this not just an Article III court issue.

This a question for Article I powers, whether we mean what we say when we pass legislation, including appropriations directed for this purpose. So with respect to boot this and say it is nobody else's, it is not our problem, it is somebody else's, I strongly disagree on, and I hope we can support the amendment.

The Chairman: Well, I think -- I think it is not somebody else's problem. It is all of our problem. What those powers are, are going to be greatly defined by courts, I think, in the near future. But to put this in here, this puts us head to head on a bill that we really have a bipartisan agreement on, so I --

Senator Van Hollen: Right.

The Chairman: I am going to vote against it. I guess everybody can vote their conscience. Thank you, Senator. I appreciate that. Is there -- is there any further discussion?

[No response.]

Senator Murphy: I ask for a roll call vote.

The Chairman: A roll call vote has been requested. The question is, shall Murphy 1 be adopted, and the clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: No.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: No.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

The Chairman: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

Senator Lee: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

The Chairman: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Pardon?

The Chairman: Mr. Curtis.

Voice: On the Murphy Amendment, how do you want to vote?

Senator Curtis: No.

The Chairman: That is a very good vote.

[Laughter.]

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: No.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Booker: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Schatz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Van Hollen: Aye.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 10, and the noes are 12.

The Chairman: The amendment is not adopted.

Senator Murphy, you have another minute you wanted to call up?

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

Senator Murphy: I do, unless Senator Daines wants to --

Senator Daines: Well, if you want to --

Senator Murphy: Yeah, dispense with mine.

Senator Daines: Go ahead, Chris. I will follow you.

Senator Murphy: I am going to call up Murphy First Degree Number 6. So this is another attempt to get at the heart of a very legitimate and important dispute between the Article I branch and the Article II branch. The President has declared a national emergency that gives him an ability to impose tariffs on partner nations, including Canada. And the explicit reason that the President gave for using emergency tariff authority against Canada is the fentanyl trade -- the illegal fentanyl trade between the United States and Canada. That was surprising to many of us. We think there is a massive problem of illegal fentanyl trade, but it has been regularly reported to us that the amount of fentanyl coming in from Canada to the United States is less than 1 percent of the overall total. It did not sound like a legitimate reason to impose an emergency authority, and I think we have to jealously guard the ways in which we grant the President emergency authorities.

So this amendment does not cancel out the President's emergency declaration. It just requires that the Department of Justice and Homeland Security report to us if the percentage of fentanyl entering the United States from Canada ever exceeds 1 percent. So that sounds like it would get into the category of something we might think about as an emergency, but if it is not 1 percent, that doesn't sound like a legitimate exercise of emergency power. So this simply is a requirement that we be apprised of whether or not

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

the amount of fentanyl coming into the United States from Canada is ever exceeding 1 percent.

The Chairman: I am going to oppose the -- did you want to speak to this?

Senator Shaheen: I do.

The Chairman: Go ahead, Senator Shaheen.

Senator Shaheen: I intend to support this amendment, first of all, because, as I indicated earlier when I talked about the nominee to be Ambassador to Canada, New Hampshire has a significant interest in Canada, both in terms of trade and familial ties and all kinds of things. And the reality is, last year, more drugs were interdicted from the U.S. going into Canada than from Canada coming into the United States. And while I agree that any percent of fentanyl is bad for our country, I think this -- we need to hold the administration accountable for what they are saying and when they are talking about deteriorating the relationship with one of our best neighbors and friends.

And I would also like to point out that I had a problem with the Department of Homeland Security in the last administration because they are not willing to share with us what is going on. It took us over a year to get numbers of people coming across the border who were being interdicted by CBP because they refuse to share that information. So I think holding Homeland Security accountable is also very helpful, so I intend to support the amendment.

Senator Kaine: Mr. Chairman, if I could --

The Chairman: Senator --

Senator Kaine: -- if I could also speak in favor of this. This is a really great Committee. It is one of the original committees in the Senate, and there is a reason when

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

heads of state come to Washington, they don't just visit with the President. They come to see us. Our ally, Canada, now feels like they are under rhetorical and economic and diplomatic attack by the United States, and that it might even be more, and there is no pushback to it. What they are hearing from a President who talks about Canada as the 51st State or talks about Governor Trudeau is insulting. It is -- it is no way to treat our number one trading partner. It is no way to treat an ally.

I think many of us hear those words of President Trump's and we think it is a negotiation attacker, it is kind of comical, or, you know, he has a sundown moment or something like that. That is not the way that they hear it. They have been with us in every war since the War of 1812. They are the biggest trading partner for my State and most of ours, and I think they may be number one nationally. That is not the way they are hearing this rhetoric. They are hearing the rhetoric to suggest that their longtime friend and neighbor is suddenly turning on them.

We have gravitas on this committee. What we say matters, and there needs to be some pushback against the irresponsible treatment of our ally. This is a small amendment, but it is exercising the kind of pushback that a Committee of this gravity should engage in, and so I strongly support what my colleague is trying to do here.

Senator Coons: Mr. Chairman, whether it is this amendment, which calls for a report or a resolution or a bill, we should do more to push back on the delusional assertion that we have a crisis at the border of fentanyl coming into the United States from Canada, and I just -- I will support this amendment. I think of all these amendments offered, this is one of the clearest and most urgent, and I just want to second what Senator Kaine said. I have met with groups of Canadians every week, and they cannot

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

understand what is happening to U.S.-Canada relations, and I think we are souring -- for Canadians to boo the American Anthem is a -- we do it in Philadelphia. We boo our own teams all the time.

[Laughter.]

