

# **BUSINESS MEETING**

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:22 a.m., in Room S-116, the Capitol,  
Hon. James E. Risch, chairman of the Committee, presiding.

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

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

**The Chairman:** The committee will come to order. We have six nominees before us today for a business meeting. We are one body short, which we are working on getting here. In the meantime, I would like to recognize Senator Shaheen for a statement for the record.

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

**Senator Shaheen:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a full statement that I will submit for the record, but I want to bring up a point that I think we should all be concerned about on this committee, and that is the proposed reorganization plans for the State Department that are going to make significant changes to offices and bureaus that some of today's nominees who we are voting on are going to oversee. And they are going to have responsibilities that they did not have when we had their hearing, and I think before the Senate votes on all these nominees I hope that we will have a chance to hear from them, or to hear from Secretary Rubio, about what that reorganization is going to do in the Department and how that is going to change the responsibilities of the people that we are voting on.

**Business Meeting**

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

And as we know, the changes that they are talking about at the State Department are supposed to be done in consultation with Congress, and in some cases, congressional action is actually required.

So again, I would hope that this committee would provide the oversight that it is intended to do and would be closely engaged on any changes at the Department.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator Shaheen follows:]

STATEMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY  
RANKING MEMBER JEANNE SHAHEEN

Thank you, Chairman Risch.

If confirmed, today's nominees will serve in critical positions at the State Department.

Whether highlighting the importance of the energy connector between Bosnia and Croatia to reduce Russian influence in the region...

Or underlining the urgency of enforceable and verifiable arms control agreements with New Start set to expire...

Some of the nominees made important points during their hearing.

I was concerned, however, by unfounded claims that surfaced.

Like the idea that U.S. foreign assistance was funding efforts to make mice transgender.

That is absolutely false.

Just as concerning was seeing the nominee who would be charged with countering disinformation misrepresenting a statement by NPR's CEO.

Countering disinformation starts with reliable facts.

And it requires an apparatus at the State Department for inter-agency coordination.

It wasn't clear from Ms. Roger's testimony that she was aware of the range of tools that have been successfully used at the State Department to counter disinformation.

This brings up a larger point—

**Business Meeting**

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

The proposed reorganization plans for the State Department would make significant changes to the offices and bureaus that some of today's nominees would oversee.

Responsibilities that they did not have when we met with them or held their hearings.

Before the Senate votes on these nominees, we need to hear from them on how they will approach this reorganization.

We also need to have Secretary Rubio come before the committee to discuss his plans for the State Department, and the future of foreign assistance.

These are changes that must be done—at a minimum—in consultation with Congress.

In some cases, congressional action is required.

I expect the Senate and this committee to not only conduct oversight...

But to be closely engaged on any changes regarding the future of the State Department.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Thank you, Senator Shaheen. That is certainly a reasonable request. For those on the committee who have not heard, we are going to have Secretary Rubio here in May.

**Senator Shaheen:** May 20th.

**The Chairman:** It is the 20th or 21st, somewhere in there. So we will have the opportunity at that time to grill him on that.

So with that, visit amongst yourselves, and as soon as we get a body here we will do that. Jeanne is attempting to get one of the Democrats here so we can vote. And we are going to have a roll call, I think. Is that right, Senator Shaheen? Okay.

All right. Well, be at ease, but don't leave.

[Recess.]

**Business Meeting**

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

**The Chairman:** The meeting will come to order. With the cooperation of the Ranking Member, first of all I am going to hold Judd to be Ambassador to Chile, pursuant to request from Tim Kaine. We will take it up at the next business meeting.

We will take up now, en bloc, Nicole McGraw, Thomas DiNanno, and Allison Hooker, and we will do it on a voice vote, with people having the ability to register a no vote if they so choose.

Is there a motion to send those three to the floor?

**Voice:** Second.

**Voice:** So moved.

**The Chairman:** It has been moved and seconded. Any comments? No comments?

**Senator Shaheen:** I would just point out, Mr. Chairman, that we have a number of people on our side who would like to vote no, and so they will register their disapproval.

**The Chairman:** And they will be reported as voting no. Thank you very much for the cooperation.

The clerk will call the roll.

