

overdoses rather than they did from auto accidents. We are experiencing a record number of fatal overdoses. There is no State and probably county untouched by the scourge.

We need to remember the human cost of addiction. In Warren, OH, a couple of weeks ago, there was middle-age woman who now has a child now in his midtwenties who has suffered addiction for a dozen years, has been in and out and is doing better, and then falls back. His family is affluent, so his treatment has been better than some. But she says that when there is an addiction, it afflicts the whole family. Nobody is really exempt.

In my State, 2,500 Ohio families in one year lost a loved one to addiction. Thousands more continued to struggle with opioid abuse or with a family member's addiction. It is not an individual problem or a character flaw. It is a chronic disease. Right now, it is placing an unbearable burden on families and communities in our health care system. That is why we need to tackle this at the national level.

It is why I am encouraged to see us debate this Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or the CARA Act. The ideas in this bill are an important first step in tackling the epidemic, but they are just the first step. On their own they are not nearly enough to put a dent in this epidemic. The initiatives are going to mean very little—and here is the key point that both Senator CASEY and Senator WHITEHOUSE made—without additional funding to back them up.

My colleagues Senator SHAHEEN of New Hampshire and Senator WHITEHOUSE introduced an amendment that would have provided an additional \$600 million to fight the opioid epidemic. That would be a serious commitment in putting the ideas in this bill into place into action.

But my colleagues on the other side of the aisle blocked this investment. Again, they want to do things on the cheap. They want to pass things to pat ourselves on the back but not provide the funding to actually accomplish things. It would block the investment in health professionals and communities who are on the frontlines of this battle.

You simply can't do a roundtable with health professionals and people working toward recovery and families affected by it without hearing from them. They need resources locally. The States aren't coming up with it adequately. They need resources, and they need real investment in prevention programs. We need real investment in treatment options to help patients not just get cured and get clean but stay clean.

Earlier this year, I introduced the Heroin and Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention and Reduction Act with my colleague Senator BALDWIN of Wisconsin. Our bill would boost prevention efforts that would improve tools for crisis response. It would expand access

to treatment, and it would provide support for lifelong recovery, the kind of serious investment we need to back up our rhetoric.

In public health emergencies, we are sometimes, somehow able to come up with necessary money—swine flu, Ebola, Zika virus. But addiction is not a public health emergency. Addiction is a public health problem, but one we need to fund in an ongoing way. You can look at the spike in the number of deaths. You can conclude nothing else but that it is a long-term public health problem. Too many lives have been destroyed. Too many communities have been devastated. I am just puzzled why my colleagues won't come up with \$600 million for this very important public health program. It is time to get serious. It is time to call it what it is—the public health crisis that demands real and immediate investment, not more empty rhetoric, not more empty gestures.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes in morning business.

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

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to talk about what I have been hearing from people in Wyoming about the issue of whether President Obama should nominate the next Supreme Court Justice.

This past last weekend, I was around the State of Wyoming in Rock Springs, in Rawlins, and in Casper and the weekend before that, as well, in Casper, Cheyenne, and Big Piney. I am hearing the same thing from all around the State of Wyoming.

What I am hearing is that President Obama should not be the one to put another nominee on the Supreme Court and that it should come down to the people: Give the people a voice. That is what I am hearing back home.

The chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, is doing exactly what the people of Wyoming are insisting upon—the right thing. He is doing the right thing by insisting that the American people decide. I think Senator GRASSLEY is doing a great service to this body, to the American people, and also to whomever the next President nominates for the Supreme Court.

On Monday, after traveling around the State of Wyoming, Senator ENZI, who had also traveled around the State of Wyoming this past weekend, and I jointly held a telephone townhall meeting. Folks at home are very familiar with these. We do these just about every month. We have a chance to visit with people about what is on their mind. Then there is a little way you can do a poll during that telephone

townhall meeting, and 88 percent of the people of Wyoming agree with Senator GRASSLEY, agree with Senator ENZI and with me about the next Supreme Court Justice and giving the people a voice.

