

I might preface this by saying I grew up in the Midwest. Tornadoes are a part of our lives. I cannot recall how many times I was rousted out of my bed in the middle of the night as the sirens were going on outside and mom and dad would take me to the basement. That is what we did as I grew up in the Midwest. Tornadoes were part of our lives.

This morning showed what happened in Nebraska yesterday to be a virtually unique occurrence—twin tornadoes came ripping through the State of Nebraska killing people and destroying lives and businesses and homes and farms. There was a reflection on this about how the weather seems to be getting more extreme in this country. Are we getting more and more extreme weather events, many of which are very destructive? I think the clear answer is yes. Don't trust a politician or even an environmentalist for that answer. Go to the people who do this for a living. That is what I did. I held a hearing and called the leaders from the property and casualty insurance companies. They do this for a living, and they said not only are we getting more extreme weather events, they are much more expensive than ever before. The destruction is much larger. So many insurance companies, because of these extreme weather events, are starting to charge higher premiums and backing off of coverage. They said they can't create a reserve for the possibility of an extreme weather event that would be so destructive.

There are some people who hear what I just said and say: Well, God has his ways—or her ways—and God may decide the weather is going to be a lot tougher for you in this generation than in other generations. I heard that back home. But there are some people who believe—and I am one of them—that this is not just God's work, this has something to do with our work on this planet.

I happen to believe carbon pollution is a challenge, not just for America but for the world, and we need to reduce carbon pollution, which is changing the planet we live on. Because of carbon pollution, this warming climate—this warming planet—is creating situations which are troubling.

There was an article in the paper over the weekend. Norfolk, VA—not a liberal bastion—is now taking steps because of the rising ocean. It is up about a foot and a half from what they knew as the standard and they expect it to grow even more, threatening buildings, commerce, and homes all around that area. The impact of climate change and carbon pollution is evident in every direction of this world.

I have said this on the floor four or five times and I will repeat it: There is only one major political party in the world today that denies climate change and denies these extreme weather events have anything to do with our activity on Earth. The Republican Party of the United States of America

is in denial. So when they deny the premise that something is happening on this Earth that we need to think about and worry about, it is easy to dismiss any and every effort to deal with it.

The Senator who spoke before me is from my neighboring State of Kentucky. His coal fields about my coal fields in Southern Illinois, so we have a common energy resource. But I will say in all honesty, if we want to use the energy resource of coal in Illinois, we have to change the way we use it to reduce pollution. I think we can do that. It will be better technology in the electrical powerplants and uses something that is underway in our State: carbon capturing sequestration. Imagine if we could take the carbon pollution that is headed for the atmosphere that causes the problem and never let it reach the atmosphere.

That is what we are going to do. We are going to dig deep into the Earth over 1 mile down under three levels of shale rock and store compressed CO₂ so it doesn't go into the atmosphere. Carbon capturing sequestration, that is not a war on coal; that is a war on our energy problems and a responsible approach for dealing with coal.

I think that is the honest answer to my friends in Southern Illinois and those who value the coal industry and what it means to our economy. We have to be thoughtful, reflective, and innovative in making certain we use the energy resources we have responsibly and leave this Earth in a situation where our children and grandchildren will say our generation did not ignore the obvious.

Twin tornadoes in Nebraska are an indicator to me that time is not on our side. We have to step up. Both parties have to step up and find solutions that are responsible.

YANDLE NOMINATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise in support of Staci Yandle, who has been nominated to serve as a Federal district court judge in the Southern District of Illinois. She is going to replace a fine Federal judge, J. Philip Gilbert, who took senior status in March. It is a judicial emergency, so I am glad we are moving to it today.

Staci Yandle has the experience, integrity, and the judgment to be an excellent Federal judge. Born in Centreville, IL—incidentally, the hometown of my wife—she currently lives in Carlyle, IL, downstate. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Illinois and her law degree from Vanderbilt.

Over the course of her career, Staci Yandle has gained extensive experience in the courtroom. She has her own solo practice based in O'Fallon, IL, which she has operated now for 7 years. She has worked for several outstanding law firms in southern Illinois and handled a wide range of litigation matters, including employment, education, med-

ical injury, civil rights, and nursing home abuse cases. She also worked as an arbitrator for the Twentieth Judicial Circuit Court in Illinois.

