

1 BUSINESS MEETING ON PENDING NOMINATIONS

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3 WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2018

4 United States Senate,
5 Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry,
6 Washington, D.C.

7 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 4:26 .m., in
8 Room S-216, The Capitol, Hon. Pat Roberts, Chairman of the
9 Committee, presiding.

10 Present or submitting a statement: Senators Roberts,
11 McConnell, Boozman, Hoeven, Ernst, Grassley, Thune, Daines,
12 Fischer, Hyde-Smith, Stabenow, Leahy, Klobuchar, Bennet,
13 Gillibrand, Donnelly, Heitkamp, Casey, and Smith.

14 OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN ROBERTS

15 Chairman Roberts. Seeing that a reporting quorum is
16 present, I now call to order a business meeting of the
17 Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

18 The purpose of this meeting is to consider the
19 nomination of Dr. Mindy Brashears for the position of Under
20 Secretary for Food Safety; the nomination of Mrs. Naomi Earp
21 for the position of Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for
22 Civil Rights; and the nomination of Dr. Scott Hutchins for
23 the position of Under Secretary for Research, Education, and
24 Economics.

25 Their individual and collective experience, combined

1 with their written responses to the members' questions for
2 the record show that these nominees are abundantly qualified
3 to lead the USDA and tackle the challenges that lay ahead of
4 them. I fully support all three of the nominations.

5 I now recognize the Ranking Member for any comments she
6 may have.

7 OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR STABENOW

8 Senator Stabenow. I understand you are going to want
9 to do voice votes, which is fine with me.

10 Chairman Roberts. That is correct.

11 Senator Stabenow. I am going to record a no on--

12 Chairman Roberts. On the voice vote.

13 Senator Stabenow. Yes, on the voice vote.

14 Chairman Roberts. Thank you.

15 Senator Stabenow. On the nominee on Earp. I am
16 waiting to see, I may not--I may support her on the floor,
17 but I have concerns given the seriousness of this position.

18 Chairman Roberts. We can send her to you at your
19 request.

20 Senator Stabenow. So I will be voting no or want to be
21 recorded as no on that nominee.

22 Chairman Roberts. Okay. I understand that.

23 Understanding there is a desire to report these
24 nominations individually, we do so in three separate votes.
25 A motion will be now in order to approve the nomination of

1 Dr. Mindy Brashears--

2 Senator Grassley. Do it en bloc.

3 Chairman Roberts. --for the position of Under
4 Secretary of Food Safety.

5 Senator Stabenow. So moved.

6 Chairman Roberts. Thank you. Is there a second?

7 Senator Grassley. Do it en bloc. Cannot you do it en
8 bloc?

9 Senator Thune. Second.

10 Chairman Roberts. All those in favor, say aye.

11 [Chorus of ayes.]

12 Chairman Roberts. All those opposed, say no.

13 [No audible response.]

14 Chairman Roberts. The ayes have it.

15 The nomination of Dr. Brashears is approved.

16 Senator Grassley. Can you do it en bloc?

17 Chairman Roberts. No, not yet.

18 Senator Grassley. Okay.

19 Chairman Roberts. You can talk to Senator Collins
20 later. If you could help me get from page three to page
21 four, it would be helpful. Thank you.

22 Now a motion would be in order to approve the
23 nomination of Mrs. Naomi Earp for the position of Assistant
24 Secretary of Agriculture for Civil Rights.

25 Senator Ernst. So moved.

1 Chairman Roberts. Is there a second?

2 Senator Thune. Second.

3 Chairman Roberts. All those in favor, say aye.

4 [Chorus of ayes.]

5 Chairman Roberts. All those opposed, say no.

6 [Chorus of noes.]

7 Chairman Roberts. The ayes have it and the nomination
8 of Mrs. Earp is approved.

9 Senator Stabenow. I think there are people who want to
10 be recorded as no.

11 Chairman Roberts. All those who would like to be
12 reported as no--there are four right here, five, six. If
13 there is any more....

14 [Pause.]

15 [Those wishing to be recognized as voting no: Senators
16 Stabenow, Leahy, Klobuchar, Bennett, Gillibrand, Donnelly,
17 Casey, and Smith.]

18 Chairman Roberts. Finally, a motion would be in order
19 to approve the nomination of Dr. Scott Hutchins for the
20 position of Under Secretary for Research, Education, and
21 Economics.

22 Senator Stabenow. So moved.

23 Chairman Roberts. All those in favor, say aye.

24 [Chorus of ayes.]

25 Chairman Roberts. All those opposed, say no.

1 Senator Gillibrand. No.

2 Chairman Roberts. The ayes have it and the nomination
3 of Scott Hutchins is approved.

4 The nominations of Dr. Brashears, Mrs. Earp and Dr.
5 Hutchins are to be reported favorably to the Senate with the
6 nays noted.

7 Thank you and the business meeting is now adjourned.

8 [Whereupon, at 4:29 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

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