

I yield the floor, and 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. BOND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### SENATE HOLD ON GSA NOMINEE

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, earlier today, apparently, our distinguished majority leader came to the floor and noted that a nomination for GSA—made on the opening day of Major League Baseball season—still remains unconfirmed for the job and said it was “because a Republican Senator is demanding a Federal building is built in his home State.”

Obviously, I am that Senator. I thank the good Senator from Nevada for raising that question because I and a bipartisan group of Members of Congress and the leaders of the Kansas City area have been working with the GSA for the past several weeks to resolve the concerns I have and get some questions answered on a project very important to the Kansas City community.

Our conversations have amazingly become very productive, and the GSA has assured me they will have information to share very shortly. Unfortunately, until I put this hold on the nominee, progress was not quite so quick. But I expect the issue to be resolved shortly, in what I hope is a matter of a couple days, to the benefit of the GSA and certainly to the benefit of the Kansas City greater community.

Let me point out one other thing before leaving the floor. The community of Kansas City—all of the leadership, the elected officials and others—had gone together to work with the GSA to get a building—a new building—to replace an existing building, which by any stretch of the imagination is extremely expensive, is partly occupied, and is not conducive to good work, as a good workplace, and it needs to be replaced. We had gone all the way through, gotten GSA approval and gotten to OMB. Then it was held up in the Senate. After all the financing had been committed to construct a building on a lease-to-own basis, they decided to pull the plug.

The Commissioner of Public Buildings has assured me that the existing facility is not a fit place for the workers to work. So I had asked and inquired of GSA and advised them that Kansas City needs to know what the plans are. As I say, our bipartisan congressional delegation is now receiving great cooperation, and we are working hard to get this resolved. We hope to do that shortly.

I also want to point to the fact that, according to a report in governmentexecutive.com, delay on this nom-

ination reaches back long before my informational hold, which occurred in late July. Since Senator REID suggested the nomination has been pending since April, it raises the question: Why wasn't she approved in April, May, June or July, prior to my informational hold? That was a period during which the baseball season started and stretched long past the All-Star break.

According to governmentexecutive.com, the delay was because of concerns by Senator REID that GSA allow Federal employees to travel to Las Vegas to meet, gamble or whatever one does in Vegas. It is important to the Federal employees in Kansas City that they have a building that has a roof that doesn't leak—a proposition of which GSA concurs. Senator REID apparently wants Federal employees to be able to visit Las Vegas, and certainly I want Federal employees to have a good place to work. Senator REID has his priorities regarding the delay on this nomination and I have mine. He wants more people in Las Vegas; I want to get the building that had been promised and was expected by the Federal employees in Kansas City.

Assuming the report in governmentexecutive.com is accurate, I wish to make sure it is clear to the Senate that the delay in approval of this nomination has more than one father and is truly bipartisan.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of the article to which I referred.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From Congress Daily, Sept. 14, 2009]

#### SENATE MAJORITY LEADER SLOWS ACTION ON GSA NOMINEE

(By Dan Friedman)

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., has missed few chances to complain about blocked executive nominations, regularly ripping Republicans for holds that he said are designed to limit floor time for Democratic legislation.

On Thursday, for example, Reid faulted Republican “stalling tactics” for forcing a cloture vote before the confirmation of Cass Sunstein to head OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. In a June floor speech, he blasted Republicans for placing holds on more than 20 nominations.

But multiple Democratic and Republican staffers say Reid himself slowed action on one of the highest-ranking nominees awaiting confirmation, Martha Johnson. She is President Obama's pick to head the General Services Administration.

Johnson, a former GSA chief of staff, cannot start her job until she is confirmed, a GSA spokeswoman said.

Reid is keen to promote travel to Nevada, where he faces a tough re-election fight next year. Aides said he delayed confirmation of Johnson while seeking assurances that the agency, which oversees federal travel policy, did not discourage federal employees from traveling to Las Vegas for business conferences.

Johnson's nomination cleared the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee in June, and drew no GOP objections when it was circulated to all Sen-

ate offices. But a Democrat apparently held up the nomination and prevented a floor vote, Senate staffers from both parties said.

“We later learned that Reid has expressed some concerns about travel,” said a senior Republican aide. “He had some concerns about that and was using the Martha Johnson nomination as leverage with the White House and GSA.”

The aide said Reid did not place a technical hold, which would not be needed since the majority leader controls the floor schedule.

“It is not accurate to say that Sen. Reid had a hold on the nomination. . . . It is typical practice that a nomination is reviewed once it is received,” a Democratic leadership aide familiar with the matter said. “There were a couple of issues that needed clarification on the nomination.”

Reid has touted his concern about agencies limiting travel to Las Vegas. In an exchange of letters in July, he asked White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel to ensure federal agencies do not prohibit travel to Las Vegas and other conference destinations that “are considered too leisure oriented.” On July 27 he sent a letter asking federal agencies not to limit travel to any specific U.S. cities.

After Reid's concerns were resolved, Sen. Christopher (Kit) Bond, R-Mo., placed his own hold on the nomination last month because of concerns about delays in a federal construction project in Kansas City. Bond has met with Johnson, but is continuing the hold while waiting for further information from the nominee, a spokesman said.

Mr. BOND. I thank the Chair. I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

Mr. BURR. I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 20 minutes.

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

#### SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS OF VETERANS

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about an issue I have been working on for 2 years—namely, ending the arbitrary process through which our own government takes away the second amendment rights of veterans. Let me briefly describe what I mean about this issue.

As most of my colleagues know, the Federal Gun Control Act prohibits the sale of firearms to certain individuals, including convicted felons, fugitives, drug users, illegal aliens, and individuals who have been “adjudicated as a mental defective.” Furthermore, the Gun Control Act prohibits possession of firearms by any of these classified individuals. Needless to say, it is a serious matter. Criminal prosecution is