Senator Coons: We did not even notice, but in Canada, they are incredibly polite and gracious and reliable, and good neighbors and partners, and what is happening now is risking that relationship. So I will support this amendment.

The Chairman: Thank you. I am going to oppose this amendment. First of all, I understand the frustration of my colleagues, and I have no doubt that you will take that frustration to the floor in your speeches and perhaps even for -- to produce a resolution. But what you are going to do is you are going to introduce politics into what is a really, really good bill that Senator Shaheen and I have worked on. It is a bipartisan bill, and if you do that, then what we wind up is getting a bipartisan -- or we get a partisan vote on the bill. We need to leave this as it is to confront fentanyl. As far as our relationship with Canada, I get the frustration, I get the concern, but this is not the right place for it. So I am going to vote nay.

Senator Schatz: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Senator Schatz.

Senator Schatz: I don't want to belabor this, but --

The Chairman: But you will.

[Laughter.]

The Chairman: Feel free.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

Senator Schatz: But I just want to push back a little bit respectfully, Chairman.

Asking for a report about the extent to which fentanyl coming over the border is a problem, that is now a partisan question, but we cannot even get information from our own executive agencies about the -- to get fidelity on what is dangerous and what is not on what part of our American border? Like, I don't accept the premise that what Chris Murphy is asking for is in any way partisan. We are just trying to literally get the data, and if we decide that three-quarters of 1 percent is sufficient to justify emergency, or if the number is 7 percent, and, therefore, Chris has egg on his face, like since when did gathering data in order to support our decision-making become partisan?

And I just -- I worry, to Tim's point, that we cannot exercise any independent thinking, even just to gather more information for fear that that is now a partisan question. Gathering information is not partisan. That is the August history of this particular committee, and I am -- I am honestly scared that we have -- we like each other a lot, but we have not figured out even the smallest area to work together.

The Chairman: Thank --

Senator Paul: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a comment.

The Chairman: Senator Paul.

Senator Paul: You know, I think it is a great debate because, really, what we are talking about is not just the report. We are talking about whether or not we should have a country ruled by emergency, and, you know, rule by emergency should be extraordinary. We got to define what emergencies are. The other thing is, is that through emergencies, we are giving up something very foundational to the republic, and that was the taxes originated in Congress and originated in the House, and that a tariff is a tax, and there is

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

no way to call it anything but a tax, but we kind of did through legislation. Both parties for 70 years just kept giving up power.

Fortunately, after World War II, much of the power we gave the executive was used to lower tariff barriers because we thought one person could do it better. That is why we gave that power -- not we -- why some people gave them that power. I would argue that, yeah, I mean, a report to find out whether there is an emergency is very important if we are going to be ruled by emergency. I mean, you know, we may -- I don't like the tariff, but if you do not like the tariff policy, the idea of giving up our -- the congressional prerogative of deciding when taxes occur, I think is such a momentous question, that I am going to vote for the amendment.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator. I am going to oppose the amendment. Again, I come back to the fact that we got a really good bill here. I understand you want to confront the President on his remarks about how much is or is not coming in. I don't disagree with trying to get the information. I don't disagree with trying to get a report. I don't disagree with you guys pushing back on the President. I did it on the last President. But I want to pass this bill as a clean bill, that we don't have a partisan vote on it, and it is not considered a challenge to the President, which it will be if we put this language into it. There is an appropriate place for it. It is not in this bill. I am going to oppose the amendment. Is there further debate?

Senator Booker: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Yes, Senator Booker.

Senator Booker: I just think there is a larger theme going on, and I know it is not this, and I actually respect when you have a good bill and wanting to get through in a

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

bipartisan manner. You know, I am -- I am a history nerd like everybody around this table, and if you look at the incredible jobs that this Committee has done in the past, and you can go back to Henry Cabot Lodge or Arthur Vandenberg, these are folks that stood up for the powers to Article I branch, even checking the President of the United States of their own party. I have heard complaints around this table, depending on who is President, about a trend that we are seeing, which is a concentration of more and more power in the executive, and these aren't political issues. I think these are really, really substantive ones. Perhaps the best time that I saw this Committee come together and have a real debate about this concentration of power was over the AUMF and the challenges we saw with a President conducting operations that used to have to come to the Article I branch.

And so I am very frustrated because I saw this, as you just said, that frustrations you had with the previous President, but the trend line is the same. If anything, it is on steroids now. And so this is maybe not the bill to try to have this conversation, but the diminishment of this Committee and the history that we stand on, I think, demands for us to be doing something to assert the powers when you have a President that is taking down bipartisan efforts to do things that we all know are urgently necessary for our national security. It is just stunning to me that we are allowing this to happen and just rolling over as a Committee.

So I get your understanding of it, but this not a Republican President versus Democratic. From President Obama, his actions, to Trump 1, to Biden, we have all seen Presidents take power from the Article I executive. And there has to be a time that we as a Committee begin to play our role in foreign policy because I know my friends on both sides

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

of the aisle have things we are passionately concerned with that are now being thwarted, undermined, torn down by executive fiat with powers that they don't have. And so I appreciate this, but it is just growing frustration for me, this trend line.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Booker, and I don't disagree with you. We are -- we have seen the -- we have in place right now the most powerful President we have seen in my lifetime, and he is using the power that he believes he has, which confronts the power that our independent branch of government has, and this something that is gone on since George Washington and will go on into the future. I get that, and certainly that creates frustration in people, but my point is I really want to get this bill out of that is a clean, bipartisan bill that doesn't bring in this. This debate is actually --

Senator Rosen: Mr. Chair?

