

Sgt. Bignotti began her career in October 1985, when she was appointed as a U.S. Capitol Police officer and assigned to the House of Representatives Division. Less than 1 year later, she was selected to serve as a member of the First Responder Unit.

Her career with the Capitol Police included assignments to the Office of the Chief of Police, the Dignitary Protection Unit, the Senate Division, the Patrol Division, and the Library of Congress Division. Sgt. Bignotti's most highly regarded assignment came in 2003 when she was promoted to serve as Unit Commander of the USCP Mounted Unit. Her horse, Henry, will always have a special place in Sgt. Bignotti's heart.

Sgt. Bignotti represented the department with distinction in her duties that included assisting during the 1990 Goodwill Games in Seattle, WA; serving as a representative during National Police Week ceremonies; participating in the Special Olympics ceremonies and recruiting class graduations, and other special events as designated by the Chief of Police. In 1991, she received commendation as a member of the Ceremonial Unit for Honor Guard duties associated with Queen Elizabeth's visit to the Capitol.

As a former officer with the U.S. Capitol Police, I have a special appreciation for the commitment and dedication of the men and women on this force. I, along with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, wish Sgt. Bignotti all the best in her retirement.

FOREIGN MEDICAL SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last week I introduced the Foreign Medical School Accountability Fairness Act. The bill seeks to fix a loophole exploited by for-profit schools to tap into the federal Treasury at the expense of students.

Under current law, a small number of medical schools in the Caribbean—about five, four of which are for-profit—are exempt from meeting the same requirements to qualify for title IV funding that all other medical schools outside of the U.S. and Canada must meet. This loophole allows these schools to enroll large percentages of American students—which means access to more Federal dollars.

The biggest of these schools are St. George's, Ross, and American University of the Caribbean whose enrollments of Americans are 70 percent, 91 percent, and 86 percent respectively. Other schools are prohibited from having U.S. citizens make up more than 40 percent of enrollment.

These for-profit schools have turned the idea of being a foreign school on its head—they are located outside of the United States, but have majority-American enrollments. They do not have to meet the same high standards U.S. medical schools must meet, but also do not have to meet the same re-

quirements as schools located outside of the U.S. to access hundreds of millions of dollars of Federal funding.

Pretty sweet deal, huh?

In fact in 2012, the three schools I mentioned earlier—St. George's and the two DeVry-owned schools—took in more than \$450 million from the Federal Government from American taxpayers. That amounted to more than two-thirds of all title IV funding that went to all foreign medical schools.

To sum up—three schools, two-thirds of the Federal funding, exempt from the law.

Not only are these schools exempt from the enrollment requirement, but they don't have to meet a minimum standard of success—having 75 percent of their students pass the U.S. board exams—a requirement for any of its students to actually practice medicine in the United States. The University of Sydney—with its dozen or so American students—has to meet this standard in order to receive title IV dollars. But DeVry's Ross University, with 1,000 or more American students, does not.

It doesn't seem right to the Department of Education, which says there is no rationale for continuing the exemption. And it doesn't seem right to me, either. Especially when you consider what students are getting for this Federal investment—more debt, higher rates of attrition, and lower residency match rates than U.S. medical schools.

Translation: More debt and less chance of becoming a doctor.

In September, an article in Bloomberg by Janet Lorin entitled “Devry Lures Medical School Rejects as Taxpayers Fund Debt” shined a bright light on the poor student outcomes of these schools.

It is no secret that for-profit foreign medical schools prey on students who have been rejected by traditional U.S. medical schools. They promise to fulfill the unrequited dreams for students who want to be doctors, but for one reason or another, did not make the cut in the U.S. On average, scores on the MCAT, the test required to enter medical school, of students attending these offshore for-profit schools are lower than those of students who are admitted to medical schools in the U.S. In 2012, students at U.S. medical schools scored an average of 31.2 out of 45 on the MCAT while students at the DeVry medical schools scored an average of 25.

The attrition rate at U.S. medical schools averaged 3 percent for the class beginning in 2009, while rates at for-profit foreign medical schools can be up to 26 percent or higher. More than a quarter of the students at some of these schools drop out.

On average, students at for-profit medical schools operating outside of the United States and Canada amass more student debt than those at medical schools in the United States. For example, in 2012, graduates of the American University of the Caribbean had a median of \$253,000 in student debt

versus \$170,000 for graduates of U.S. medical schools.

To add insult to injury, these foreign trained graduates are on average less competitive candidates for coveted U.S. residency positions. In 2013, residency match rates for foreign trained graduates averaged 53 percent compared to 94 percent for graduates of medical schools in the United States. They are even less likely to land a residency position the second time around.

According to the Bloomberg article I referenced earlier, one graduate of St. George's University, Michael Uva, amassed almost \$400,000 in medical school loans, but failed to land a residency spot twice. Michael now works at a blood donation clinic earning \$30 an hour. Although he sacrificed years of his life training for it, without completing a residency he will never get to practice medicine and this \$400,000 debt will likely follow him throughout his life.

Congress has failed taxpayers and students by subsidizing these Caribbean schools with billions in Federal dollars for years without adequate accountability and oversight. This bill takes a first step at addressing that failure by ensuring these Caribbean schools must meet the same standards other schools outside of the United States and Canada must meet.

At the same time, these schools are just another example of the systemic problem we have with for-profit colleges trying to make a buck off of students in this country and usually bilking Uncle Sam to do it. In fiscal year 2010, we sent \$32 billion to all for-profit schools.

There are three numbers you need to remember when thinking about for-profit schools:

The percentage of high school graduates that enroll in for-profit schools—12 percent;

The percentage of Department of Education title IV funds that go to for-profit schools—25 percent;

The percentage of student loan defaults for profit schools are responsible for—47 percent.

I have been fighting these schools for a long time. But today I have a message for those schools down in the sunny Caribbean who may have thought they could continue to exploit taxpayers and students without anybody noticing—we're watching.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I regret that I was absent from the Senate yesterday and was unable to vote on the nomination of Jeh Johnson to be Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. Had I been here, I would have voted in opposition to this nominee.

Reforming our broken immigration system is one of the Nation's top priorities. To that end, ensuring that our borders are secure and preventing illegal entry is absolutely vital. In my capacity as the senior Senator from Arizona and one of the lead advocates of

comprehensively reforming our immigration system, I have a solemn obligation and a constitutional prerogative to make sure that the Department of Homeland Security, DHS, accomplishes that mission. In furtherance of that obligation and that prerogative, I—indeed Congress—must count on DHS cooperation to provide any relevant information I and this body request.

Unfortunately, in connection with the Senate's effort to craft legislation to help secure our borders, the former DHS Secretary unjustifiably refused to provide such information. The information I asked for was intended to let Congress and the American people judge for themselves if progress is being made to protect our borders from illegal entry. To date, I never received that information from this administration.

So first during his confirmation hearing and then in writing, I asked Mr. Johnson to commit to me that, if confirmed as the new DHS Secretary, he would provide me that same information. Unfortunately, on grounds that I find to be specious and unacceptable, he declined. On the basis of his response, I can only conclude that, if confirmed, the level of cooperation between DHS and me, particularly on the vitally important issue of border security—when comprehensive immigration remains such a vitally important issue—would remain business as usual, and that is unacceptable. It is unacceptable to me and to the people who interests I am committed to representing.

For this reason, I have no choice other than to oppose Mr. Johnson's nomination.

I have known Jeh for some time. I have respect for his work while General Counsel for the Department of Defense. In particular, I applaud his efforts in the development of the Department of Defense's policy regarding the use of deadly force in connection with counterterrorist operations and other important defense and national security issues.

But what I have seen all too frequently is the inability or unwillingness of appointed officials within this administration to free themselves from the unelected, unpointed, political staff in the West Wing that put political expediency ahead of meaningful governance. I can have no tolerance for another Secretary who will act as nothing more than a road block on behalf of those with a political agenda and is either unwilling or unable to provide transparency into the actions of this department and its components.

Congress, particularly those of us who are the border, has the right to have that information. It is our responsibility and obligation to our constituents. I have constituents in my State who every night, there are people who are crossing their border illegally. I have constituents that every day, drug smugglers are going across their property and their homes. They certainly

have the right, as citizens, to know what measures need to be taken in order to control our border.

