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NOT VOTING—1

Scott (SC)

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from California.

CALIFORNIA JUDICIAL CONFIRMATIONS

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise today on behalf of the great State of California to celebrate several newly confirmed U.S. district court judges.

I am proud to say that just 3 months after I celebrated a confirmation of four highly qualified Federal judges for the State of California, three more have now been confirmed. Today, I hope to share a bit more about each of their stories, the breadth of experience, and their history of dedicated public service.

Early last month, I was proud to see Judge Wesley Hsu confirmed to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California. Judge Hsu's path to the Federal bench is a story of hard work, remarkable intelligence, and truly a case study in the American dream.

His father fled communist China, traveling 70 miles to the coast with his mother and developmentally disabled brother as a child. Both of Judge Hsu's parents eventually immigrated to the United States to attend graduate school at Kansas State University before moving to California where Judge Hsu grew up.

After earning his undergraduate degree and his JD from Yale, he worked as a law clerk in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, the same court on which he now serves as a judge. He later served for over a decade and a half as an assistant U.S. attorney for the Central District in the Criminal Division. And from 2017 until just recently, Judge Hsu served as a judge on the Los Angeles County Superior Court, presiding over the Family Law and Criminal Divisions.

I have no doubt that Judge Hsu's strong qualifications and deep experience in the Central District will make him an exemplary district court judge.

That was early last month.

Just yesterday, we confirmed Judge Hernan Vera, another devoted jurist slated to serve on the District Court for the Central District of California. The son of Argentine immigrants, Judge Vera earned his undergraduate degree from Stanford University and his JD from the UCLA School of Law. And since then, he has had a diverse legal career from corporate law to serving 12 years at Public Counsel, our Nation's largest pro bono law firm.

As director and then CEO of the Consumer Law Project, Judge Vera worked tirelessly on behalf of consumers, on behalf of veterans, the elderly, and the

working poor. In 2020, Judge Vera was appointed to the California Superior Court for Los Angeles County where he adjudicated child dependency cases. In every respect, Judge Vera stands out in California's legal community. His diverse legal and professional experience makes him a welcome addition to the Central District's bench.

And, finally, earlier this afternoon, just a couple of hours ago, we confirmed Casey Pitts to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

Born in Minnesota and raised in Fargo, ND, Pitts attended Yale University and, later, Yale School of Law. After law school, he came out west, and he served as a law clerk on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals for Judge Stephen Reinhardt before joining the public interest firm Altshuler Berzon, where he has been ever since.

He has represented workers, consumers, and public interest groups, fighting to protect lives and livelihoods of Americans and helping to shape how and for whom our economy and our courts work.

Casey will be the only LGBTQ article III judge currently serving on the District Court for the Northern District of California. His life experience, his credentials, and his record of fighting for the American people will no doubt make him a phenomenal jurist. And I am proud to see him confirmed, as well.

Mr. President, for the past 2½ years, Senate Democrats have worked closely with President Biden to nominate and confirm a record number of Federal judges. I have made it a personal priority to try to fulfill the expectations of Americans all over the country who deserve a trusted, highly qualified, and, yes, diverse Federal judiciary. With these three confirmations, we are proving that our judiciary benefits when people from diverse backgrounds are on the Federal bench. Whether the child of immigrants who sought a better life in the United States or an LGBTQ kid from Fargo, ND, whether an assistant U.S. attorney or a lawyer defending consumers and veterans, all these backgrounds should be represented in our judiciary.

We can't say this often enough: Our Nation is beautifully diverse, and we are a stronger Nation because of it. And so it should be for our Federal judiciary. So I thank you, colleagues, for confirming these three nominations, and I am so grateful to each and every one of them for their public service on behalf of our Nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

CELEBRATING THE 246TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CREATION OF THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES AND EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, I rise today to share a resolution of support for the Pledge of Allegiance as an expression of patriotism and to honor the 246th anniversary of the creation of our U.S. flag.

Today, we celebrate Flag Day. As we pause to recognize all that our flag represents, let us also honor those who have sacrificed everything to defend it.

In 2002, Senator Tom Daschle raised a similar resolution with unanimous support from the Senate. It passed on the floor uneventfully. Today, I ask this body to reaffirm our support of the Pledge of Allegiance.

