

This broad array of support is indicative of his exceptional legal background. Judge Bacharach received his B.A., with high honors, from the University of Oklahoma in 1981 and his J.D. from Washington University School of Law in 1985. Judge Bacharach began his legal career as a law clerk for fellow Oklahoman, Chief Judge William J. Holloway, Jr., on the Tenth Circuit; thus, he is already quite familiar with those chambers. Following his two-year clerkship, he joined the outstanding Oklahoma-based law firm Crowe & Dunlevy, becoming a shareholder in 1994. After 12 years of private practice, he was appointed by the judges of his district court as a United States Magistrate Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma where he currently presides. In addition to serving as a magistrate judge, Judge Bacharach also served as an adjunct professor at the University of Oklahoma School of Law and received a number of outstanding awards and recognition for his years of scholarship and service.

In addition to his clear legal qualifications, even more important to my decision to support Judge Bacharach's nomination are the strong testimonies to his integrity and commitment to service outside of his judicial role. He is currently the Vice President of the Federal Bar Association (FBA) for the Tenth Circuit and formerly served the Oklahoma City Chapter of the FBA as President, Vice President, and a member of the Board of Directors.

Furthermore, Judge Bacharach serves the Oklahoma legal community beyond his professional capacity. One of his primary areas of service to his colleagues is through his involvement with the Oklahoma Bar Association's Lawyers Helping Lawyers Committee, which helps attorneys who are experiencing personal problems such as depression, alcoholism, and drug dependency. He has served on the committee for three years and also joined the Board of Directors of the Lawyers Helping Lawyers Foundation. Judge Bacharach serves Oklahoma outside of the legal profession as the Director and Executive Committee Member of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Oklahoma City and on the Board of Trustees of the Temple B'nai Israel.

I believe Judge Bacharach will uphold the highest standards and reflect the best in the American judicial tradition by joining the Tenth Circuit as a distinguished and respected member of the Oklahoma legal community. The Judiciary Committee received many letters of support for Judge Bacharach's nomination, including recommendations from judges, deans and professors from Oklahoma law schools, several bar associations, and attorneys from Judge Bacharach's former law firm, Crowe & Dunlevy.

Equally important to Judge Bacharach's qualifications is his judicial philosophy. I believe his record and his hearing testimony demonstrate

that he respects the limited role our founders intended judges and the federal government to play in our constitutional democracy.

Based on all of these factors, I believe Judge Bacharach will be an excellent addition to the Tenth Circuit, and I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

I offer my congratulations to Judge Bacharach and his family on this momentous occasion of his confirmation and wish him well in his new endeavor.

Judge Bacharach's nomination got caught up in the political shenanigans the majority leader and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee carried out at the end of the last Congress. Never before has a circuit court nominee come to the floor without notification of the very members of the Judiciary Committee who sponsored their nomination in the committee. So it was purely a political trick. And for that I think the Senate owes Judge Bacharach an apology for the delay. I have no doubt he will be confirmed, and I doubt there will be anybody who will vote against him.

That leads me to two other comments I wish to make. I have sat on the Judiciary Committee for four Supreme Court nominees, and so what I am about to say may strike some people as hyperbole, but it is not. The four Supreme Court nominees who appeared while I sat on the Judiciary Committee displayed great qualities, and what I am about to say doesn't diminish their characteristics or qualities at all, but I must say that Judge Bacharach has the two qualities that are at such a high level that we should want each and every judge who sits on our Federal bench to have them.

The first is personal integrity. Now, those words are used a lot in our country, but this man has demonstrated it with his life, with his commitments to other people, his commitment to helping other people, with the way he spends his time, with his commitment to his family and to his faith. You cannot find a blemish on this man in terms of his personal integrity, and very rarely can we say that about anybody. He is actually a stellar individual, exactly the type of individual our Founders had in mind, someone who has the kind of personal life that exemplifies the characteristics and qualities that built this country, a love for the law, and an understanding that the rule of law is the glue that holds our society together.

That leads me to the second quality. I have interviewed a lot of candidates for the Supreme Court and for judgeships and circuit court positions, and I have never met anybody who knows the Constitution, its limitations, and its intent better than Judge Bacharach. I think he quite assuredly impressed every member of the Judiciary Committee with his knowledge, his insight, and his background.

So Judge Bacharach brings together the two qualities that are so important

and represent the upper end of all the candidates I have seen in my 9 years in the Senate of those whom we would ask to fulfill some of the most important positions in our country and in our society.

I believe Judge Bacharach is the first judge I will have voted for whom I have no doubt of his absolute fidelity to the U.S. Constitution. So I sleep well at night. I wish we had 100 Judge Bacharachs—100—to put on the bench today. I don't believe he can be influenced by anything other than stare decisis, precedence, and the U.S. Constitution and the statutes. His personal life gives reflection and insight into how he is going to be a judge, how he will carry himself, how he will act in this position of power. When you meet him, what you find is one of the humblest of men with one of the greatest intellects I have ever known in my life.

So I will just say that I fully support his nomination. I congratulate him because I know he is going to be approved, and I say, Mr. President, bring us more Robert Bacharachs.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE LONG-TERM DEBT REDUCTION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, it has been 1,398 days since the Senate passed a budget. People wonder why we are lurching from one budget crisis to another one in Washington. The fact is this is not the only deadline that has been missed. This year the President failed to submit, by February 4, his proposed budget. But the truth is even last year when he submitted a budget, and it was voted on by the entire Senate, it received zero votes. In other words, it was not viewed as a reasonable and practical solution to the financial crisis that faces our country with \$16.5 trillion in debt and 40 cents out of every dollar being spent by the Federal Government being borrowed from our creditors.

Even before we reach the upcoming crisis which is known as the budget sequester—and I suggest most Americans would not consider a 2.4-percent cut in spending to be a crisis, but even before we reach this next stage in the budget negotiations, we know President Obama has proposed the same old solution to every budgetary question; that is, to raise taxes even though on December 31, with the fiscal cliff negotiations, we saw the President get his pound of flesh when it came to spending, and that is \$600 billion in additional revenue.

But this does, indeed, seem like the Washington version of Groundhog Day.

We know the President has rejected his own bipartisan fiscal commission's recommendations, the so-called Simpson-Bowles Commission recommendation, and he has rejected budget proposals put forward by the House of Representatives. Even though our gross national debt has gone up by nearly \$6 trillion under his watch, and even though it is projected to go up another \$9.5 trillion over the next decade, the President seems to be stuck on telling us it is only going to take a little bit more in taxes in order to solve the problem.

The American people understand we do not have a revenue problem, we have a spending problem—spending money we do not have—and the only way to reduce our long-term debt burden is through reining in that spending. And not just the 39 percent of it which represents discretionary spending; we need to reform our entitlement programs, Medicare and Social Security, in order to preserve and to protect those programs for future generations. Yet when we try to enact spending cuts or entitlement reforms, the President, unfortunately, has resorted to shameless fear mongering.

He is now warning that it will be the end of western civilization, or something like it, if we cut the Federal budget by 2.4 percent. When we consider that Federal spending has gone up over 19 percent since 2008, and when we consider how much inefficient and duplicative and downright wasteful spending there is in the Federal Government, it is hard to take this argument seriously.

For example, no one should be talking about raising more taxes from the American people on top of the \$600 billion that was extracted as a result of the fiscal cliff negotiations. No one should be talking about raising more taxes when the Federal Government made more than \$220 billion in improper payments over the last 2 years—that's right, \$220 billion in improper payments in the last 2 years—and this is just one example of costly government waste.

The President does not appear to believe in the urgency of the moment. He does not appear to believe that our country is headed for a true crisis. We all know interest rates are at historically low levels at this time. If interest rates were to go up just 1 percent or 2 percent more, for each percentage increase it would represent more than \$1 trillion in additional interest we would have to pay on our debt. It is easy to see if interest rates were to go back up to historic norms, 4 or 5 percent, that very quickly we would lose control of our financial system, and we would be able to do little more than pay interest on the debt and pay for Medicare and Social Security.

Both Senate Republicans and Democrats have shown that they understand the nature of the crisis we have before us, but we believe it is imperative that we support a budget that reduces our long-term debt.

The only way we can see a significant path forward to debt reduction is if the President joins us in these important negotiations. Unfortunately, so far, the President seems truly allergic to genuine bipartisan compromise.

