

merit or because it was inadvertent, technical or otherwise of a *de minimis* nature: 8.

(6) The number of alleged violations for which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry and the Committee issued private or public letters of admonition: 1.

(7) The number of matters resulting in a disciplinary sanction: 0.

(8) Any other information deemed by the Committee to be appropriate to describe its activities in the previous year:

In 2024, the Committee staff conducted 16 Member and office campaign activity briefings; 19 employee code of conduct training sessions; 5 public financial disclosure clinics, seminars, and webinars; 29 ethics seminars and customized briefings for Member DC offices, state offices, and Senate committees; 2 private sector ethics briefings, and 3 international briefings.

In 2024, the Committee staff handled approximately 11,082 inquiries (via telephone and email) for ethics advice and guidance.

In 2024, the Committee wrote approximately 968 ethics advisory letters and responses including, but not limited to, 776 travel and gifts matters (Senate Rule 35) and 161 conflict of interest matters (Senate Rule 37).

In 2024, the Committee received 4,323 public financial disclosure and periodic disclosure of financial transactions reports.

CONFIRMATION OF SEAN DUFFY

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, yesterday afternoon I voted to advance Sean Duffy's nomination to be Secretary of Transportation. I support qualified Cabinet nominees even when I have deep policy and political differences, unless they are so extreme as to pose a threat to the mission of their Agency. I have voted for qualified nominees from both parties for this position, and, while I have deep political and policy difference with Mr. Duffy, I believe that his experience in the House of Representatives has prepared him to do this job and support the overall mission of the Department of Transportation. I also appreciated his commitment in his hearings to funding Federal transportation projects without partisan influence.

However, last night, the administration put out an unprecedented and illegal directive to Agencies to hold vast amounts of Federal funding, including grants and loans to states and organizations working in our communities. My office is hearing from counties and community groups across Maryland who are losing access to funds to support firefighters, prevent homelessness, and keep transportation projects on track. Mr. Duffy, and every nominee, will be responsible for executing this unlawful withholding of funding as passed by Congress. We cannot continue with business as usual when the administration abuses its power and ignores spending laws as passed by Congress, so I voted against Mr. Duffy's nomination today.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Stringer, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and three withdrawals which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 471. A bill to expedite under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and improve forest management activities on National Forest System lands, on public lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and on Tribal lands to return resilience to overgrown, fire-prone forested lands, and for other purposes.

At 2:20 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that pursuant to section 9803(d)(1)(C) and (E) of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117-263), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Minority Leader appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Commission on Reform and Modernization of the Department of State: Mr. QUIGLEY of Illinois.

The message further announced that pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 4355(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Minority Leader appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Board of Visitors to the United States Military Academy: Mr. RYAN of New York.

The message also announced that pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 8468(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Minority Leader appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Board of Visitors to the United States Naval Academy: Ms. ELFRETH of Maryland.

The message further announced that pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 9455(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Minority Leader appoints the following Member to the Board of Visitors to the United States Air Force Academy: Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 4 of the United States Semiquincentennial Commission Act of 2016 (Public Law 114-196), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Minority Leader appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the United States Semiquincentennial Commission: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN of New Jersey and Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania.

The message further announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 6913, and the

order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Congressional Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: Mr. MCGOVERN of Massachusetts.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 2 of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 715a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission: Mr. THOMPSON of California.

The message further announced that pursuant to 14 U.S.C. 1903(b), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Board of Visitors to the United States Coast Guard Academy: Mr. COURTNEY of Connecticut.

The message also announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2903, and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Japan-United States Friendship Commission: Mr. TAKANO of California.

The message further announced that pursuant to section 4 of the United States Semiquincentennial Commission Act of 2016 (Public Law 114-196), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the United States Semiquincentennial Commission: Mr. ADERHOLT of Alabama and Ms. SALAZAR of Florida.

The message also announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 1928a, and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the United States Group of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly: Mr. BERGMAN of Michigan.

The message further announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 1928a, and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the United States Group of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly: Mr. TURNER of Ohio, Chair, Mr. DUNN of Florida, Mrs. WAGNER of Missouri, Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania, Mr. GUTHRIE of Kentucky, Ms. VAN DUYNE of Texas, and Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 2 of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 715a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission: Mr. WITTMAN of Virginia.

