

BUSINESS MEETING

Thursday, May 15, 2025

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:07 a.m., in Room SD—419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. James E. Risch presiding.

Present: Senators Risch, Ricketts, McCormick, Daines, Hagerty, Barrasso, Paul, Scott, Curtis, Shaheen, Murphy, Merkley, and Rosen.

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

The Chairman: All right. I am told we have a quorum. So, with that, we are going to take up five nominees. We will take them in the order that they have been listed. The first one is the nomination of Caleb Orr of Texas to be Assistant Secretary of State, Economic and Business Affairs. Do I have a motion to send it to the floor?

It has been moved and seconded. Is there debate? There being none.

Senator Shaheen.

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

Senator Shaheen: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I am going to support Mr. Orr because I think he has got the qualifications to manage the Economic and Business Affairs Bureau. But I would just again point out, as I did at our last business meeting, that part of our job is to provide advice and consent with respect to the jobs that we are confirming people to hold. And given the disruption that is going on at the Department of State and the reorganization plans, we do not know what his responsibilities are going to be.

So while I intend to support him, I am going to be also asking for

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additional clarity about what he is actually going to be doing if he is sworn in and confirmed by the Senate, and I would hope that we would join as a committee in clarifying the responsibilities of all of these nominees.

The Chairman: That is an absolutely fair request. Senator Shaheen, I commit to work with you on that.

Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

The Chairman: Yes.

Further comment? If not, 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?

The Chairman: Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

The Chairman: Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

Senator Paul: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

The Chairman: Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

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Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

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 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 Merkley: No.

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 Rosen: No.

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The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

Senator Risch: Aye.

The clerk to report.

The Clerk: Mr. Chair, the ayes are 13, the nays are 9.

The Chairman: The motion has passed.

We will turn to Kenneth Howery of Texas to be ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark. Is there a motion to send him to the floor?

Senator Hagerty: So moved.

The Chairman: Is there a second?

Senator Daines: Second.

The Chairman: Thank you. It has been moved and seconded that we send Mr. Howery to the floor to be affirmatively confirmed. Is there debate?

Senator Shaheen: Yes.

The Chairman: Senator Shaheen.

Senator Shaheen: Mr. Chairman, I supported Mr. Howery's nomination to serve as Ambassador to Sweden in the first Trump administration. And I do think it is critical that we have someone in Denmark because it is an important ally of the United States.

I do hope, however, that he is going to refocus the conversation around Denmark and away from this delusional fantasy about taking over Greenland because the Danes are a very valued ally, and we want to keep them that way. So thank you. As I said, I do intend to support him.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

Is there further debate? There being none, the clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

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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?

The Chairman: Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

The Chairman: Aye, by proxy.

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?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

The Chairman: Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Shaheen: Aye, by proxy.

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The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Merkley: No.

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 Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

Senator Risch: Aye.

The clerk to report.

The Clerk: Mr. Chair, the ayes are 15, the nays are 7.

The Chairman: The motion has passed.

We will take up Somers Farkas of New York to be Ambassador to Malta.

Is there a motion to send her nomination to the floor?

Senator Hagerty: So moved.

The Chairman: It has been moved——

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Senator Daines: Second.

The Chairman [continuing]: And seconded.

Is there debate? 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?

The Chairman: No, by proxy—excuse me. Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

The Chairman: Aye, by proxy.

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?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

The Chairman: Aye, by proxy.

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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 Merkley: No.

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 Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

Senator Risch: Aye.

The clerk to report.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the ayes are 13, the nays are 9.

The Chairman: The motion has passed.

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The last one we have is Leandro Rizzuto, of Florida, to be Ambassador for the United States to the Organization of American States. Is there a motion to send him to the floor?

Senator Hagerty: So moved.

Senator Daines: Second.

The Chairman: It has been moved and seconded that we send the nomination to the floor with a due pass recommendation.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator Shaheen: Mr. Chairman, I intend to vote against this nominee. In the first Trump administration, this committee, on a bipartisan basis, did not allow Mr. Rizzuto's nomination to go through when he was nominated during that first Administration.

He has been willing to share unfounded conspiracy theories online to attack members of Congress, including members of this committee. He has not taken responsibility for that reckless behavior, and I do not think he has got either the experience or the understanding to serve as an effective representative of the United States to the OAS.

So, I certainly intend to oppose his nomination.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator, Shaheen.

Is there further debate? There be no further debate, the clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

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The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

The Chairman: Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

The Chairman: Aye, by proxy.

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?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

The Chairman: Aye, by proxy.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Shaheen: No, by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

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Senator Shaheen: No, by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Merkley: No.

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 Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

Senator Risch: Aye.

The clerk to report.

The Clerk: Mr. Chair, the ayes are 12, the nays are 10.

The Chairman: The motion has passed.

That completes the business portion of our meeting today, and we will continue with the hearing on the nominations that are before us today.

[Whereupon, at 10:15 a.m., the meeting was adjourned.]