I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 178

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that following morning business on Tuesday, March 10, the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, a few minutes ago I was talking about why I had hoped that after 121 days we could finally have a vote on the confirmation of Loretta Lynch to be Attorney General. She has been supported by leading Republicans and Democrats. She has been supported by Republicans and Democrats in law enforcement, especially in light of her very tough enforcement of terrorism laws. On the issue of abuse of public trust, she has prosecuted both Democrats and Republicans.

I mentioned a few minutes ago that when George W. Bush was in the last two years of his term, he was a lame-duck President and Democrats had just taken over control of the Senate. The President nominated Judge Mukasey to be Attorney General. Because I disagreed with Judge Mukasey on the question of torture, I told the President I would vote against him, but I also told him that any President has a right to at least have a vote on their nominees. I moved him forward in 53 days—that is from the time his nomination was announced until he was confirmed. And that includes the time it took for the paperwork to get up here and the rest of the process. I put him through the committee, got him onto the floor, and he was confirmed in 53 days.

Now we have been waiting 121 days for Loretta Lynch, who came to the Judiciary Committee with far more law enforcement background. I don't know what the difference is between this man, Judge Mukasey, who took 53 days and Loretta Lynch.

In fact, I will give you another Attorney General nominee I also disagreed with and voted against, but who I, as chairman, helped bring to a vote. President Bush nominated John Ashcroft—a former Senator who had just been defeated—to be Attorney General. I put him through in 42 days—42 days from the time his nomination was announced until he was confirmed. Forty-two days.

So Ashcroft went through in 42 days. Judge Mukasey went through in 53 days. Loretta Lynch has waited 121 days.

I was involved with the nominations of these two men even though I disagreed with them. When Republicans took back control of the Senate there was another Attorney General in between who took 86 days. But for the two men when I was Chairman: 42 days for John Ashcroft; 53 days for Judge Mukasey. But Loretta Lynch has been waiting 121 days and still hasn't had a vote. Is it any wonder that people have concern about the U.S. Senate when she has to wait all that time just to get a vote up or down? Up or down, that is all we ask. So let's hope she can be scheduled, voted on and confirmed because with her record as a tough prosecutor, that is the sort of person I would like cracking down on terrorists, cracking down on those who defraud this country, cracking down on traffickers, as she has in the past.

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.

Mr. LEAHY. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF DANIEL HENRY MARTI TO BE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ENFORCEMENT COORDINATOR, EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

NOMINATION OF MICHELLE K. LEE TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

NOMINATION OF JEFFERY S. HALL TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION BOARD, FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION

NOMINATION OF DALLAS P. TONSAGER TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION BOARD, FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nominations of Daniel Henry Marti, of Virginia, to be Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, Executive Office of the President; Michelle K. Lee, of California, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office; Jeffery S. Hall, of Kentucky, to be a Member of the Farm Credit Administration Board, Farm Credit Administration, for a term expiring October 13, 2018; and Dallas P. Tonsager, of South Dakota, to be a Member of the Farm Credit Administration Board, Farm Credit Administration, for a term expiring May 21, 2020.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. I ask unanimous consent that the time until 5:30 p.m. be equally divided in the usual form, with all other provisions of the previous order remaining in effect.

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

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I understand, for the information of Senators, that means the vote will still be at 5:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask unanimous consent that the time be equally divided.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

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

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

LEE AND MARTI NOMINATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I welcome the Senate's action today to confirm two well-regarded practitioners to important leadership positions charged with protecting and promoting intellectual property.

Michelle Lee, who is nominated to serve as the Director of the Patent and Trademark Office, USPTO, will be the first woman and first Asian Pacific American to hold this position. She is also the daughter of immigrants who moved to this country and contributed to the growth of Silicon Valley through her father's career as an electrical engineer. Her historic nomination is an American success story, and it is fitting that she is confirmed today to lead the office that is home to countless stories of successful innovation and creation by Americans throughout the country.

The USPTO has been without a Senate-confirmed director for more than 2 years, which is far too long for an office that is so important to our Nation's innovators and to our economy. Close to 600,000 patent applications and 450,000 trademark class applications are filed with the office each year. By serving America's innovators, the USPTO helps Vermonters and citizens across the country build their businesses and bring their inventions to the global marketplace.

Ms. Lee is charged with leading this office at a time when too many bad actors are abusing the patent system. Something must be done to address misconduct by bad actors who are targeting everyone from small businesses in Vermont to larger companies that are crucial to our economy. Congress plays an important role in this discussion, and as I have said for the last 2 years, we must enact balanced reforms to ensure the patent system can thrive. While that discussion continues in Congress, the USPTO Director must ensure the policies we currently have in place work for the diverse patent community.