Until the Obama administration, virtually every landmark domestic policy change in American history was achieved with bipartisan support. We all understand that; it cannot happen any other way. For example, both the 1935 Social Security Act and the 1964 Civil Rights Act were signed by a Democratic President and supported by large majorities of Senate Republicans. The 1996 Welfare Reform Act signed by President Clinton was backed by every single Member of the Republican Senate caucus, along with the majority of Senate Democrats.

Likewise, during the Reagan years, most Senate Democrats voted for the 1983 Social Security amendments, and a whopping 94 percent of Senate Democrats voted for the 1986 Tax Reform Act. Under President George W. Bush 84 percent of Senate Democrats voted for No Child Left Behind.

In other words, Presidents have traditionally understood that reform and results take leadership and only then will bipartisan support follow. Yet the President seems to neglect this obvious fact and instead prefers to continue what seems like a perpetual campaign and knock down straw men rather than actually doing something about our skyrocketing debt.

Real debt reduction will require Presidential leadership, the kind of leadership that President Clinton displayed in 1993 when he convinced 47 percent of Senate Democrats and 40 percent of House Democrats to defy organized labor and support the North American Free Trade Agreement. Since then, U.S. trade with Canada has nearly tripled, and U.S. trade with Mexico has increased almost sixfold.

My hope is that the President will ultimately show the kind of leadership we have seen throughout this Nation's history when we are confronted with big challenges. He has acknowledged the need for serious reform.

I believe he understands the problem perfectly: We cannot preserve and protect Social Security and Medicare unless we deal with those programs now. Yet he has never acted on his words, instead choosing to engage in the perpetual campaign.

As a result, Washington keeps spending money it doesn't have and saddling our children with more debt. Meanwhile our safety-net programs are spiraling toward a collapse that will leave the poor and elderly even more vulnerable. It is time for a change, and it is time for the President to take his rhetoric about debt reduction and turn it into real meaningful reform.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, as I have every year since I came to the Senate, I rise to commemorate Black History Month. This year, we are privileged to recognize Bill Strickland, a man whose approach is unique and whose accomplishments are of great consequence to African-Americans, and in fact, to all Americans. From the age of 19, Bill Strickland has worked tirelessly to improve the lives of those living in poverty, to give them a setting they can thrive in and a future they can take pride in.

Bill grew up in the Manchester neighborhood of Pittsburgh, on the city's north side. Prior to the decline of industry in the city in the mid-1960s, Manchester was a solid, working class community. But by the time Bill was in high school, the area around him had slid into urban decay and instability. Though surrounded by poverty, Bill's mother was determined to provide a safe environment for her family. And though she didn't have a high school diploma herself, Bill's mother held firm to the belief that a good education was the ticket to a better life. At Oliver High School, when he began his senior year Bill had neither plans for after graduation or a clear picture of what his future might look like.

Then one day while walking down the hallway at school, Bill was attracted by the smell of fresh coffee. The coffee, along with the sounds of jazz, led Bill to the art room in Oliver High where he watched a pot being formed from a mound of clay on a turntable. Seated at the potter's wheel was Frank Ross, Oliver High's art teacher who would become Bill's close friend and mentor. Over the next year, in the calm atmosphere of Frank's well-lit art studio, Bill would develop a talent for ceramics. As importantly, it provided a safe and stable sanctuary from the chaos of the streets. At the potter's wheel Bill found his passion, and although he didn't know it yet, he was also forming the beginning of a vision that would become Manchester Bidwell Corporation.

In 1967, Bill graduated from Oliver High School and, at the instance of Frank Ross, applied to the University of Pittsburgh where he was accepted, but only as a probationary student. Although he had begun his studies full-time, Bill never lost the connection with his neighborhood. In the summer of 1968, as Manchester grappled with the racial tensions that swept many inner cities, Bill decided to open an arts center in his neighborhood. He had seen the power a bright, orderly, safe place like Frank Ross' studio and the artistic work done there had had on his own life. He wanted to give the young people of Manchester a place where they too could escape the effects of economic and social devastation and experience something beautiful. A conversation with a young minister working in the area led Bill to his first \$25,000 in funding and the Manchester