Ms. Yandle currently serves on the board of the Illinois Bar Foundation. She has taught as an adjunct law professor at the St. Louis University School of Law.

Additionally, she has a distinguished record of pro bono service in southern Illinois, representing indigent clients and nonprofit corporations, including the Delta Economic Development Corporation, which operates a childcare center in St. Clair County.

Ms. Yandle's nomination is historic in several respects. Never before in the course of the history of our State has there been an Article III Federal judge who was openly a member of the LGBT community. Upon confirmation, Staci Yandle will be the first. Upon confirmation, she will also be the first African-American Federal judge ever to serve in the Southern District of Illinois. She will be only the second woman to serve, as she is joining Nancy Rosenstengel, who was approved by the Senate just a few weeks ago.

In short, Staci Yandle's confirmation marks another important milestone in America's journey toward equality of opportunity.

Ms. Yandle was recommended to me by a bipartisan screening committee which I established to take a look at all of the judicial candidates, and I was pleased to recommend her to President Obama. He forwarded her nomination for consideration by the Senate Judiciary Committee where it passed with a strong vote. I hope there will be an equally strong vote today in support of her nomination.

In conclusion, Ms. Yandle is an excellent nominee and I hope my colleagues will join me in voting to confirm her.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

NOMINATION

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise to speak about an important vote we are going to be taking today to confirm the next U.S. district judge for the Eastern District of Washington State.

It is not every day that I get to support a nominee who also happens to be a former intern in my Senate office, but it is also not every day that a man who is the son of a migrant farmworker and himself worked on farms in the Yakima Valley is called upon by the President of the United States to become the very first Latino Federal judge in the Eastern District of Washington. So I am incredibly proud to stand in support of Judge Salvador Mendoza, Jr., whose confirmation we will vote on shortly.

Through his life story, Judge Mendoza represents the very best of my home State's honest, hard-working spirit. Through his work ethic, his commitment to his community, and

his belief in equal opportunity, Judge Mendoza is a leader and a role model for families throughout our State, particularly young men and women born into poverty and difficult circumstances. In fact, in his application to serve as Federal judge, he discussed his own upbringing, and I wish to quote him. Judge Mendoza wrote:

I wrote and studied hard to better myself and my family. I understood then what I believe now, that both the quality of the educational system coupled with a strong system of justice will lift up the entire community.

Those are the words of a man who belongs in our judicial system. It should come as no surprise that throughout his professional life, Judge Mendoza has stayed true to those words. From serving as a trustee for Columbia Basin College to helping to coordinate the annual Tri-Cities Youth and Justice Conference, to helping create the first drug court for Benton and Franklin counties, Judge Mendoza has given his time and experience, investing in institutions that lift communities throughout our State.

Judge Mendoza is currently a superior court judge, but his judicial career spans private practice, service as an assistant attorney general, and years of experience in superior, district, municipal, and juvenile court. He is an experienced practitioner in Federal court and served from 2010 to 2013 as lawyer representative to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference.

Through his many years of legal practice and judicial experience, Judge Mendoza will come to the Federal bench well prepared.

Judge Mendoza has described his judicial philosophy as guided by the principles of patience, respect, and humility—the same principles that have guided his life and legal career—and principles that will serve him well as a member of the Federal judiciary.

Let me close by thanking him for his willingness to serve Washington State as a Federal judge. I have always believed that as a country we are at our best when good people are willing to give of themselves in service to others. It is that kind of service to others that has defined Judge Mendoza throughout his career and that will continue to define him as he assumes the duties of this new office.

I am proud to support his nomination to be U.S. district judge, and I urge our colleagues to support his nomination as well.

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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

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

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

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise to support the nomination of Salvador Mendoza, Jr., to be a district judge for the Eastern District of our State. I applaud the Senate Judiciary Committee for favorably reporting Mr. Mendoza's nomination on a bipartisan basis out of the committee with a 17-to-1 vote, so he enjoys a great deal of support. We are happy because we filled one vacancy for the Eastern District bench earlier in April, and now it is time for the Senate to move forward in filling the last of the two vacancies by voting to confirm Judge Mendoza.

Judge Mendoza is a well-qualified, dedicated judge whose passion and perspective will serve the Eastern District of Washington very well. He has had experience serving as a superior court judge. He has served as a prosecutor, he has been in private practice, and he has been a community leader in the central part of our State. There is no question that he is ready for the challenge of being a Federal judge.