Among those policies is carrying out the landmark reforms in the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act, the greatest transformation to our patent system in over 60 years. This landmark law has helped simplify the process for patent approval, reduce backlogs at the USPTO, and harmonize our patent system with the rest of the world. The AIA sought to improve patent quality by creating new and more efficient administrative proceedings at the USPTO. Three years later, the USPTO has now received over 2,000 petitions for post-grant review. These measures are important to help businesses that fall into the crosshairs of overbroad patents. But improving the quality of patents also improves their value for inventors and investors, too. The USPTO is doing tremendous work to implement these new programs under Ms. Lee's current leadership as Deputy Director of the office. Because of the AIA, there are now four satellite offices around the country to make the USPTO more accessible to inventors and small businesses. The USPTO has strengthened its pro bono program and used its fee-setting authority created by the AIA to gain better financial independence.

These are profound improvements, but strong leadership at the USPTO is needed to ensure the America Invents Act helps our patent system to thrive in the 21st century. As the USPTO's Deputy Director, Ms. Lee has proven to be thoughtful, balanced, and respectful of the diverse perspectives across the patent community. I look forward to continuing the Judiciary Committee's productive relationship with Ms. Lee and with the USPTO.

I also welcome the Senate's action today to confirm Daniel Marti as the second Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, or ''IPEC.'' The IPEC was created by legislation I authored in 2008, the PRO–IP Act, which passed the Senate with unanimous support. In creating this position, our goal was to take a comprehensive approach to intellectual property enforcement within the U.S. government, to ensure that law enforcement has the tools it needs, and that agencies are working together efficiently. The first IPEC, Victoria Espinel, built a strong record in this position, and I am confident Mr. Marti will do well continuing this important work.

The protection of intellectual property is important to our Nation's creators, artists, inventors, and businesses alike. Whether one is a filmmaker whose work is being copied and distributed online without permission, or a family-owned business in Vermont that discovers knock-off copies of its products being sold at half the price, intellectual property theft harms innovators across the country. It also harms consumers, as we have learned from the repeated, devastating stories of victims who inadvertently purchased counterfeit medicines or other products not knowing they were of dangerously low quality.

The IPEC plays an important role coordinating law enforcement and industry efforts to address these pressing issues. Nowhere is this work more important than in addressing counterfeiting and infringement in the online world—a complex, global problem that requires creative, thoughtful solutions. Just last month, leading advertising networks announced a new initiative to help ensure that they avoid inadvertently supporting websites that serve no legitimate purpose other than to traffic in stolen content and property. Search engines have now acknowledged that they, too, have a responsibility to help address illegal activity online. I hope Mr. Marti will renew the IPEC's work to support and encourage these voluntary initiatives, and will continue these efforts with other actors who drive so much of the online economy. Every business that operates in the Internet ecosystem has a role to play.

Mr. Marti is currently the managing partner of the Washington, DC office of Kilpatrick, Townsend & Stockton LLP. A graduate of Georgetown University and Emory University School of Law, he has spent his entire legal career specializing in intellectual property law, with a focus in trademark law and the protection of intellectual property both domestically and internationally.

I look forward to continuing the Judiciary Committee's productive relationship with Mr. Marti and the IPEC office. Last year, Senator GRASSLEY and I sent a letter to President Obama urging him to nominate a candidate to fill the IPEC position, which has been vacant for over 18 months. I chaired a confirmation hearing for Mr. Marti in December in the hope that the Senate would move swiftly with his confirmation this year. With Mr. Marti's confirmation today, the IPEC office can return fully to its important work.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote on two nominees charged with important responsibilities in the enforcement of our Nation's intellectual property laws.

The first is Daniel Marti, who is nominated to become Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator in the Executive Office of the President.

The second is Michelle Lee, who is nominated to become the next Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

The United States is a world leader in the innovation of cutting-edge technologies and products that improve our daily lives. Importantly, the United States' economy, indeed every industry, relies heavily on intellectual property.

Because intellectual property rights are critical to the Nation's economic well-being, we need strong and capable leaders at the helm of the offices that deal with patents, trademarks and copyrights. And because the top positions at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the Office of the Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator have been vacant for quite some time, I am pleased that we are able to fill them today with two highly qualified candidates.

Mr. Marti and Ms. Lee have proven track records in the field of intellectual property law and are well respected by the intellectual property community.

Their experience and expertise are of the caliber required for their respective positions. I believe they are excellent candidates for these positions, and I will support their nominations.

VOTE ON MARTI NOMINATION

The question now occurs on the Marti nomination.