The Chairman: -- a good and long debate to have, but anyway, not this bill.
Senator Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Well, Mr. Chairman, I would just point out that given how well respected you are in your role as Chairman of this Committee, that if you -- if you took the position that this was information that we should have as part of this bill, that I would bet most of your colleagues would support it.

The Chairman: Perhaps. Thank you, Senator. I appreciate the thought. Senator Rosen.

Senator Rosen: You know, I just want to speak to especially what Senator Schatz said, is that data is agnostic. As a former data analyst and computer programmer, data is agnostic. Data tells a story if you are smart enough to listen to it. It informs us and informs our decision-making. We do it in our daily lives personally, we do it here, and it is

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

really important that we use the data, just look at the raw data, and we can figure out where we put resources to this place and not that place, more here, less there, where it goes. It is an instructive tool. It is not a combative tool.

And so I would say that asking for a report to show us all the data about where we might put our resources most effectively to be effective. This is a terrible problem. It is killing people right and left, and so the data is neither Democrat or Republican. It is just going to tell us, and anyone who has been in business, or done these things, or used analysis in a way that we do every day, it just informs us where to best put our resources in order to combat whatever the problem set is that we are trying to solve. So I don't think it is controversial. It is not a Democrat or Republican issue. It is just about allowing the data to help us position our resources in the best way, which is what we all want, and I don't see it as a Democrat or Republican issue, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Rosen. Senator Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Yeah, I want to -- just certainly appreciate the comments that our colleagues here have made with regard to their frustrations or how they view the exercise of the executive branch. At the end of the day, though, if you do pass this amendment, it will be seen as political, and the bill is going to die. There are -- many of my colleagues who will not vote for it because it looks like it is a challenge to the President. So the question you have to ask yourself is if you want the day, you are not going to get it if you attach this amendment because the bill is not going to go anywhere. So do you want to have a good clean bill, as the chairman has expressed, that has a chance to pass on the floor, or do you want to attach this and have the whole thing go down to make a statement to the President? I think that is what it kind of boils down to.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

Senator Shaheen: It doesn't mention the President, though.

The Chairman: It doesn't need to.

Senator Ricketts: It will be seen as a direct act on the President. That is the political side of it. And you all may not agree on your side of the aisle, but there is certainly going to be colleagues on my side of the aisle who will see it that way.

The Chairman: Senator McCormick goes next.

Senator McCormick: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. So I am going to support you, what you are saying in terms of this amendment, but, you know, I campaigned on fentanyl. I talk to the Border Patrol. I know that the numbers were growing on the Canadian border, but I want to know the answer to this question, and I think it is a reasonable thing for us to know. But I think the most important thing is to have a bipartisan bill that we can support, and I trust your judgment on that better. But I do think this is a question I would like to be able to work with you on and others around this table to get the answers to, but not through this amendment.

Senator Daines: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Senator Murphy, did you have --

Senator Murphy: No. Listen, I appreciate Senator Rickett's comments, but, man, that is a real indictment of the power of this Committee if we cannot move any legislation or any amendment that has any whiff or suggestion of opposition to the President's agenda. We are an independent arm of the people. We are not bound and no party is bound to agree with everything that is proffered by the President of their party. You can make a critique, and probably a valid one, that when a Democratic President was in power, our party was too fast to rush to his defense, but when it mattered on some pretty

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

important matters of national security, there was not total, complete deference, on arms trade and arm sales, for instance. So I hope that that is not the rule for this Committee, that any time any amendment has a hint of being oppositional nature to the policy of the executive, that it is, by definition, an illegitimate exercise of this Committee's power.

Senator Van Hollen: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: I think Senator Daines was next.

Senator Daines: Yeah. I think there is four of us on the Republican side that are Northern border States, at least I am now looking around at my colleagues, including the Chairman. I know Senator McCormick as well. I am a Northern border State, and I think we could still achieve the outcome of getting the data without clouding this bill, and perhaps there is a way we could write a joint letter and make this request because I would like to see the data. So perhaps we could join together in a bipartisan way. We deserve to get this data. Let's write a joint letter together, the Northern Border States Caucus here on the Foreign Relations Committee, and ask for it. So just a thought.

Voice: Mr. Chairman.

Senator Shaheen: I am happy so sign on to that kind of letter.

Senator Van Hollen: I think we would all like to get the data -- on getting the data, but I would like to speak to a larger point here because the argument was made that anything in this bill that has any whiff of being opposed by President Trump will mean it cannot go forward. That was it, and I just -- I do with my colleagues want to recall the history of this Committee. I mean, I remember many examples, but I remember one in 1980 when the Senate -- United States Senate passed sanctions against the apartheid regime of South Africa. You know who was Chairman of the Committee at the time?

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

Senator Lugar, a Republican. You know who strongly opposed it? President Reagan. President Reagan opposed it so much, he vetoed the bill that passed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the Senate and the House, and you know who led the override of the veto? Senator Lugar, Republican Chairman of the Committee.

So if we have descended the point where we cannot pass a piece of legislation because the President of the United States, somehow it will be seen as a -- to offend him, we have really sunk to great depths. I always speak about Senator Lugar in that moment. It was a great moment for the Committee in a bipartisan way, and this Committee is just a shadow of it if our new test is going to be something we pass is -- offends the President of the United States or is perceived to.

The Chairman: Further comment? If not --

Senator Hagerty: I just add one point.

The Chairman: Okay. I am sorry.

Senator Hagerty: Mr. Chairman, I have spoken with the Canadian Ambassador about this very issue. She has got the data. We can call her.