Earlier this year, the Senate passed a comprehensive immigration bill with 67 votes that included unprecedented increases in spending to help secure the border. The information we based these spending increases on came directly from leadership within the Border Patrol, and I believe it will be successful. But the American people deserve to have more than my faith in the efforts of the Border Patrol as to whether the border is made secure. Our constituents are relying on us to finally secure the border but also be good stewards of their tax dollars and to have the capabilities to ensure their money is being used wisely and if not, to make the appropriate adjustments.

When developing this legislation, we requested information from Secretary Napolitano that I believe would have helped make the legislation stronger and potentially garner more support from my Republican colleagues. This information was never provided to us, I believe, for solely political reasons but has ultimately harmed our ability to get comprehensive immigration reform legislation signed into law.

This is the source of my disappointment with Mr. Johnson: His refusal to commit to provide the information necessary would prevent Members of Congress from making reasonable and informed decisions that serve the American people. And Mr. Johnson did so under circumstances that other Members of this body have sought—and obtained—commitments of cooperation.

For example, here is what Secretary Kerry said in response to a request for answers regarding the Benghazi raid: “[H]ere's what I say to you. After 29 years here—in my 29th, I respect the prerogatives of the United States Senate and the members of Congress. You represent the American people, you're the other branch of government, you have the right to know what took place. And I have an obligation commensurate with the, you know, regulations and classifications and privacy and other things that are at play here, to help you get the answers, and we'll do that.”

And what did I get from Mr. Johnson? “If I am confirmed . . . I promise that addressing your letter will be a top and immediate priority for me.”

For years, we were told that apprehensions are down and the border is more secure. In reality, we all knew that the economy was the primary driver in reducing potential illegal border crossers. In the last 2 years, with slight improvements in the economy, we have seen a 20 percent increase in the number of apprehensions. Does that mean the border is less or more secure?

For years DHS has been telling us they are developing a border security index in a shift away from using apprehensions as the sole measure of success

and to get a true measure of security along the border. We have been waiting 3 years with no sign that the index will be made public. All indications are the development of the index has been shelved.

Until Congress is provided greater information on the capabilities and deficiencies of the Department of Homeland Security's abilities to secure the border, Congress will not be able to determine if the border is secure.

I regret that Jeh Johnson has refused to commit to providing this information to Congress, and I do not support his nomination.

TRIBUTE TO KAREN PONZURICK BROWN

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the outstanding work of an invaluable member of my staff. Karen Ponzurick Brown, who is really quite young, has already reached 25 years of service on Capitol Hill, and she has chosen to retire. For 7½ years, she has worked tirelessly in a job that calls for 24/7/365 attention. I cannot thank her enough for her dedicated assistance. And I also thank her husband Paul who has shared his wife's attention with me for these many years.

Karen came to work for me at a time when technology was rapidly changing for the position that she held. While she had never worked in this type of capacity before, her sharp mind and intuitive sense quickly assessed how to put together a system that ensured Idahoans received priority attention on my schedule. She has been instrumental in creating efficiencies and effective processes in our office and in my time. Karen is conscientious, structured and hardworking. She was accessible to anyone who needed her and was a mentor to many of our staff. Her calm demeanor has soothed many agitated callers seeking appointments. Her sense of decorum has provided me and my staff with a greater sense of professionalism. Her ability to anticipate challenges has saved the day many times over. I have great respect for her thorough, diligent and well-thought-out approach to tackling any problem, and I will truly miss having her input on the many challenges that are encountered in our everyday workplace.

But above all her professional qualities, Karen has been a great friend and trusted advisor, and there are no words strong enough to express my gratitude for that friendship, which I hope will continue. No matter the challenges at hand, she always strives to meet and exceed expectations. Karen has been a great asset to me, my staff, Idahoans and countless others throughout her two and a half decades of committed public service. Thank you, Karen, for your dedication. Your confident and strong guidance will truly be missed, and I wish you all the best. Retirement has been a tough choice for you, but I know that you are at peace with that