

pocket limit for pediatric dental services.

However, Madam President, more work remains to be done. For example, according to a recent report by the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General, three out of four children covered by Medicaid did not receive all required dental services over a recent 2-year period, with one in every four failing to see a dentist at all. This is simply unacceptable. We must act to ensure that all American children have access to comprehensive oral health care.

I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort. Tragically, our health care system was not there for Deamonte. Today, on the ninth anniversary of his death, let us honor his memory and pledge to do better for the children in our country by working together to build on the significant strides we have made over the past 9 years, and to ensure that all children have access to affordable and comprehensive pediatric dental services.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, notwithstanding our occasional dustups and kerfuffles and disagreements that we have in the Senate—and that is not a bad thing—the Senate is supposed to be a place where differences of opinion and different points of view are debated, voted on, and played out here on the floor of the Senate in an attempt to achieve consensus on a bipartisan basis and make legislative progress for the American people.

I have to say that since 2015, under new leadership, this Chamber has been marked by a spirit of hard work, bipartisanship, and accomplishment. I am sure we have all been frustrated by the things we cannot accomplish because, frankly, there is no consensus, but that shouldn't deter us from working together where we can to make progress for the American people. So I am frankly proud of what the Senate has done, again on a bipartisan basis.

I think one of the greatest frustrations under the previous leadership was that even if you were a Member of the majority party, you could not get amendments on legislation. You could not get votes on amendments. So you were basically shut out of the process, not just if you were in the minority but including when you were in the majority. That is a little hard to explain to your constituents back home. Indeed, I think that is one reason we saw some races for the Senate turn around the way they did in 2014.

The truth is that under new leadership we have proved we can work together on the issues that matter most to the people of our country. That is not to say there will not be some par-

tisan differences. There is a reason people choose to be Republicans or Democrats. But my experience has been that most of the time we agree on the goal, just not on the means to achieve the goal.

While bipartisanship is important, leadership really does matter, and I think we have seen what a difference it can make in the 114th Congress—since the last election in 2014. I will mention just a couple of examples.

One is the first major overhaul to education reform since No Child Left Behind. We also passed a major long-term Transportation bill. I know it seems like a small thing in isolation, but it really does make a difference to fast-growing States such as mine—Texas—to be able to plan ahead when it comes to maintaining and operating our transportation infrastructure. Frankly, it saves taxpayer money when you can plan on the long haul rather than in a series of starts and stops.

A subject that is near and dear to my heart is the first major help we have been able to provide to victims of human trafficking in 25 years. Because of a resource deficit at the local level, a lot of big-hearted people who wanted to help simply didn't have the resources to do it—simple things such as rescuing people who are victims of human trafficking and providing them a safe place to stay. Now, as a result of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, we are going to be able to provide through a victim's compensation fund up to \$60 million a year to help provide grants for housing, for rescue, and for victims of human trafficking.

It is true there are some differences between the political parties, and that shouldn't be a matter for panic. We shouldn't say: Well, I guess we can't do anything since we can't do this one thing. It is certainly true with respect to the recent passing of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia.

It is clear that we have reached a major point of disagreement or I guess you could look at it this way: We actually are agreeing with the position that Vice President BIDEN took when he was chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. We are now agreeing with the position that was taken by then-Senate Democratic leader REID, and we are agreeing with the position that was taken in 2007 by Senator CHUCK SCHUMER, a Member of the senior Senate leadership of the Democratic Party.

I mentioned these yesterday. I will just go over them really quickly again. Surely, our Democratic friends don't think that Republicans, when we are in the majority, ought to be constrained by different rules than apply to them. That does not make any sense at all. How foolish we would be, in the majority, to say that this is the way that Democrats view the rules and that we are going to apply a different set of rules to ourselves.

This is what Senator REID said in 2005. He said:

The duties of the Senate are set forth in the U.S. Constitution. Nowhere in that docu-

ment does it say the Senate has a duty to give Presidential appointees a vote.

That is a fact. Senator REID is correct. The President proposes a nominee, and the Senate either grants or withholds consent under the terms of the Constitution itself. But of course, that is what Senator REID was suggesting back when George W. Bush was President of the United States—that the Senate was under no obligation to even give those nominees a vote.

Then, more recently, there is Senator SCHUMER, who I know is really stirred up about our intention not to process a nominee this year and to have a referendum as a result of this Presidential election on who makes that appointment—perhaps for the next 30 years. That is how long Justice Scalia served on the Supreme Court of the United States. But here is Senator CHUCK SCHUMER, the senior Senator from New York. This was 18 months before President George W. Bush left office—18 months, or a year and a half, before he left office.

Senator SCHUMER said: For the rest of this President's term, we “should reverse the presumption of confirmation.” In other words, he was saying there was a presumption against confirming. He said he would recommend to his colleagues that we should “not confirm a Supreme Court nominee except in extraordinary circumstances.”

Then, of course, more recently a little research was done into the record of Vice President BIDEN when he was Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee back in 1992. He said: The Senate Judiciary Committee should seriously consider not scheduling confirmation hearings on the nomination until after the political campaign season is over. Action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over.

So it strikes me as rather hypocritical for our Democratic friends to say that these were the rules when George W. Bush was in office or when his father, George Herbert Walker Bush, was in office, in the case of 1992, but now that President Obama is in office, a different set of rules ought to apply.

It would be completely hypocritical of them to say that. But this is a matter of disagreement. There is no debate about that. But it does not mean that just because we are divided along party lines on this matter that there are other things we cannot do together. I think our friends across the aisle would agree that there is a lot of important work that we can and should do together.

The chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, along with the ranking member from Washington, has worked diligently on energy legislation that we are currently considering. It is legislation that would update and modernize our country's energy infrastructure for the 21st century. We still need to find a way forward to deal with this legislation. I

know this is an opinion that many members on the Energy Committee and in this Chamber share on a bipartisan basis.

There is another piece of legislation that has strong bipartisan support that was voted out of the Senate Judiciary Committee, unanimously, called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, known as CARA. This legislation is in response to the growing opioid abuse epidemic that affects our Nation, an epidemic that has claimed the lives of tens of thousands of Americans each year, along with the concomitant scourge of cheap heroin coming across our borders from Mexico, because when people can't get the prescription drugs—the opioids—then too many of them revert to cheaper heroin with disastrous consequences.

I know that on a bipartisan basis the junior Senators from New Hampshire and Ohio have particularly led on this on my side of the aisle. But they have worked with the junior Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and the senior Senator from Minnesota, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, to make this a top priority. So we are going to have a chance to show very soon that we are committed to actually getting important legislation, such as the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, passed by this Chamber.

This week also, the senior Senator from Vermont, Mr. LEAHY, who is the ranking member on the Senate Judiciary Committee, and I introduced legislation called the Justice for All Reauthorization Act. That bill would provide important resources to victims of domestic violence, and it would target resources on the rape kit backlog, which is, just frankly, an embarrassment to our criminal justice system.

It has been estimated that there are as many as 400,000 rape kits; that is, forensic evidence taken after a sexual assault that would, if tested, reveal the identity of the attacker through DNA testing.

There is just no excuse not to test those rape kits, which are part of that backlog. We know that many of the assailants in these cases are serial abusers, and many times we can stop someone before they attack again, if we will just test those kits. There is about \$120 million each year that Congress appropriates for the Debbie Smith Act. Debbie Smith is the person for whom this legislation is named—and quite appropriately so. She has been a champion of eliminating that rape kit backlog. That is a large part of what the Justice for All Reauthorization Act would help us do.

So I would ask our friends across the aisle, while they come out on the floor or give press conferences and express mock horror at the fact that Republicans in the majority now would apply the same standards that they advocated for when they were in the majority, to tone down the rhetoric and avoid the hypocrisy that seems so apparent when they argue for different

standards today than they advocated in the past. That is nothing more, nothing less than hypocritical.

What is out of line is when you have personal attacks against the Members of the Senate, particularly the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. The minority leader, the Democratic leader, made a personal attack against the chairman of the Judiciary Committee right here on the Senate floor just yesterday. What he said was so far from the truth that it is not even worth repeating.

But what I would like to make clear is that Chairman GRASSLEY, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, has made a big impression on this Chamber and on the legislation that we have passed. I mentioned the CARA Act that passed out of the Judiciary Committee unanimously. Senator GRASSLEY has a decades-long dedication to serving the people of Iowa in this body.

So I don't know how the Democratic leader can come out and personally attack a colleague who has done an outstanding job as chairman of the Judiciary Committee, while basically what we are embracing is what he himself argued for in 2005. How does that work?

Well, I would say the Democratic leader does not have a lot of firm ground to stand on when it comes to judicial nominations. I would like to remind my colleagues that the Democratic leader, just a few short years ago, took the position that there were no fixed rules when it comes to judicial nominations. Then, in 2014, he simply tore up the rule book by invoking the so-called nuclear option, breaking the rules to change the rules on judicial nominations, as he attempted—successfully, I will say—to pack the District of Columbia Court of Appeals by breaking the rules of the Senate in order to pack the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, which many have said is the second most important court in the Nation.

So I hope he will take into consideration his prior actions, which are far more disruptive and poisoned the well of this institution more than anything we are talking about doing now, especially when we are agreeing with him, at least on this point.

But most of all, I would hope that we can conduct our debates in a civil and a dignified fashion. People watch what we do and we say here. When people come out here and make hypocritical attacks, I don't think it reflects very well on the person making that attack, and I don't think it reflects well on the Senate as a body. It is certainly not a good example for our young people or other people who might be looking at how we conduct ourselves as they think: Well, that is the way we air our differences. Then certainly they can be forgiven for thinking: Well, maybe that is the way I ought to conduct myself. That is not the message we should be conveying.

Well, we can continue to do a lot of good work here on a bipartisan basis in

the Senate this year. It is true that we do have a major difference of opinion when it comes to filling the vacancy left by the untimely death of Justice Scalia. But it is true that we are only applying the rules that were advocated for by the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, now Vice President BIDEN, in 1992, and by minority leader REID in 2005 and Senator SCHUMER in 2007.

Surely they cannot expect us to apply a different set of rules today than they themselves said they would apply if the shoe were on the other foot. But we can still work together on other legislation, such as the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, such as the energy legislation we are considering now, because we do have a lot of work left to do, and there is a lot we can accomplish together.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

SAFE PIPES ACT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I wish to take a moment to speak today on a bipartisan pipeline safety bill that will soon be considered by the full Senate.

Last December, the Senate Commerce Committee unanimously passed legislation to strengthen pipeline safety across our Nation. I have been working with my colleagues, Senator BOOKER, the Presiding Officer Senator DAINES, and Senator PETERS, on this bill for nearly 9 months, and we are proud of this bipartisan legislation.

Over the past several months, we have held several hearings, including one in the Presiding Officer's home State, in Billings, MO, last September. Not far from Billings, in January of 2015, the Poplar Pipeline spilled nearly 30,000 gallons of crude oil into the State's precious Yellowstone River. This incident reinforced the need for a robust update to our laws regarding both the pipeline system and the government agency charged with keeping it safe.

Pipeline infrastructure transports vital energy resources to homes, businesses, schools, and commercial centers across the United States. According to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, or PHMSA, more than 2.5 million miles of pipelines traverse this country. Our bill, the SAFE PIPES Act, would increase congressional oversight over pipeline safety programs at PHMSA. It would also provide greater flexibility and resources to State pipeline safety officials. Further, the bill would require PHMSA to reprioritize congressional directives and conduct an assessment of the pipeline integrity management program.