Democrats want to turn this all around into a fight on the Senate floor. They want this to be a backroom deal between the President and the special interest groups. These are the groups that are pushing the President to appoint someone who will rule the way they want. But that is not what the American people want.

The American people—and certainly the people in Wyoming—want this to be a fight about what happens and what they decide in the voting booth in November. When an election is just months away, the people should be allowed to consider possible Supreme Court nominees as one factor in deciding whom they will support for President. This shouldn't really even be controversial.

Democrats in the past have come to the floor, and they said it would be a bad idea to let the President make a lifetime appointment in his last months in office. In 1992 Senator JOE BIDEN came to the Senate floor to explain his rule. He called it the Biden rule, and it had to do with Supreme Court nominations.

On the Senate floor, JOE BIDEN—now the Vice President, former chairman of the Judiciary Committee—said that once the Presidential election is underway—and I will tell you, Madam President, the Presidential election is underway—“action on a Supreme Court nomination must be put off until after the election campaign is over.”

Those are the words of JOE BIDEN. Senator BIDEN said that a temporary vacancy on the Court was “quite minor compared to the cost that a nominee, the President, the Senate, and our Nation would have to pay for what assuredly would be a bitter fight.”

That is what Senator BIDEN at the time was worried about. He was worried that a bitter fight over a nominee would do damage to the nominee and to the Senate. He knew there would be Senators who would come to the floor and try to politicize this process for their own purposes, and we are seeing the Democrats doing that right now. He knew it because that is what Democrats have done for years.

This is politics as usual for the Democrats. It is the way they tend to live their lives here on the Senate floor—talking this way. It is exactly what Democrats did when Robert Bork was nominated to serve on the Supreme Court. So Vice President BIDEN, former Senator BIDEN, understands it completely. It is what they did when Miguel Estrada was nominated to the circuit court. It is what Democrats did when Samuel Alito was nominated to the Supreme Court. Democrats in the Senate even filibustered Justice Alito when he was the nominee. They did everything they could to slander good, qualified people to try to score political points. It is what they do.

Well, there is no need for us to have this bitter political fight that JOE BIDEN worried about. Republicans have said there should not be a bitter political fight. We have called on the President to spare the country this fight. The best way to avoid the fight is to agree to let the people decide. Give the people a voice, and let the next President put forth the nomination. That is certainly what the people of Wyoming want us to do. It is what I heard, along with Senator ENZI, on the telephone townhall meeting this past Monday, and that is what I heard as I traveled around the State of Wyoming the past several weekends. I will be back in Wyoming this weekend, and I expect to hear the same thing as I travel to Buffalo to the health fair and to communities around the State.

That is what the American people are saying: Give the people a voice. They are saying that a seat on the Supreme Court should not be just another political payoff to score points in an election year. They are saying it should not be a decision for a lameduck President with one foot out the door. It is too important for that.

The Supreme Court is functioning just fine with eight Justices right now. That is not me saying it; it is the Justices of the Supreme Court saying the same thing. Since Justice Scalia died last month, the Court has heard oral arguments in 10 cases. They have released written opinions in five cases. They have scheduled more cases for the rest of the term, and they are doing their jobs. That is exactly what Justice Breyer said they would do. He is a liberal Supreme Court Justice who was appointed by President Bill Clinton.

A reporter asked Justice Breyer about the death of Justice Scalia, and he said: "We'll miss him, but we'll do our work." He said: "For the most part, it will not change."

So there is no urgency to fill this vacancy on the Supreme Court right now. There is no danger in waiting for the next President to act. There is tremendous danger, however, if we rush through a nomination in the last few months of a Presidential election, to the nominee, to the Senate, and to the Nation, just as JOE BIDEN said 24 years ago. The stakes are very high, too high to let that happen.

The people are telling us what they want. Eighty-eight percent of the people in Wyoming involved in our telephone townhall meeting on Monday said exactly that: Give the people a voice. We must let the people decide.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will re-

sume consideration of S. 524, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 524) to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11:30 a.m. will be equally divided between the two managers or their designees.

The Senator from Mississippi.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I understand we are on the bill, but there are no speakers presently here, so I would like to address the Chair and my colleagues for a few moments about the matter my colleague from Wyoming was discussing just now, and that is the very serious matter of how we will fill the vacancy of Justice Scalia.

I want to read to my colleagues a message I got from one of my constituents in Columbus, MS. As you can imagine, we have all received quite a bit of opinion from the people who put us in office, but I think this constituent really hits it on the head when she says: "The next appointment is probably the most crucial in our history and will have ramifications on future generations."

I really agree with that, and I think it is such a profound decision that we ought to feel comfortable, as the Senator from Wyoming just said, in letting the people decide. We are in the midst of a great debate about the direction our country will take, the executive branch will take, over the next 4 and possibly 8 years.

The Court has been relatively balanced, with a slight 5-4 tilt toward the conservative side. Clearly there is an effort in this city and on the part of some of my friends on the other side of the aisle to shift that balance. I think it is reasonable to conclude, with so much involved and with the ramifications on future generations, as my constituent has said, that it is very appropriate that this be a matter of debate in this Presidential election and, frankly, in the Senate elections also. And I realize there is a lot of heat and light on this issue, but I would simply suggest that we are on the right track in letting the American people speak to this.

There is another matter in this regard that I have been reluctant to bring to the attention of my colleagues until today, but I think it has gotten to the point where we need to be reminded that there are rules of decorum that apply to this debate and to all debates we have on the Senate floor. I would direct the Chair's attention and the attention of my colleagues to rule XIX of the Standing Rules of the Senate. Paragraph 2 of that rule states: "No Senator in debate shall, directly or indirectly, by any form of words impute to another Senator or to other Senators any conduct or motive unworthy or unbecoming a Senator."

I read that paragraph in its entirety because it is quite obvious to me, to

my colleagues on this side of the aisle, and I think to objective observers, that what has ensued over the last week or two has been a concerted effort to impugn the reputation and honor of the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the distinguished Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY.

I would just suggest to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and particularly to my friend the distinguished minority leader that in reviewing some of the statements that have been made on this floor—and I have them in my hand, although I will not read them again to the Chair because they are in the RECORD—particularly those statements coming from the very top leadership of the other side of the aisle, there has been statement after statement that crosses the line, that is prohibited under the rules. It is a breach of our rules to suggest about any other Senator motives unworthy or unbecoming of a Senator.

I hope we can continue this debate, and certainly we will, but I hope we will confine it to the merits of the issue, and there are merits on both sides. This is not the place to conduct an election or reelection campaign—the floor of the Senate is not that place—and it seems to me that in recent days that line has been crossed and crossed repeatedly.

I will get back to my original point. We are prepared to let the American people speak on this issue, and it is of vital importance not just for the next 4 years but perhaps for the next decade, two decades, or three decades. And I would ask us to dial the rhetoric back, dial the heat back, and stay on the issues. We are comfortable making the case that this is a decision that should be left to the American people.

I thank the Chair for giving me the time.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I want to take a few minutes to describe the funding that my substitute amendment for S. 524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016, is intended to authorize.

Section 202 of the amendment authorizes SAMHSA's grants to prevent prescription drug/opioid overdose-related deaths. These grants were appropriated \$12 million in H.R. 2029, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016. The specific appropriating language is located on page 50 of the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education report to H.R. 2029.

Section 204 authorizes the COPS Anti-Heroin Task Force and Anti-Methamphetamine Task Force. These two task forces were appropriated \$7 million each in H.R. 2029, for a total of \$14 million. The specific appropriating language is located in paragraphs three and four under the section entitled "Community Oriented Policing Services", on page 70 of H.R. 2029.

Section 301 authorizes SAMHSA's grants for targeted capacity expansion—medicated assisted treatments.