The message further announced that pursuant to section 9803(d)(1)(C) of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023

(Public Law 117-263), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Commission on Reform and Modernization of the Department of State: Mr. MILLER of Ohio.

The message also announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2903, and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Japan-United States Friendship Commission: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.

The message further announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 6913, and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Congressional Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Co-Chair.

The message also announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the British-American Interparliamentary Group: Mr. LATTA of Ohio, Chair.

The message further announced that pursuant to 14 U.S.C. 1903(b), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the Board of Visitors to the United States Coast Guard Academy: Mrs. MCCLAIN of Michigan and Mr. RUTHERFORD of Florida.

The message also announced that pursuant to 46 U.S.C. 51312(b) and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the Board of Visitors to the United States Merchant Marine Academy: Mr. VALADAO of California and Mr. SUOZZI of New York.

The message further announced that pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 7455(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the Board of Visitors to the United States Military Academy: Mr. WOMACK of Arkansas and Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma.

The message also announced that pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 8468(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the Board of Visitors to the United States Naval Academy: Mr. ELLZEY of Texas and Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida.

The message further announced that pursuant to section 2(a) of the National Cultural Center Act (20 U.S.C. 76h(a)), amended by Public Law 107-117, and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts: Mr.

MCCAUL of Texas, Ms. LETLOW of Louisiana, and Mrs. BEATTY of Ohio.

The message also announced that pursuant to sections 5580 and 5581 of the revised statutes (20 U.S.C. 42-43), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. GIMENEZ of Florida, and Ms. MATSUI of California.

The message further announced that pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 9455(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Speaker appoints the following Members to the Board of Visitors to the United States Air Force Academy: Mr. PFLUGER of Texas and Mr. CRANK of Colorado.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. KING (for himself and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 264. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish the Veterans Experience Office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 265. A bill to provide that participation in the American Community Survey is voluntary; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. REED, Mr. MARSHALL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. WARNER, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 266. A bill to reauthorize the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BUDD (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 267. A bill to make certain repairs, replacements, and restorations of private roads and bridges eligible for reimbursement under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. HYDE-SMITH (for herself and Mr. LEE):

S. 268. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require taxpayers claiming the child and earned income tax credits, and their qualifying children, to have a valid social security number for employment purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 269. A bill to improve coordination between Federal and State agencies and the Do Not Pay working system; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. LANKFORD:

S. 270. A bill to establish a Commission on Federal Natural Disaster Resilience and Recovery to examine and recommend reforms to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Federal Government's approach to natural disaster resilience and recovery, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr.

LANKFORD, Mr. BUDD, Mr. JUSTICE, Mr. RICKETTS, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 271. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to increase penalties for individuals who illegally reenter the United States after being removed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. HOEVEN):

S. 272. A bill to improve the safety of infant formula through testing of infant formula for microorganisms and toxic elements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. ROSEN (for herself, Ms. ERNST, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 273. A bill to allow nonprofit child care providers to participate in certain loan programs of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. KIM):

S. 274. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements to laws relating to the payment of certain benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs that are affected by death, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MORAN:

S. 275. A bill to improve the provision of care and services under the Veterans Community Care Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. MARSHALL):

S. 276. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand and improve health savings accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. HAGERTY):

S. 277. A bill to release a Federal reversionary interest and convey mineral interests in Chester County, Tennessee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BUDD, Mr. KING, Mr. CURTIS, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. FETTERMAN):

S. 278. A bill to prohibit users who are under age 13 from accessing social media platforms, to prohibit the use of personalized recommendation systems on individuals under age 17, and limit the use of social media in schools; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BENNET:

S. 279. A bill to reform and enhance the pay and benefits of Federal wildland firefighters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. WELCH, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. REED, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. KAINE, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. KING, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. OSOFFO, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. WARREN, Ms. SLOTKIN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. KELLY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. LUJÁN, Ms. ALSOBROOKS, Mr. WARNER, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. GALLEGOS):

S. 280. A bill to prohibit the application of certain restrictive eligibility requirements