The Chairman: All right. If there is no further debate, the clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: No.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

Senator Hagerty: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

Senator Lee: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Yes.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

The Chairman: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

The Chairman: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: No.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: Aye.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Booker: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Schatz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Van Hollen: Aye.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 11. The noes are 11.

The Chairman: The --

Senator Cornyn: Mr. Chairman, may I ask a question?

The Chairman: Yes.

Senator Cornyn: Has everybody voted on the floor?

The Chairman: No, nobody has voted.

Senator Cornyn: Okay. I did not want to be the last one.

The Chairman: Do not worry.

Senator Cornyn: We have the Whip here.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Chairman: They got -- they go to vote for us.

Voice: The Whip voted.

Voice: I called the cloakroom. I told them you are all here.

The Chairman: All right. Thank you. The amendment has failed.

Senator Cornyn: I got burned once.

The Chairman: You want to vote on the bill, Senate Bill 860? Is there a motion to send it to the floor? Senator Daines, did you have an amendment?

Senator Daines: I did, yeah. Yeah.

The Chairman: All right. Go ahead.

Senator Daines: So I will make it quick. So we will go quickly because I am going to call this up and withdraw it. This is my amendment on the U.S. Treasury beneficial ownership information I have worked with Senator Van Hollen on.

Look, the current status quo tools to combat illicit finance are not working. They are not doing their job. And for those of you who have worked in the private sector, nobody wants to be on the front page of the Wall Street Journal or New York Times. Nobody wants to end up like Lloyd's or Santander Bank of England finding out they have unintentionally been facilitating Iranian illicit finance schemes. A small thing to do in this situation would be to allow financial institutions access to the Treasury beneficial ownership information. I will cut to the chase and just say I want to thank Senator Van Hollen for your support last Congress and look forward to working with everyone on passage this Congress. Thank you.

The Chairman: And you are withdrawing the amendment?

Senator Daines: I am.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Chairman: All right. We are down to the bill.

Senator Van Hollen: Mr. Chairman, very briefly. I want to thank Senator Daines for his work on this. I would point out that as we speak, as you probably know, the Treasury Department has rolled back some of the rules that were put in place, based on our legislation, regarding beneficial ownership, and in my view, what they have done is opened the door more widely to abuse in the system, but I look forward to continuing to work with the Senator.

The Chairman: Okay. Thank you, Senator. The question is on Senate Bill 860.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Chairman: Opposed, nay?

[No response.]

The Chairman: The ayes have it. Senate Bill 860 will be reported to the floor.

I really -- Senator Shaheen has been working a long time on this Georgia bill, and I would really like to get to it. There is a vote going on I understand, but Senator Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you Mr. Chairman, and thank you for working with me. You and I were in Georgia in 2012 when Georgian Dream took over. We were election observers, and we saw that that was a free and fair election. We had high hopes that Georgia would be able to continue the transition of power peacefully and continue their democracy, and what we have seen, sadly, is a deterioration in that democracy as the Georgian Dream has become more and more autocratic and had more and more influence from the Russian Government.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

The people of Georgia have been protesting that government's unconstitutional behavior now for over a hundred days. Despite the interest on the part of the public for Europe and joining the EU, the government continues to try and move them away from that. It continues to crack down in ways that include beatings and arrests of protestors -- innocent protestors, and so I think this a really strong message to them that we are paying attention, and we are interested in supporting their move to protect their democracy. They had -- interestingly enough, they had a protest several days ago that -- where they held posters that said Support the MEGOBARI Act. So they are paying attention to what we do, and I appreciate, Senator Risch, your work -- our working together to get this done.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Shaheen: I hope people will support it.

The Chairman: Appreciate it. Other amendments? There are no amendments?

Senator Paul: Just a question. This is on the Georgia bill? I have an amendment to it.

The Chairman: Okay. Who wants to go first?

Senator Paul: You can go.

Senator Lee: Okay. I would like to call the first degree. I'll be brief. The amendment would delay the effective date of the bill until we can get submission of a report from the Secretary of State identifying what the U.S. national interests are in Georgia, including whether Georgia's zero integration for NATO membership, or whether, to what extent, in what way those might be essential to securing those interests. U.S. foreign policy really ought be aligned with those interests. It shouldn't be controversial. We seek that alignment, and that is what this amendment would allow us to do.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Chairman: Did you want to speak to this?

Senator Shaheen: Yes. I think we have shown over 30-plus years that we have had an interest in Georgia. The Georgia military fought with us in Afghanistan against the Taliban. They have had aspirations for NATO but have not made the reforms there to allow them to join yet. They continue -- their public -- as I said, continues to be interest in joining the West and the EU and supporting the Transatlantic Alliance. There are lots of other reasons -- business reasons that Georgia is important as we think about the prospects for the future. Their strategic situation on the Black Sea, their ability to serve as a transit for oil and gas coming across is not only important to us, I think it is important to our European allies as well. So I think the importance of Georgia to the United States has been determined a long time ago, been supported by both Democrat and Republican administrations.

Senator Lee: Great.

The Chairman: Senator Lee.

Senator Lee: Yeah, I get that, and my point is we have got a new administration, new Secretary of State. It would be good to get his assessment [inaudible] of this. I would love to get a roll call vote.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Lee. There will be a roll call vote. I am going to reluctantly oppose this. I think Senator Lee is correct in judging what our interests are in this. I am aligned with the proposition that we should support the people in Georgia and what they are trying to do. I don't think, really, the question of whether their NATO accession or their Europe accession are necessarily relevant to this bill. I do want to support the people of Georgia, and that is what Senator Shaheen and I tried to do with

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

this bill. So I am going to reluctantly oppose it, but I do -- I think you are right, Senator Lee, always in determining when we do something like this or something close to this that we decide -- make a decision as to whose side are they on and who is -- who is their friend, but thank you for that. Is there further debate?

[No response.]

The Chairman: There being no further debate, the question is on the -- on the amendment. The Secretary -- or the clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: No.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

The Chairman: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

Senator Lee: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

The Chairman: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Booker: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Schatz: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: No. The clerk will report.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 5. The noes are 17.

The Chairman: The amendment has failed. Senator Paul.

Senator Paul: You know, as we look at this debate, it seems to have some similarities to another debate we have had, which is the last 10 years of debate over Ukraine. They say the definition of "insanity" is trying the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result. So basically, we are going to condemn anybody in Georgia who doesn't want be part of NATO or give [inaudible] the power to sanction those people, and it sounds like even the current government doesn't necessarily agree with the precepts of this bill.

So you have a debate in Georgia going on. You are on one side or the other, and then we are going to involve ourselves in their country and sanction people who disagree with us. We did this in Ukraine starting in 2012. I don't justify anything that Putin has done, but Putin told you one of the main reasons why he went into Ukraine is because they kept stomping their feet -- we kept stomping our feet for putting them in NATO. That is exactly what this is, again, beat your chest and say how great we are and how great NATO is, and, Georgia, are we in? And yet Georgia is this tiny little country on the edge of this larger, more dominant country that they have a have a long history with -- a long history of trading with.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

In the last three years, Georgia hasn't been putting sanctions. They are trying to learn how to live with Russia. It doesn't necessarily mean any of it is good, but is it our business to tell the people in Georgia what they want to do? Part of Georgia is occupied, the same way part of Ukraine is occupied. They have the same/similar problem in that they have Russian-speaking ethnic people there who align more with the Russian country than they do with the -- with the -- those who want Georgia to be in NATO.

So you have all these things going on, and we are going to do exactly the same thing. Does this mean we will be -- you know, we are headed towards that war in Georgia because of everything we want to do to show how imperial we are, that we have this NATO and they have got to be a part of it. I think it is a terrible idea. This bill allows sanctions for anybody who undermines peace. What does that mean? I mean, and what is -- you know, does that mean you protest in the streets in civil disobedience against peace, security, stability? Well, you all may think being in NATO makes it very stable. I think it might make them unstable. It might make it more likely that Russia attacks them if we put them into NATO [inaudible] NATO, but it is a matter of opinion.

You have given the President the power to sanction people who make the -- you know, have policies -- it says policies that undermine stability and sovereignty. It also says policies that undermine territorial integrity. So let's say you live in Georgia. You don't necessarily like Russia, but they are this big neighborhood, this big army, and they occupy part of your country. And let's say you come to the grips that the only way to survive is to make a deal with Russia and Russia remains. Well, that disturbs the territorial integrity. I am not for it. I am not saying it is a good idea. What if you live in Georgia and you come to that realization? The people who vote for this, you are all going

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

to say you are smarter than everybody in Georgia, and then if anybody in Georgia dares to say, damn, Russia is a big country, they are not part of our country, why don't we make a deal with Russia such that they are -- they are going to have some independent parts that are now going to be part of Russia, like they are arguing in Ukraine. Once again, not saying it is right, but if people in Georgia decide that, you are going to overrule them and you are going to tell the President we can sanction people who are willing to give up part of their territory.

None of it is good, and none of it is advisable, and none of it is supportive of Russia, but you are putting yourself into Georgia and telling them what to do, and telling them that the big mighty U.S. will come and sanction you if you don't do what we believe, which is NATO, European Union. That might not be in their best -- their best interest. And really, shouldn't Georgia decide what is in their best interest? Who are we to decide what is in the best interest in Georgia and overrule people who actually live there?

So I think it is a terrible bill, and I will put in an amendment that would replace it all with this statement: It is the policy of the United States to cultivate a bilateral relationship with Georgia based on mutual respect that advances American security and prosperity, and I would like to have a recorded vote.

The Chairman: You would like to have what?

Senator Paul: Excuse me?

The Chairman: What did you say?

Voice: Recorded vote.

Senator Paul: Recorded vote.

The Chairman: Recorded vote. Thank you. Senator Shaheen.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

Senator Shaheen: Well I think what this bill attempts to do is to give the Georgian people the ability to make that decision on their own, which they are not able to do right now because they have a government that refuses to let them do that. They haven't had -- they did not have free and fair elections in the last election, and the government continues to crack down on anyone who speaks out against them. I would say, though, Senator Paul, I would be happy to have, and I would bet the chairman would feel the same way. I would be happy to have you add that statement of policy as part of the bill.

Senator Paul: The problem is, is I don't think that we should be sanctioning anybody in the country just because they disagree with our view of NATO. There are people in Georgia who disagree. Some want to be in NATO, some don't.

Senator Shaheen: Well, the sanctions are --

Senator Paul: Do you think everybody in Georgia wants to be in NATO?

Senator Shaheen: -- about more than just NATO. They are trying to raise concerns about the behavior of the Georgian Dream officials who are now in control, who are rolling back democracy in the country a little bit at a time, and they have been doing this for --

Senator Paul: But you are going to sanction people with policies that undermine stability. You understand how there could be disagreements on whether being in NATO makes it more or less stable? I can be Georgian and say being in NATO makes it much more likely that Russia invades. That is not going to help with stability, and you have the opposite point. They are both valid, and you can argue that, but I would never presume to go into Georgia and tell them if you disagree with my point of view, I am going to put sanctions on you. So I just think it is -- it is invasive, and it doesn't realize the plurality of

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

opinion that there is no monolithic opinion. It may not be best for them to be in NATO, frankly.