**Voice:** Are you going to do a voice vote?

**The Chairman:** Oh, okay. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

**The Chairman:** Opposed, nay.

The ayes have it. The motion is passed.

**Senator Coons:** Mr. Chairman, can I be recorded as a no on Nicole McGraw? Otherwise, a yes on the other two.

**The Chairman:** And we will take the list that Senator Shaheen will give us. We will record them as such.

**Business Meeting**

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—The following Senators voted No re: Ms. McGraw on the voice vote: Senators Coons, Murphy, Merkley, Booker, Schatz, Van Hollen, and Duckworth.]

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—The following Senators voted No re: Mr. DiNanno on the voice vote: Senators Murphy, Merkley, Schatz, Van Hollen, and Duckworth.]

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—The following Senators voted No re: Ms. Hooker on the voice vote: Senators Murphy, Merkley, Booker, Schatz, Van Hollen, and Duckworth.]

**The Chairman:** All right. Let's take up Brian Burch, of Illinois, to be Ambassador to the Holy See. Is there --

**Voice:** I move.

**Voice:** Second.

**The Chairman:** Motion made and seconded? Is there comment?

**Senator Shaheen:** Yes.

**The Chairman:** Senator Shaheen.

**Senator Shaheen:** Mr. Chairman, I think we saw a demonstration this weekend with the funeral mass of Pope Francis, that the Vatican is a small but very powerful partner for the United States and we cooperate on a range of issues from promoting religious freedom to preventing human trafficking. But I worry that Mr. Burch did not demonstrate his commitment to the causes that bind the U.S. and Vatican relationship. And I would just point out, one of the things he cited for his opposition to USAID programs was his opposition to the program for transgender mice.

Let me just correct the record here, that there was no program for transgender mice. It was a reference to transgenic mice, which are mice that are modified with DNA for biomedical research. They are used to study how genes affect disease and health. And I mean, I would hope that all of us on this committee would do our best to try and prevent

**Business Meeting**

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

any nominees from the Trump administration from using this example anymore, because it just shows that people have no idea what they are talking about.

So I intend to oppose Mr. Burch, and I would like a roll call, please.

**The Chairman:** Thank you, Senator. Is there further comment?

[No response.]

**The Chairman:** There being no further comment, 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?

**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?

**Business Meeting**

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

**Senator Curtis:** Aye.

**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 Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**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.

**Business Meeting**

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

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

**The Chairman:** The motion is passed.

We will take up Sarah Rogers, of New York. Is there a motion to send her to the floor with a recommendation she be confirmed?

**Voice:** So moved.

**The Chairman:** Second?

**Voice:** Second.

**The Chairman:** It has been moved and seconded. Is there debate?

**Senator Shaheen:** Yes.

**The Chairman:** Senator Shaheen.

**Senator Shaheen:** Again, I was very troubled by this nominee's responses on the issue of disinformation, which is what she is being charged with overseeing. She seemed to have no understanding of what it takes to curb the threats. She inaccurately quoted NPR and used that as a talking point. I think she doesn't have a plan to protect Americans from disinformation, and she has shown a willingness to empower foreign, state-run media entities that are threatening our safety. So I intend to vote against her, and I ask for a roll call.

**The Chairman:** Thank you, Senator. There will be a roll call.

Is there further debate?

**Senator Coons:** I associate myself with the comments of the Senator from New Hampshire.

**The Chairman:** Further debate?

[No response.]

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



**Business Meeting**

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

**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?

**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?

**Senator Curtis:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Cornyn?

**Senator Cornyn:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mrs. Shaheen?

**Senator Shaheen:** No.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Coons?

**Business Meeting**

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

**Senator Coons:** No.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Murphy?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**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.

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

**The Chairman:** The motion has passed.

That completes our business, but let me say to the committee, first of all, thank you, all of you who showed up. This was a unique circumstance where we have a lot of committees that were having markups this morning. I apologize for the overlap. We will try

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

**Business Meeting**

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

harder in the future to try to coordinate these things, so we don't wind up with this kind of situation.

Thank you all. Thank you to the Minority for helping. The committee is adjourned.

**[Whereupon, at 10:49 a.m., the meeting was adjourned.]**