I also wish to speak in terms of the historic nature of this vote. Salvador Mendoza will become the first ever Hispanic Federal judge in Eastern Washington. That is a major step forward and one that is long overdue. One in every nine residents of Washington State is Hispanic. Yet we have not yet had a Hispanic Federal judge in the eastern part of our State. Judge Mendoza is the right man for the job and he is ready to make history.

Judge Mendoza personifies the American dream. Eastern Washington is home to a very large and growing Hispanic population. Many who settled in Eastern Washington did so for the very same reasons Judge Mendoza's family did. He grew up in a family of migrant workers who moved from California to Washington's Yakima Valley when he was just a small child. He went on from working alongside his parents in the fields to earn a bachelor's degree from the University of Washington and a law degree from the University of California at Los Angeles.

Coming from very modest beginnings, Judge Mendoza has built a stellar legal resume. Judge Mendoza served as a deputy prosecuting attorney and spent 1 year as assistant attorney general. He has worked in private practice in a partner firm, and he went on to serve as judge pro tempore for Benton County Superior Court and Franklin County juvenile district court. Since 2013 he has served as Washington State's superior court judge for Benton and Franklin Counties.

A few years ago I had the honor of speaking with Judge Mendoza at a roundtable of Latino community leaders in the Tri-Cities. I came away very impressed with his intellect and his ability and keen understanding of our challenges in Central and Eastern Washington and of our legal system. He talked about the importance of an effective drug court to tackle the challenges facing Central Washington, and Judge Mendoza has shown his commit-

ment to making his community a better place to live. He helped found the juvenile drug court program for Benton and Franklin Counties, which provides the opportunities for treatment for juvenile drug offenders. He is the main organizer of the Tri-Cities Youth and Justice Forum, an organization that encourages students from underrepresented communities to seek careers within the legal system. He also serves on many other boards, including the board of trustees for Columbia Basin College.

I think Judge Mendoza has earned this important position. I hope my colleagues will support him. I know my colleague Senator MURRAY, who just spoke, Governor Jay Inslee, and many other attorneys and judges across the State of Washington enthusiastically support Judge Mendoza's nomination. So I urge my colleagues to confirm him today.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote on the nominations of three judicial nominees to serve on the U.S. districts courts: Judge Salvador Mendoza, to serve in the Eastern District of Washington, Staci Yandle, to fill an emergency vacancy in the Southern District of Illinois, and Judge Darrin Gayles, to fill an emergency vacancy in the Southern District of Florida. Each of these nominees has the support of their home State Senators, and each was reported over a month ago with unanimous or nearly unanimous approval of members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. None of these qualified nominees deserved to be filibustered yesterday, and should be confirmed without delay.

The confirmation of these nominees will be historic milestones for diversity on the Federal bench. If confirmed, Judge Mendoza would be the first Latino to serve on the Federal bench in the Eastern District of Washington. The confirmation of Staci Yandle would make her the first African-American woman ever to serve as a Federal judge in the Southern District of Illinois, as well as the first openly gay Federal judge to serve in Illinois. And, if confirmed, Judge Gayles would be the first openly gay African-American man judge to ever serve on the Federal bench. It is important that the Federal bench reflects the diversity of the American people, and we should be proud of the progress we are making today.

Judge Salvador Mendoza has been nominated to fill a judicial vacancy on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Washington. Judge Mendoza has served since 2013 as a Washington State superior court judge in Benton and Franklin Counties. He previously served as a judge pro tempore in Benton and Franklin Counties from 2002 to 2013. In 2002, he helped start the Benton-Franklin Juvenile Drug Court program, a treatment-based program intended to be an alternative to full criminal prosecution. Before his time

as a judge, he worked in private practice as the president and managing attorney of Mendoza and Johnson, P.S. from 2002 to 2013. He served as vice president at Haney and Mendoza, P.S. from 1999 to 2002. After graduating from law school, he served as assistant attorney general in the Washington State Attorney General's Office from 1997 to 1998, and as the deputy prosecuting attorney in the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office from 1998 to 1999. He has the support of his home State Senators, Senator CANTWELL and Senator MURRAY. The Judiciary Committee reported his nomination favorably with near-unanimous bipartisan support to the full Senate on April 3, 2014.