Senator Shaheen: Well, and if they have a free and fair democracy, they can make that determination.

The Chairman: I am going to agree with Senator Shaheen on this. With all due respect, Senator Paul, I think you are dead wrong on this. We have been there. We know the people in Georgia. They want to do what they want to do. There is nobody on our side going to stand in the way. If they want to become part of Russia, if that is what they want to do, we are certainly not going to get in their way to do that. But the way they -- the way they have been abused, the people who want to proceed to join NATO or join Europe, is just flat wrong.

And I have to tell you that they as you say, there are people in the country, just as you believe they shouldn't be in the NATO, some of them believe they shouldn't be in NATO. That is not the majority view there, and the way they are being abused, this a good bill, and it stands up for the -- for the people in Georgia. So with that, is there further debate?

[No response.]

The Chairman: There being none, Secretary -- or the clerk call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: No.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

Senator Daines: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

Senator Lee: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: Yes.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

The Chairman: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: No.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye. No. I thought I was voting for the bill.

[Laughter.]

The Chairman: We will get there.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Booker: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 4. The noes are 18.

The Chairman: The amendment has failed, and I will now go to the bill, Senate

868. Is there a motion to put it out?

Senator Shaheen: So move.

Voice: So moved.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Chairman: Seconded. All those in favor, signify by saying ayes.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The Chairman: Opposed, no.

Senator Lee: No.

The Chairman: Senator, did you want to be recorded as no. We will let -- probably Senator Paul wants to be recorded as no.

Senator Lee: I cannot speak for him.

The Chairman: I know. I get that. We will leave that open if he wants to be recorded -- wants to be recorded as no. With that, we got a little bit more to do here, but they are telling me that you and I need to vote, Senator Shaheen.

Senator Shaheen: Okay.

The Chairman: Has everybody else on the Committee voted?

Voices: Yes.

Senator Shaheen: All right.

The Chairman: All right. So you want to try it?

Senator Shaheen: Why do we not take a 5-minute break?

The Chairman: You want to take a break?

Senator Shaheen: Five minutes?

Voice: We will just a 5-minute break?

The Chairman: It will be less than five minutes. We are going to run up.

Senator Shaheen: Well, you are faster up those stairs than I am.

[Recess.]

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Chairman: All right. Let us get back at it. We are going to look at Senate Bill 799, U.S. Gold and Mining Partnership Act, Senator Cornyn and Senator Kaine. We have amendments. Who has an amendment?

Voice: I have got an amendment.

Senator Cornyn: Can I -- can I just what it is?

The Chairman: Yeah, please.

Senator Cornyn: I mean, I don't want to take anybody's time --

The Chairman: No, go ahead.

Senator Booker: I object to him speaking, Mr. Chair.

[Laughter.]

The Chairman: Out order.

Senator Rosen: You are the only person here who doesn't want to take someone's time down.

[Laughter.]

Senator Cornyn: So if we are eager to have a demonstration of bipartisanship, here is a great opportunity. Senator Kaine and I are the principal co-sponsors. Obviously the cartels are -- will do anything they can for money: traffic people, drugs. They will steal energy from pipelines, oil and gas, and they will use -- hijack the seafood business, which is kind of bizarre to me, but obviously harvest or mine -- illegal gold mining is one of the sources of revenue.

So this was a bill that our friend, now Secretary Rubio, had carried, and it basically would give him an opportunity now as Secretary of State to come up with a strategy to

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

combat illegal gold mining in the Western Hemisphere. So I appreciate Senator Kaine working on this and hope that we can support it.

The Chairman: Thank you. Senator Kaine, I assume you are all in.

Senator Kaine: He said it just it --

The Chairman: All right.

Senator Kaine: -- just like I would have.

The Chairman: Before we take up your amendment --

Senator Cornyn: You can say it better than that.

The Chairman: -- Senator Lee, we have a manager's amendment that is agreed to by everyone. Does anybody object to adopting that by unanimous consent?

[No response.]

The Chairman: If not, the amendment will be adopted by unanimous consent.

Senator Lee, you are up.

Senator Lee: Okay. I would like to call up Lee First Degree Amendments 1 and 4, and I will just discuss both of them together. They cover sort of similar things. I have got some concerns with this bill that go back a couple of years, but these two are amendments that together deal with a much narrower concern.

USAID has become an Agency that has become known for some -- from some waste and some abusive uses, and also some uses in waste that quite urgently undercut U.S. interests. And I have been raising those concerns for years, and some of those concerns have now been somewhat indicated by the Trump administration's review of what is going on there. So I would like to see a thorough review undertaken in order to figure out ways in which our foreign aid might have been misused. We have got no business naming

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

USAID as a relevant Agency to combat gold mining problems that we are talking about or anything else [inaudible]. So these amendments simply would remove those references to USAID, rightfully deferring to the State Department the task of managing the strategy and the coordination that is done according to this bill.

The Chairman: So you -- what you are doing, so I understand it, Senator Lee is you are --

Senator Lee: Just taking USAID out of the equation.

The Chairman: You are not changing the substance of the bill. You are just changing who it is that pursues it, USAID --

Senator Lee: Yes, that is correct. "State Department" being replaced with "USAID."

Senator Kaine: Mr. Chair?

The Chairman: Yeah, Senator Kaine.

Senator Kaine: On this, I said that Senator Cornyn and I would speak to this. The operative phrase of this bill, it is directing the administration -- the Trump Administration through the Secretary of State to develop a strategy. Then it lists other agencies that the Secretary is supposed to consult with, including USAID but not specifically USAID. And the Secretary and the President can decide, do they have a minuscule role. Do we just listen to them and they have no role? Do they have a big role? That is purely within the discretion of the Secretary of State.

And we just voted for a CR that every member of this Committee on the Republican side voted for that had funding for USAID, so I know there are some folks who may want to reform it, may want to eliminate it, but we just voted for a bill that funds USAID. And

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

so until -- you know, Brian talked earlier, and others, about working with Lindsey on reformation issues, and I think that is fine, but we have voted for a budget that funds USAID, and to take them out of this and say that if the Trump administration decides here's something that they can do, that is good, no, they cannot do it, why would we tie the hands of the administration? So I definitely oppose this amendment.

The Chairman: Taking it out is not going to affect the actual execution of the action that the bill is --

Senator Kaine: Well, but it basically says they cannot be at the table -- the Secretary of State -- there is just a list of agencies at the table, and --

The Chairman: It says it cannot be at the table or --

Senator Kaine: By taking them out. There is a list of who is at the table with the Secretary. And Mr. Chairman, I just want to quote you because I wrote -- I love these words: "We shouldn't introduce politics into a good bipartisan bill."

[Laughter.]

Senator Kaine: When you said that earlier, I thought, now, that is a darn good phrase.

The Chairman: Let me tell you something. That was then. This is now.

[Laughter.]

The Chairman: All right. Who is up?

Senator Lee: Let me respond very briefly. I get the point. To a very substantial percentage of the American population, there is no more toxic agency in the U.S. Government right now than USAID. Yes, you are exactly right. We just passed a CR. I get it. A bunch of us experienced nausea following other unpleasant symptoms, too

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

unpleasant to mention here, while doing it for that reason. We did it in order to avert a shutdown, and under unique circumstances, we did so reluctantly. I think it is appropriate for removing it. Insofar as your suggestion holds true that they play a minor role, why not take them out at a time when these things still need to be reviewed, and a lot of us have no trust in this Agency, and our constituents do not.

Senator Coons: Mr. Chairman, if I might just briefly for the benefit of the Committee as a whole, USAID has long had a role in countering trafficking -- human trafficking, weapons trafficking, fentanyl trafficking, gold trafficking, wildlife trafficking -- a non-trivial role they have played in this hemisphere, and why it shows up in this bill is combating trafficking. So I will just say when we get to that review of its role, it should be no surprise to members of this Committee that USAID has long played a role countering trafficking.

The Chairman: Senator Cornyn --

Senator Shaheen: Yeah.

The Chairman: Go ahead. Did you have a comment, Senator?

Senator Cornyn: I agree with Senator Kaine.

The Chairman: Senator Shaheen.

Senator Shaheen: Well, I just wanted to point -- to object to Senator Lee's characterization of USAID. I have a lot of constituents who have contacted my office who have been very concerned about the dismantling of USAID, about the way it was done, about the lack of information about who is in charge, and so I think that is an inaccurate characterization to say that people across this country don't care. Your constituents may not care, but my constituents care. The Agency still exists in statute, and I think to take

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

them out would suggest that, again, this Committee is not concerned about what the ramifications are of how these decisions have been made. And I know that not to be true because we had a meeting for an hour yesterday with Pete Marocco where everybody raised -- who was there. You weren't there, unfortunately, but everybody who was there raised concerns about what is happening.

Senator Lee: Well, I don't doubt that there are a lot of people who are concerned. It is an entity that has \$40 billion it has been spending in a year. That is a lot of money, a lot of people getting paid for that. I am not suggesting, moreover, that the American people are 100 percent against USAID. I am saying a substantial portion of the American population, including disproportionately in many of our States, is fit to be tied over this and not without good reason. Finally, as to the suggestion that there are certain functions that need to be performed by USAID, every single one of those that you all have mentioned in response to my amendment are -- those are all functions that are, can be, have been, and should continue to be performed by the U.S. State Department.

Senator Shaheen: And are not being performed by the State Department. That is the problem. That is why we want to know what is going on.

Senator Cornyn: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Yeah, Senator Cornyn.

Senator Cornyn: I don't want this to become a --

Senator Shaheen: Yes, you are right. I am sorry.

Senator Cornyn: -- political football, so I am going to support the amendment, but we need to work this out before it comes to the floor.

The Chairman: Yeah, I agree.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

Senator Cornyn: And I just think this kind of a crazy atmosphere we are in, so I don't want this to be a lightning rod for the bill to fail because of that, so I am going to support --

The Chairman: The fact of the matter is it doesn't affect the execution of this bill one way or the other. I am also going to support it. I am in the frame of mind, and I have said this publicly and I know we have different constituencies, but I hope USAID does not survive what is going on. I hope everything is moved over to the State Department and you get it under the Secretary of State, but that is a debate for another day. That is very --

Senator Shaheen: It is.

Senator Coons: That is for debate when the Secretary of State shows up to testify.

The Chairman: Correct. Okay. In any event, is there further -- is there further debate?

Senator Schatz: I just want to be clear, I consider this a poison pill. I am going to support the underlying measure, and I will be a no, and I will not cooperate on the floor. So to the extent that you worry about passing this legislation, I just wanted to be totally transparent. I think this is an extraneous debate. I think we have not yet had the debate about foreign aid generally and where these functions should or should not be parked, whether USAID should exist in the future or all of those important functions should be better aligned with our interests under the State Department. But this is an attack on USAID in a way that jumps over even getting the information from the State Department about what it is that has been cut and hasn't been cut, and under what statutory and constitutional authorities those things have been cut.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

So Mr. Chairman, you are talking a lot -- yesterday you said I know you want to save these programs, we want to cut these programs. That is not what I am arguing about. They are violating statutory law -- the Impoundment Control Act, the Foreign Assistance Act, and the Appropriations Act -- on the daily, and that should piss all of us off, and the fact that we are allowing this to infect an unrelated bill is a shame.