I rise today also to honor a Hoosier who understood the innate value of the Pledge of Allegiance to our civic education. In 1969, Red Skelton, the American entertainer who was well known for his program "The Red Skelton Hour," wrote a speech on the importance of the pledge. Reflecting on his time in Vincennes, IN—not many miles from where I was born and raised in Jasper—he spoke about the values instilled in the students by one of his high school teachers. After the performance of the speech, CBS received 200,000 requests for copies. The speech would go on to be sold as a single by Columbia Records and performed at the White House for President Nixon. To honor Mr. Skelton's memory and the importance of the pledge, I will recite his speech today on the Senate floor.

In the words of Mr. Red Skelton, as applicable today as it was many years ago:

When I was a small boy in Vincennes, Indiana, I heard, I think, one of the most outstanding speeches I ever heard in my life. I think it compares with the Sermon on the Mount, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, and Socrates' speech to the students.

We had just finished reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, and he [Mr. Lasswell, the Principal of Vincennes High School] called us all together and he says: '[U]h boys and girls, I have been listening to you recite the Pledge of Allegiance all semester, and it seems it has become monotonous to you. Or, could it be, you do not understand the meaning of each word?'

If I may, I would like to recite the pledge and give you a definition for each word.

I—Me; an individual; a committee of one.

Pledge—Dedicate all of my worldly good to give without self-pity.

Allegiance—My love and my devotion.

To the Flag—Our standard. "Old Glory"; a symbol of courage. And wherever she waves, there is respect, because your loyalty has given her a dignity that shouts, "Freedom is everybody's job."

"Of the United"—That means we have all come together.

States—Individual communities that have united into 48 great States; 48 individual communities with pride and dignity and purpose; all divided by imaginary boundaries, yet united to a common cause, and that's love of country—

And, of course, 48 States dates when that was done—

Of America.

And to the Republic—A Republic: a sovereign state in which power is invested into the representatives chosen by the people to govern; and the government is the people; and it's from the people to the leaders, not from the leaders to the people.

For which it stands.

One Nation—Meaning “so blessed by God.” Under God.

Indivisible—Incapable of being divided.

With Liberty—Which is freedom; the right of power for one to live his own life without fears, threats, or any sort of retaliation.

And Justice—The principle and qualities of dealing fairly with others.

For All—For All. That means, boys and girls, it's as much your country as it is mine.

Afterwards, Mr. Lasswell asked his students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance together with newfound appreciation for the words.

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

I call upon the U.S. Senate to recommit to the meaning of these words. This is why today, on National Flag Day, I am requesting unanimous consent from my colleagues that my resolution expressing support of the Pledge of Allegiance is passed.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 252, which is at the desk.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 252) celebrating the 246th anniversary of the creation of the flag of the United States and expressing support for the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 252) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

Mr. BRAUN. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

OSWALDO PAYÁ WAY

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, this week the Senate unanimously passed my bipartisan legislation to rename the street in front of the Cuban Embassy in Washington, DC, “Oswaldo Payá Way.”

Oswaldo Payá was a dissident and a fighter for freedom in Cuba of unrelenting passion and dedication. He was someone who stood up against the Castro regime. He had incredible courage. He spoke up for human rights. He spoke up for free speech. He spoke up

for democracy. And 11 years ago, Oswaldo Payá was murdered by the Cuban communist government.

On July 22, 2012, Payá left his house with three other people, including Harold Cepero, to go visit friends. From the start of the journey, their car was followed. On the way, the Cuban security services drove Payá's car off the road, killing both him and Cepero.

There has never been any doubt about who was responsible for these murders. Indeed, just this week, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights released its long-awaited report on the case. The determination was clear and conclusive in confirming what we have known all along.

Payá had long been a thorn in the side of the Castros and the regime, even from a young age. He was the only person at school who refused to join the Communist Youth. As a teenager, he publicly opposed the communist crackdown on protesters in Czechoslovakia who were fighting for freedom, and he was punished with 3 years in prison.

Payá went on to found the Varela Project, which sought a referendum on Cuba's communist system. Their demands were simple: democratic government, religious liberty, freedom of expression, and the economic freedom to start businesses. Payá managed to get 11,000 signatures to support the Varela Project to petition the regime to hold a referendum. And, eventually, over 20,000 people supported the cause, but the Cuban regime refused to hold it.

Payá's fight for freedom made him a target of the Communist Party in Cuba. They harassed him. They tried to intimidate him. They arrested him numerous times and, ultimately, they murdered him.