Staci Yandle has been nominated to fill a judicial emergency vacancy on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Illinois. Staci Yandle has worked since 2007 in private practice as a sole practitioner, and since 2010 as counsel for the Farrise Firm P.C. She previously served as a partner at The Rex Carr Law Firm from 2003 to 2007 and as an associate at Carr, Korein, Schlichter, Kunin, Montroy, Glass & Bogard from 1987 to 2003. She worked as an adjunct professor at the St. Louis University School of Law from 1991 to 2000, teaching courses in trial advocacy and civil practice. From 1992 to 1996, she served as a member of the Illinois Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Staci Yandle has been active in her community, providing pro bono legal services to indigent clients on issues ranging from tenant disputes to personal injury claims. She has the support of her home State Senators, Senator DURBIN and Senator KIRK. The Judiciary Committee reported her nomination favorably with near-unanimous bipartisan support to the full Senate on April 3, 2014.

Judge Darrin Gayles has been nominated to fill a judicial emergency vacancy on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida. He has served since 2011 as a Florida State judge on the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court, and previously served as a county judge in the Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida from 2004 to 2011. Prior to becoming a judge, he served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Southern District of Florida from 1999 to 2004, an assistant district counsel in the U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service from 1997 to 1999, and as an assistant State attorney in the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office from 1993 to 1997. He has the support of his home State Senators, Senator NELSON and Senator RUBIO. The Judiciary Committee reported his nomination by voice vote to the full Senate on May 8, 2014.

I commend the majority leader for bringing the nominations of these three nominees up for a vote. With yesterday's cloture votes, the Senate has voted on cloture for judicial nominees 50 times so far this year. This is more

than all the cloture votes on judicial nominees during the two preceding administrations combined. This level of partisanship is meritless, and only serves to weaken the Federal courts and the American justice system. I hope that my colleagues will join me in voting to confirm these qualified nominees, and allow them to get to work for the American people.

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

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF SALVADOR MENDOZA, JR., TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

NOMINATION OF STACI MICHELLE YANDLE TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

NOMINATION OF DARRIN P. GAYLES TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

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 reported the nominations of Salvador Mendoza, Jr., of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington, Staci Michelle Yandle, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Illinois, and Darrin P. Gayles, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Florida.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There are now 2 minutes of debate prior to a vote on the Mendoza nomination.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Salvador Mendoza, of Washington, to

be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington?

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN).

The result was announced—yeas 92, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 195 Ex.]

YEAS—92

| | | |
|------------|--------------|------------|
| Alexander | Grassley | Murphy |
| Ayotte | Hagan | Murray |
| Baldwin | Harkin | Nelson |
| Barrasso | Hatch | Paul |
| Begich | Heinrich | Portman |
| Bennet | Heitkamp | Pryor |
| Blumenthal | Heller | Reed |
| Booker | Hirono | Reid |
| Boozman | Hoeven | Roberts |
| Boxer | Inhofe | Rubio |
| Brown | Isakson | Sanders |
| Burr | Johanns | Schatz |
| Cantwell | Johnson (SD) | Schumer |
| Cardin | Johnson (WI) | Scott |
| Carper | Kaine | Sessions |
| Chambliss | King | Shaheen |
| Coats | Kirk | Shelby |
| Coburn | Klobuchar | Stabenow |
| Collins | Landrieu | Tester |
| Coons | Leahy | Thune |
| Corker | Lee | Toomey |
| Cornyn | Manchin | Udall (CO) |
| Donnelly | Markey | Udall (NM) |
| Durbin | McCain | Vitter |
| Enzi | McCaskill | Walsh |
| Feinstein | McConnell | Warner |
| Fischer | Menendez | Warren |
| Flake | Merkley | Whitehouse |
| Franken | Mikulski | Wicker |
| Gillibrand | Moran | Wyden |
| Graham | Murkowski | |

NAYS—4

| | |
|-------|-------|
| Blunt | Cruz |
| Crapo | Risch |

NOT VOTING—4

| | |
|---------|-------------|
| Casey | Levin |
| Cochran | Rockefeller |

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON YANDLE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate prior to the vote on the Yandle nomination.

Mr. REID. I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Staci Michelle Yandle, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Illinois?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr.