Whereas automatic fire alarm systems provide the early warning of a fire that is necessary for occupants and the fire department to take appropriate action; whereas automatic fire sprinkler systems are a highly effective method of controlling or extinguishing a fire in its early stages, protecting the lives of the building's occupants; whereas many college students live in off-campus residences, fraternity and sorority housing, and residence halls that are not adequately protected with automatic fire sprinkler systems and automatic fire alarm systems; whereas fire safety education is an effective way of reducing the occurrence of fires and reducing the resulting loss of life and property damage; whereas college students do not routinely receive effective fire safety education during their time in college; whereas it is vital to educate young people in the United States about the importance of fire safety to help ensure fire-safe behavior by young people during their college years and beyond; and whereas, by developing a generation of fire-safe adults, future loss of life from fires may be significantly reduced: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates September 2011 as “Campus Fire Safety Month”; and
(2) encourages administrators of institutions of higher education and municipalities across the country—

(A) to provide educational programs to all students during September and throughout the school year;
(B) to evaluate the level of fire safety being provided in both on- and off-campus student housing; and
(C) to ensure fire-safe living environments through fire safety education, installation of fire suppression and detection systems, and the development and enforcement of applicable codes relating to fire safety.

NATIONAL AIRBORNE DAY

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate adoption of S. Res. 255.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 255) designating August 16, 2011, as “National Airborne Day.”

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

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements relating to this matter be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 255) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. Res. 255

Whereas the airborne forces of the Armed Forces have a long and honorable history as bold and fierce warriors who, for the national security of the United States and the defense of freedom and peace, project the ground combat power of the United States by air transport to the far reaches of the battle area and to the far corners of the world; whereas the United States’ experiment with airborne operations began on June 7, 1940, when the Army Parachute Test Platoon was first authorized by the Department of War, and 48 volunteers began training in July 1940; whereas August 16 marks the anniversary of the first official Army parachute jump on August 16, 1940, to test the innovative concept of inserting ground combat forces behind a battle line by means of a parachute; whereas the success of the Army Parachute Test Platoon in the days immediately before the entry of the United States into World War II prompted the evolution of those forces into a diversified force of parachute and air-assault units that, over the years, have fought in Korea, Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, the Persian Gulf region, and Somalia, and have engaged in peacekeeping operations in Lebanon, the Sinai Peninsula, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo; whereas since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, United States airborne forces, which include members of the XVIII Airborne Corps, the 82nd Airborne Division, the 101st Airborne Division, the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team (Airborne) of the 82nd Infantry Division, the 505th Ranger Regiment, and special operations forces of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force, together with other units of the Armed Forces, have demonstrated bravery and honor in combat, stability, and training operations in Afghanistan and Iraq; whereas the modern-day airborne force also includes other elite forces composed of airborne-trained and qualified special operations warriors, including Army Special Forces, Marine Corps Reconnaissance units, Navy SEALs, and Air Force combat control and para-rescue operatives; whereas of the members and former members of the United States airborne forces, thousands have achieved the distinction of making combat jumps, dozens have earned the Medal of Honor, and hundreds have earned the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star, or other decorations and awards for displays of heroism, gallantry, intrepidity, and valor; whereas the members and former members of the United States airborne forces are all proud members of a proud and honorable tradition that, together with their special skills and achievements, distinguishes such members as intrepid combat parachutists, air assault forces, special operations forces, and, in former days, glider troops; whereas the history and achievements of the members and former members of the United States airborne forces want special expressions of the gratitude of the people of the United States; and whereas since the airborne forces, past and present, marked the anniversary of the first official jump by the Army Parachute Test Platoon, August 16 is an appropriate day to recognize as National Airborne Day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates August 16, 2011, as “National Airborne Day” and
(2) calls on the people of the United States to observe National Airborne Day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

NATIONAL CHESS DAY

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent to proceed to S. Res. 255.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 255) designating October 8, 2011, as “National Chess Day” to enhance awareness and encourage students and adults to engage in a game known to enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

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

Mr. ROCKEFELLER: Mr. President, I rise today in support of this resolution to designate National Chess Day as October 8, 2011. I greatly appreciate the support of my colleague, Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER of Tennessee.

National Chess Day is designed to enhance awareness and encourage students and adults to engage in a game known to enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

There are 76,000 members of the Chess Federation and half of them are students. Studies indicate that chess programs can help with students improving in math and reading. Engaging students in such activities can make learning fun and help them develop a lifelong pastime to engage their skills.

Engaging students in chess is a wonderful opportunity to promote education and, I hope as school begins in a few weeks, more students will join the Chess Federation and learn this historical game.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements relating to this matter be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 255) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. Res. 255

Whereas there are more than 76,000 members of the United States Chess Federation (referred to in this preamble as the “Federation”), and unknown numbers of additional people in the United States who play the game without joining an official organization;

Whereas approximately ½ of the members of the Federation are scholastic members, and many of the scholastic members join by the age of 10;

Whereas the Federation is very supportive of the scholastic programs and sponsors a
Certified Chess Coach program that provides the coaches involved in the scholastic pro-
grams training and ensures schools and stu-
dents can have confidence in the programs;

Whereas many studies have linked chess pro-
gress to the improvement of student scores in reading and math, as well as improved self-esteem;