Payá's friend and the driver of the car said that when he awoke after the crash, he was confronted at the hospital by a regime operative, and the hospital was flooded with uniformed military personnel. Under extreme duress, drugged, and threatened with death by regime officials, he signed a document falsely exonerating the regime.

That is how important it was to the communists to immediately try to hide their crimes and avoid accountability. It is imperative that they fail in this task.

I am heartened that, yesterday, the Senate unanimously passed this bipartisan legislation that I led to rename the street in front of the Cuban Embassy here in Washington, DC, after Payá.

I want to thank Senator DURBIN, who led this effort with me, along with Senator RUBIO, Senator MENENDEZ, Senator RICK SCOTT, and Senator CARDIN—all who joined with me in this bipartisan effort. This week the Senate spoke in one unanimous voice, and it was a voice speaking out for freedom.

I also want to acknowledge the tireless work of Payá's daughter, Rosa Maria, who has fought tenaciously and

never wavered in pursuing and advocating her father's legacy. She is an incredible, courageous, powerful leader in her own right, and together we have sat down and discussed ways of advancing the cause of justice in Cuba. We will continue doing so.

This is the second time that the Senate has passed this bipartisan legislation. In the previous Congress, the House of Representatives declined to take it up. But I urge our colleagues in the House to take it up and pass it this year, and I have a high level of confidence that the House will do that. We need to make this a law, to put it on Joe Biden's desk, and to rename the street outside of the Cuban Embassy.

Now, when we change the street name, we are not merely changing signs. It can be a reminder—indeed, a forceful one—that shines a light of truth on the regime. Changing the name of the street means that anyone who wants to write to the Cuban Embassy will have to write Oswaldo Payá's name, or, if you need to go there, you will have to look up the address and see his name. Members of the Cuban regime who deal with the embassy will have to acknowledge that Payá existed. Their efforts to erase his existence and his legacy failed.

I have told this story before, but it is worth retelling because it illustrates just how much of an impact renaming a street in front of an embassy can be.

A few years ago, I introduced legislation to rename the street in front of the Chinese Embassy “Liu Xiaobo Plaza,” after the famed Nobel peace laureate and democracy activist in China who was wrongfully imprisoned in China.

After multiple iterations on the Senate floor, my bill ended up passing the Senate—a Democrat Senate with a Democrat majority. My bill passed the Senate unanimously. Unfortunately, the House of Representatives failed to take that bill up as well. It was infuriating.

However, at the beginning of the Trump administration, in 2017, I was having breakfast with Rex Tillerson, then the new Secretary of State, at his office at Foggy Bottom. We were talking about the challenges facing America, and he had recently just met with his counterpart, the Chinese Foreign Minister.

Secretary Tillerson said that the Foreign Minister from China told him that China had three critical foreign policies, at which point Rex shook his head and said: Ted, it was the damndest thing. One of their top three priorities was stopping you from renaming the street in front of their Embassy in DC.

That is how concerned—that is how terrified—Xi and his communist cronies were of the world being reminded on a daily basis about Liu Xiaobo.

Ultimately, I told Secretary Tillerson the following, which is that Liu Xiaobo had passed away at that point but that his widow, Liu Xia, was

still in China. China would not let her leave. She had never gone to collect the over \$1 million that she was due for her husband winning the Nobel Peace Prize.

So I told Secretary Tillerson: You tell the Chinese Government, if they release Liu Xia—if they allow her to leave and escape to freedom—I will stop pushing this particular bill, but if they don't, I will keep pushing it, and we will pass it into law. You can let him know it is not a bluff, because I have already passed it unanimously through the Senate once and will do it again, and this time the House will pass it as well.

Within a matter of weeks, the communist government in China released Liu Xia and let her escape. That is how powerful shining a light of truth on a despotic regime can be.

Renaming the street outside of the Cuban Embassy sends a powerful message to the Cuban people that their struggle for freedom will not go unnoticed or be forgotten; that the world is watching, and their heroic efforts are not in vain. Their fight for freedom resonates deeply with people across the globe.

By passing this legislation, the U.S. Senate has made a powerful statement of solidarity with the people of Cuba and is a resolute condemnation of the oppressive regime that silenced a brave voice for freedom. The Senate has spoken with one voice, and that voice has demanded "Cuba libre"—a free Cuba—an end to the totalitarian and despotic state.

I urge our colleagues in the House to take up this bill and pass this bipartisan legislation swiftly.