Mr. VITTER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Daniel Henry Marti, of Virginia, to be Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, Executive Office of the President?

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 92, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 69 Ex.]

YEAS—92

Alexander	Fischer	Murray
Ayotte	Flake	Nelson
Baldwin	Franken	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Hatch	Reed
Booker	Heitkamp	Reid
Boozman	Heller	Risch
Boxer	Hirono	Roberts
Brown	Hoeven	Rounds
Burr	Inhofe	Sanders
Cantwell	Isakson	Sasse
Capito	Johnson	Schatz
Cardin	Kaine	Schumer
Carper	King	Scott
Casey	Kirk	Sessions
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Shelby
Cochran	Lankford	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Sullivan
Coons	Lee	Tester
Corker	Manchin	Thune
Cornyn	Markey	Tillis
Cotton	McCain	Udall
Crapo	McCaskill	Vitter
Daines	McConnell	Warner
Donnelly	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Enzi	Mikulski	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Wyden
Feinstein	Murphy	

NOT VOTING—8

Coats	Heinrich	Shaheen
Cruz	Murkowski	Toomey
Graham	Rubio	

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON LEE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Michelle K. Lee, of California, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON HALL NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Jeffery S. Hall, of Kentucky, to be a Member of the Farm Credit Administration Board, Farm Credit Administration, for a term expiring October 13, 2018?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON TONSAGER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Dallas P. Tonsager, of South Dakota, to be a Member of the Farm Credit Administration Board, Farm Credit Administration, for a term expiring May 21, 2020?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislation session.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SELMA MARCHES

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I rise today on the 50th anniversary of the Selma marches and to call on Congress to come together to protect all Americans' sacred right to vote.

In March of 1965, thousands of Americans came together in Alabama to march the 54-mile highway from Selma to the State capital of Montgomery. They marched in defiance of the segregationist repression in the Jim Crow South. They marched to demand that Black American citizens be allowed to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

On March 7, 1965, 50 years ago this week, some 600 civil rights marchers headed east of Selma on U.S. Route 80. That day, March 7, would go down in history as Bloody Sunday. They got as far as the Edmund Pettus Bridge, 6 blocks away, where State and local law enforcement attacked them with billy clubs and tear gas and drove them back into Selma.

This photo reflects the scene on the bridge where JOHN LEWIS and others were being struck down with batons. Images of peaceful marchers brutally attacked by uniformed State troopers were broadcast worldwide. Seeing how peaceful activists who sought to ensure the franchise were treated by the very law enforcement officers sworn to uphold the law in Selma shocked the conscience of Americans everywhere and began an awakening that would ultimately lead to the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Two days later, on March 9, Martin Luther King, Jr., led a symbolic march to the same bridge where they were confronted by State troopers. Still awaiting requested Federal protection, and seeking to minimize the risk of additional violence, Dr. King turned the marchers around and led them back to the church where they had started.

Dr. King knew the threat of Jim Crow had to be stopped by the law, so he sought Federal court protection for a third full-scale march from Selma to the State capital in Montgomery. Ruling in favor of the demonstrators, Federal District Court Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr., wrote:

> The law is clear that the right to petition one's government for the redress of grievances may be exercised in large groups . . . and these rights may be exercised by marching, even along public highways.

On Sunday, March 21, 2 weeks after Bloody Sunday, approximately 3,200 marchers set out for Montgomery, walking 12 miles a day and sleeping in fields. By the time they reached the capital on Thursday, March 25, they were 25,000 strong.

As Dr. King said standing in front of the capital that day:

> Selma, Alabama became a shining moment in the conscience of man. If the worst in American life lurked in its dark streets, the best of American instincts arose passionately from across the nation to overcome it.

Less than 5 months after the last of the three marches, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965—landmark legislation that fundamentally transformed voting rights in the United States, particularly in the Jim Crow South.

As Americans, we all owe a debt of gratitude to those who marched, those who bled, and in some cases those who died, to transform the Voting Rights Act from a bill into a reality.

This past weekend a group of Republican and Democratic lawmakers traveled to Selma, AL, to join President Obama and former President Bush in honoring those brave Americans who worked tirelessly and at great personal cost to secure equal rights for all citizens regardless of their race. As our Nation thinks about their tremendous patriotism and sacrifice this month, it is a particularly appropriate time to talk about the role Congress can play in safeguarding the hard-won rights of minority voters by working to restore the integrity of the Voting Rights Act.

The oath of office that each of us takes when we become a Senator is to ''support and defend the Constitution''—and that means supporting and defending voting rights, which are explicitly enumerated in our U.S. Constitution.