The Chairman: Is there further debate?

[No response.]

The Chairman: There be no further debate, do you want a roll call vote on this?

Senator Kaine: Yes.

The Chairman: A roll call has been requested on Lee Amendments 1 and 4.

The clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Yes.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Yes.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Yes.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

Senator Lee: Aye.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Booker: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

Senator Schatz: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 12. The noes are 10.

The Chairman: It has been adopted. What do we have next here?

Senator Kaine: Final passage. That was a vote on the amendment. I believe it was a vote -- that was a vote on the amendment, so we still have final passage. Because we put politics into a good bipartisan bill, I am going to oppose my own bill.

The Chairman: Okay.

Senator Rosen: And as a leading exporter of gold in North America, the State of Nevada, we have good amendments in here. Since you inserted some politics into that, I am going to vote against it.

The Chairman: Okay. Are there -- are there further amendments?

[No response.]

The Chairman: If not, we are going to vote on the bill. On the bill, you want a roll call?

Senator Kaine: Yes.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Chairman: Okay. Roll call has been -- I am going to hold this over to the next meeting. Yeah, we got to have a physical vote in the room if you want to pass it, so I am going to hold for the next meeting.

Senate Res. 98, Hong Kong resolution. Amendments?

Senator Murphy: Mr. Chairman, I think you are sensing that if this Committee doesn't deal squarely with this extraordinary power grab by the administration to shut down key functions of our national security infrastructure, we are going to have trouble operating as a Committee. I don't oppose any of the words in this resolution, and I commend you and the Ranking Member for continuing to raise the specter of Hong Kong's continued dissent away from democracy and the rule of law. But it does feel to me, dangerously tone deaf for this Committee to be passing a bill talking about the destruction of democracy and the rule of law in Hong Kong when we are continually silent, except for these occasional eruptions, when it comes to the assault on the Constitution here at home, especially when this Committee is at the center of that debate.

We are talking about USAID. This an agency that has been authorized and appropriated by Congress. It is true the administration is involved in constant law breaking by impounding and refusing to appropriate those dollars, but it is not just USAID. The U.S. Agency for Global Media is an agency authorized and appropriated by Congress. It is effectively shut down. Radio Free Asia, Radio Martin, Radio for Europe, all specifically appropriated, authorized by Congress, they are no longer operating. The U.S. Institute of Peace authorized by Congress, signed into law by President Reagan, shut down by this administration. The same thing has happened to the African Development Foundation, Inter-American Foundation.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2025

We have spent hundreds of hours of time as a Committee setting up an infrastructure to protect this country, and in 90 days it has been destroyed. And yes, there is bubbling frustration from Democrats on this Committee, and I would hope other members of the Senate, that we have not held one single hearing, that we have not brought Secretary Rubio before this Committee to talk about this extraordinary set of events that is literally eviscerating -- eviscerating -- the power of this Committee and the Article I branch.

And so I have a series of amendments that I would ask to be considered en bloc -- Murphy Amendment 1, 2, and 3. I will submit that, though I thought my previous amendments on the fentanyl bill could be bipartisan, I admit that this -- these are slightly more political in nature.

The Chairman: Slightly?

Senator Murphy: Slightly.

[Laughter.]

Senator Murphy: But what I am -- what I am seeking to do is to insert clauses into the preamble and the resolved clause of this resolution to make it clear that we are also having a crisis of democracy and rule of law here at home. And I think it is particularly appropriate for this Committee to acknowledge that, given that it is the foreign policymaking power of the Article I branch vested in this specific Committee that is under the most acute assault. So in some way, shape, or form, we have an obligation to deal with the extraordinary seizure of foreign policymaking power in this administration. It is effectively rendering us neutered as a Foreign Relations Committee. And I think you are

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

going to hear that there is going to be a lot of angst on our side to try to draw us into that debate if the Chairman doesn't choose to do it on his own.

So I would ask for the Committee's support on this amendment to acknowledge that while we care about democracy in Hong Kong, we also care about democracy here in America. I certainly understand the writing on the wall with this amendment, so I would accept the voice vote.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator. I respectfully disagree. He has accepted a voice vote. The question is on the amendment.

All those in favor, signify to saying aye.

Senator Murphy: Aye.

The Chairman: Opposed, nay?

[Chorus of noes.]

The Chairman: Ayes have it.

Voice: The nays have it.

Senator Cornyn: I think I heard the nays.

The Chairman: Nays have it. The three amendments have been defeated. We will now move to the bill. Is it necessary to have -- let's have a voice vote unless somebody objects.

All those in favor, Senate Res. 98, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The Chairman: Opposed, nay?

Senator Murphy: Nay.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025

The Chairman: Ayes have it. Senate Res. 98 has been passed and will go to the floor.

Senator Schatz: Can I be recorded as a "no," please?

The Chairman: You may be. The Senator will be recorded as "no," and that --

Senator Murphy: I as well, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman: And that -- what is that?

Senator Murphy: A "no" as well.

The Chairman: And Senator Murphy will also. Thank you so much everybody.

Oops. That completes the Committee's business.

I ask you unanimous consent staff be authorized to make technical and conforming changes and that members of the Committee be permitted to submit a request to the clerk in writing to be recorded as a "no" on any item on today's agenda.

Without objection, so ordered.

The Committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:29 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]