Let us come together as one, as the U.S. Congress, and force the communist regime to do what utterly terrifies them—to say Oswaldo Payá's name—to say his name.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able to complete my remarks before the vote starts.

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

REMEMBERING JOHN MCCOY

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to honor distinguished Washington State senator, Tribal leader, and my friend John Richard McCoy.

State Senator McCoy dedicated his life and career to public service. John served in the Air Force for two decades. He was a steadfast and fearless leader for the Tulalip Tribes in the State of Washington. And he was one of

the longest serving Native legislators in Washington State history.

His story is an inspiration and testament. He overcame unbelievable odds. And most importantly, he showed what one person can achieve in the service of others. John led a life and career that will be remembered for generations.

He was born in 1943 in Washington. He was born in the middle of World War II and started his career as a commercial fisherman in Puget Sound before he joined the Air Force. He served in the Air Force for 20 years, retiring as a technical sergeant at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland, near here.

He was then recruited as a computer programmer before computer programming was really hip and was assigned to staff the Reagan White House situation room. His skills as a computer programmer and technical expertise led the late Stan Jones—one of our other Tribal legends who was then Chair of the Tulalip Tribes—to recruit him back to Washington to help transform the Tribe's communications system. At the time, the Tribe was struggling to build the infrastructure that was needed to take advantage of economic development and continue to move forward with their plans.

But John took this project and telecommunications infrastructure and helped the Tribe build one of its greatest economic successes. The Quil Ceda Village is about a 500-acre unique business park that was approved in 2001. It was so successful that in 2005, the Puget Sound Business Journal named him Executive of the Year for his contributions to the successful project. He not only brought computers and high-speed internet access to the village, he made the whole thing a reality for the Tribe.

John McCoy never lost his ideas about public service. In 2003, he was elected to the Washington State House of Representatives, and he served our State legislature for 17 years. Senator McCoy served the 38th Legislative District in Northwest Washington covering Tulalip, Everett, and Marysville. During that time, he became a stand-out legislator for the State of Washington. He was a tireless advocate for K-12 education, healthcare, the environmental policies, and, most importantly, he was outspoken on Tribal issues.

One important piece of legislation John championed and created was the "Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State" curriculum which is now taught in all Washington State public schools. "Since Time Immemorial," endorsed by all of Washington State's 29 federally recognized Tribes, is a curriculum that focuses on their history in the State of Washington. The lessons help students understand the importance of treaties, the history of Tribes in the Pacific Northwest, and the challenges of reservation life. It also teaches students the influence of geography and where Tribes are located in the State

of Washington—and, importantly, the distinct cultures of the 29 federally recognized Tribes in Washington State. The knowledge our students are gaining about Tribes is invaluable. And this is just one example of Senator McCoy's leadership in the State of Washington.

He also helped expand dental care. He passed legislation requiring telecommunications companies to provide call location information to emergency responders. He helped emergency responders locate victims and patients more quickly. And he passed a bill that allowed our State to provide jurisdiction to Tribes over criminal and civil matter on Tribal lands to Federal and Tribal governments. These were all important roles, and we can never give enough thanks to him and his family for his contributions.

He also served in leadership roles. Senator McCoy was elected by his colleagues to serve as caucus chair for the then Washington State Senate Democrats. He served as chair of the National Caucus of Native American State Legislators, playing a Tribal leadership role nationally. And something he always took pride in was not only serving the Tribe he grew up in, but he took great pride in serving the rest of Everett and Marysville. He never lost sight of what it meant to represent the people of the 38th District. That is the kind of person he was, dedicated to his Tribe, but also dedicated to all his neighbors.

He retired from the Washington State Senate in April of 2020, and he said, "Through the changes in committees, leadership roles and even chambers over the course of my legislative career, it was always an immense privilege to represent my neighbors . . . I am deeply grateful for that privilege."

Senator John McCoy will go down in our State's history as one of our most effective local leaders, someone who came up against roadblocks and found ways to bypass those roadblocks to get progress for our State.

He will be missed by all of us, especially his wife of 58 years, Jeannie McCoy—my heart goes out to her and her family—his siblings; his children: Angela McCoy, Sheila Hillaire, and Cara Tohanniep; and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

We all thank you for sharing your father with us. He will be missed not only as a leader in our State, but also a leader that helped us across the United States to better understand Indian Country and certainly the leadership of the Tulalip Tribe.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the scheduled vote occur immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.