

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday, April 30, 2026

BUSINESS MEETING

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:12 a.m., in SD-419, Senate Dirksen Office Building, Hon. James E. Risch, Chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Risch [presiding], Ricketts, McCormick, Daines, Hagerty, Barrasso, Lee, Paul, Cruz, Scott, Curtis, Cornyn, Shaheen, and Murphy.

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

The Chairman: The United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We have two matters today. One is a business meeting, where we are going to consider six [sic] nominees, and after that we will go to a hearing, which we will talk about when we get there.

Senator Shaheen, how do you want to do this? Can we do them one at a time?

Senator Shaheen: Well, I am afraid we do, Mr. Chairman. Since we do not have everyone here, and people are all over the map on some of these nominees, I think it is better to do it.

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The Chairman: We will do it, as requested. So we will do it as quickly as we can.

Mr. John Breslow, of Arizona, to be Ambassador to Cyprus. Is there a motion we send him to the floor?

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

The Chairman: It has been moved. Is there a second?

Senator Hagerty: Second.

The Chairman: It has been moved and seconded that we send him to the floor with a recommendation he be confirmed. Is there debate?

[No response.]

The Chairman: There being no debate, 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?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

Senator Lee: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

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Senator Paul: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

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Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye. The clerk will report.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 14, the noes are 7.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

We will now consider Mr. Fleet White, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs. Is there a motion?

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

The Chairman: It has been moved. Second?

Senator Lee: Second.

The Chairman: It has been moved and seconded that we send Mr. White to the floor with a recommendation that he be confirmed. Is there debate?

[No response.]

The Chairman: There being none, 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.

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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?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

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The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

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 Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye. The clerk will report.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 16, the noes are 6.

The Chairman: The motion is passed.

We will now consider Mr. Todd Steggerda, of Virginia, to be the Representative of the United States to the Office of the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, with the rank of Ambassador. Is there a motion?

Senator Hagerty: So moved.

The Chairman: It has been moved. Is there a second?

Senator Ricketts: Second.

The Chairman: It has been moved and seconded that he be sent to the

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floor with a do-confirm recommendation. Is there debate?

[No response.]

The Chairman: There being none, 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?

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?

[No response.]

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

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Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

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 Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

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The clerk will report.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 13, the noes are 8.

The Chairman: The motion is passed. Mr. Steggerda will be referred to the floor with a recommendation that he be confirmed.

We have Mr. Wells Griffith, of Virginia, to be the Ambassador rank to the United Nations at the Vienna office. Is there a motion?

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

The Chairman: I am sorry, and to be Representative of the United States of America to the International Atomic Energy Agency, with the rank of Ambassador. Is there a motion for both those?

Senator Ricketts: Moved for both.

Senator Shaheen: Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman: Is there a second?

Senator Ricketts: Second.

The Chairman: It has been moved and seconded that we send him to the floor with a do-confirm recommendation. Is there debate?

Senator Shaheen: Mr. Chairman, I am going to support Mr. Griffith today, but I am doing that because I think this is a really critical position for the United States and for global security. I think the IAEA is critical to the success or failure of any agreement that is reached on Iran's nuclear activities. But if he is confirmed I intend to watch his tenure very closely, and I expect him to keep an open line to this Committee on his work representing the United States.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator, and I agree. We need to be kept in touch on this. I have visited the IAEA in Vienna, and I came away with the

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distinct feeling that we need to look at that very closely. And I think I am with you on that. I think we do need to keep a handle on this.

Having said that, I think Mr. Griffith brings to the position a wealth of knowledge on the issues. He has the knowledge. He knows how to do the job. We need to oversee that and make sure that it is done right. Thank you for those comments. Is there further debate?

[No response.]

The Chairman: There being no further debate, 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?

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?

[No response.]

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The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

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.

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The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

Senator Cruz, do you wish to be recorded as aye on this?

Senator Cruz: I do.

The Chairman: Senator Cruz will be recorded as aye.

The clerk will report.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 13, the noes are 9.

The Chairman: The motion is passed. Mr. Griffith will be referred to the floor, as recommended.

The last one we have is Adam Cassady, of Virginia, to be Ambassador at Large for Cyberspace and Digital Policy. Is there a motion?

Senator Ricketts: So moved.

The Chairman: Second?

Senator McCormick: Second.

The Chairman: There has been a motion and a second that Mr. Cassady be referred to the floor with a recommendation that he be confirmed. Is there debate?

[No response.]

The Chairman: There being no debate, the clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

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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?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

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Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

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: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The clerk will report.

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

The Chairman: The motion is passed. Mr. Cassady will be referred to the floor with a recommendation he be confirmed.

That completes our business agenda. Thank you all for getting here.

Senator Shaheen: Mr. Chairman, before we end this business meeting, I just want to register again my concern at the failure of the State Department

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and this Administration to forward career ambassadors to this Committee. I think we have approved fewer than 10 career ambassadors, and we have half of our embassy posts around the world that are unfilled. China has, by far, a larger footprint in terms of diplomats than the United States does, and yet the State Department and the Administration continue to sit on career nominees and not forward them to us. So I hope we will register this Committee's concern about that.

The Chairman: I have done so, and intend to continue to do so.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

The Chairman: I appreciate your thoughts in that regard.

So with that we will close that part of this meeting and proceed to a hearing that we have set today regarding sabotage in the Baltic Sea.

[Whereupon, at 10:20 a.m., the business meeting was adjourned.]