Whereas the Federation offers a school cur-
riculum to educators to help incorporate chess into the school curriculum;

Whereas chess is a powerful cognitive learning tool that can be used to successfully enhance reading and math concepts; and

Whereas chess engages students of all learning styles and strengths and promotes problem-solving and higher-level thinking skills; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—
(1) designates October 6, 2011, as “National Chess Day”; and
(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe “National Chess Day” with appropriate programs and activities.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unan-
imous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 95, 220, 256, 267, 268, 269, 275, 277, 278, 279, 280, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 288, and Calendar Nos. 291 through 323, and nominations placed on the Secretary’s Desk in the Air Force, Army, Foreign Service, Marine Corps, and Navy; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc, the motions to re-
consider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; and that President Obama be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for the second year in a row, the Senate has failed to take significant steps before the August recess to address the seri-
ous crisis of judicial vacancies on courts around the country. Last Au-
gust, Senate Republicans left 17 judi-
cial nominations pending and con-
sented to confirm only four Federal circuit and district court nominations before the recess. I noted at that time what a serious blow that was to our ability to make progress addressing the judicial vacancies crisis that had al-
ready persisted for well over a year. Today, as the Senate recesses with judi-
cial vacancies still near 90 as they were a year ago, the Senate is doing even worse, confirming only 4 judicial nomina-
tions that the 24 nominees already con-

considered by the Judiciary Committee and awaiting a Senate vote.

Last week, I urged the Senate to con-
firm the two dozen judicial nomina-
tions already fully considered by the Judiciary Committee and ready for fin-
al action by the Senate. Of them, 20 were unanimously reported, without a single negative vote. Many have been pending without final action for months. I am, again, disappointed as Senate Republicans continue to delay these much needed and long awaited confirmations.

Even though Federal judicial vacan-
cies have remained near or above 90 for more than 2 years, the Senate’s Repub-
liean leadership has refused to consent to vote on these qualified, consensus nominations, leaving 16 of the 20 unani-
mosly reported nominees in limbo. This is real, enduring progress. The American people should not have to wait more weeks and months for the Senate to do its con-
stitutional duty and ensure the ability of our Federal courts to provide justice to Americans around the country.

In the past, we were able to confirm consensus nominees more promptly. They were not forced to languish for months. In the second year of the Bush administration, in 2002, before the Au-
gust recess the Senate moved ahead to confirm a dozen nominees. The next year, with a Republican Senate majority, Senate Democrats consented to seven confirmations before the Au-
gust recess. With the delays that have been backlogging confirmations for years, only 35 Federal judicial nominees have been confirmed, only 20 of whom had been awaiting Senate action. This is real, enduring progress. The American people should not have to wait more weeks and months for the Senate to do its con-
stitutional duty and ensure the ability of our Federal courts to provide justice to Americans around the country.

Just last week, the Congressional Re-
search Service released a report that confirms what many of us have been saying for some time: This is the long-
est sustained period of historically high vacancy rates on the Federal judi-
cracy in the last 35 years.

This is hardly surprising. Republican obstruction kept the total confirmations in the first year of the Presi-
dent’s term to the lowest total for a first term in 25 years, when 89 judicial vacancies existed. Republican leaders have waited to confirm judicial nominees who would all have been confirmed before this recess. Regrettably, 16 will not go forward today because Republicans refuse to consent.

At a time when judicial vacancies re-
main near 90, these needless delays per-
petuate the judicial vacancies crisis that Chief Justice Roberts wrote of last December and that the President, the Attorney General, bar associations, and chief judges around the country

have urged us to join together to end. The Senate can and should be doing a better job working to ensure the ability of our Federal courts to provide justice to Americans around the coun-
try.

In the past, we were able to lower vacancies dra-
astically during President Bush’s first term. The Senate proceeded to confirm 100 of his judicial nominees; during the next 24 months, with a Re-
publican majority in the Senate, con-

firmed 106 more, for a total of 266 con-
firmed Federal circuit and district court judges during Bush’s first term. We have a long way to go for the Senate to be as productive as we were during President Bush’s first term.

We were able to lower vacancies dra-
matically during President Bush’s years in office, cutting them in half during his first term. The Senate has reversed course during the Obama ad-
mnistration, and with Republican ob-
jection slowing the pace of confirmations, we have seen significant and substantial judicial vacancies again. In the past 2 years, the Senate has confirmed only 95 of his Federal circuit and district court nominees. President Obama has been in office for 31 months and only 95 of his Federal circuit and district court nominees have been confirmed. There remain 243 judicial vacancies, including 87 district court vacancies, on the docket that must be addressed before the Senate can conclude its work for the year.

Today, as the Senate recesses, Senate Republicans continue to delay these much needed and long awaited confirmations. In the 17 months I chaired the Ju-
diciary Committee during President Bush’s first term, the Senate confirmed 100 of his Federal circuit and district court nominees. It looks like it will take twice as long to reach 100 con-
firmed judicial nominees during President Fed-
cial circuit and district court nomi-
nees. President Obama has been in office for 31 months and only 95 of his Federal circuit and district court nominees have been confirmed. There are more than 243 judicial vacancies on the docket that must be addressed before the Senate can conclude its work for the year.

Time and time again over the last 2½ years, I have urged the Senate to come together and work to address this cri-

sis. At the beginning of this year, I called for a return to regular order in the consideration of nominations. We