

their court. In the past, when a President's nominee didn't get enough support for confirmation for whatever reason, the President just picked another nominee. If it comes to that, that is what this President should do. If Judge Gorsuch fails to garner 60 votes, the answer isn't to irrevocably change the rules of the Senate, the answer is to change the nominee. It is not Gorsuch or bust.

The Republicans are playing a game of unnecessary and dangerous brinksmanship. If it comes to a rules change—and I sincerely hope that it does not for the sake of the grand traditions of this body, for the sake of the advice and consent clause of the Constitution, but if it does—it will be squarely on the shoulders of the Republican Party and the Republican leader—a Republican Party that broke 230 years of precedent when it refused to even consider President Obama's nominee, Chief Judge Merrick Garland, with almost a year left in Obama's Presidency. There was no vote—not even a hearing—and Republicans accuse Democrats of the first partisan filibuster of a Supreme Court nominee? What Republicans did to Merrick Garland was worse than a filibuster. They didn't even grant him the basic courtesy of a filibuster. Merrick Garland actually was a consensus nominee with Republican buy-in for the Supreme Court.

Second, President Trump totally dispatched with the notion of "advice and consent" by pledging, before he was even elected, to nominate a Supreme Court Justice off of a preapproved list of hard-right, conservative judges put together by the Heritage Foundation and the Federalist Society. Contrast that with Bill Clinton, who sought and took the advice of the Republican Judiciary Chairman, ORRIN HATCH, in nominating Justices Ginsburg and Breyer. He did not pick his first choice, Bruce Babbitt, because ORRIN HATCH said that would be a bad idea and could not bring the kind of unity we needed. How about Democratic President Obama, who took, again, the advice of ORRIN HATCH when he picked Merrick Garland. There was bipartisan consultation. That is why the process worked. There is none now. The Heritage Foundation and the Federalist Society are not simply mainstream organizations, as every Republican knows, but they are organizations on the hard-right of the Republican side who often threaten Republicans if they don't vote the right way—the far-right way. So we are not talking about "advise and consent." We are talking about something that was done without any consultation and a political move by a President to shore up his base with the hard rightwing.

What President Trump did was worse than simply ignoring article II of the Constitution. President Trump actively sought the advice and consent of rightwing special interest groups instead of the Senate. That is another

Supreme Court-related precedent that the Republicans discard. Because President Trump made that choice, now Republicans are saying they have no choice but to change the rules? It is illogical and self-serving. For all the handwringing of my friends on the other side of the aisle that they cannot imagine Democrats voting against Judge Gorsuch, I would like to remind them that only three of the current Senators on the Republican side voted for either of President Obama's confirmed nominees. Let me repeat that. Only three of the current Senators on the Republican side voted for either one of President Obama's confirmed nominees. Most voted for neither, and every single one of them lined up to conduct an "audacious" partisan blockade of Merrick Garland.

It is true the norms and precedents and traditions have been eroded by both sides. We changed the rules for lower court nominees in 2013 after years of unprecedented obstruction by Republicans on routine circuit and district court judges. Still, I am on the record as regretting that decision. But this is in an order of magnitude much greater than that. This is the Supreme Court. This is the Court that is the final arbiter of U.S. law and the Constitution. We Democrats have serious principled concerns about Judge Gorsuch, his record, his long history of ties to ultraconservative interests, and his almost instinctive tendency to side with special power interests over average citizens. We have principled concerns about how Judge Gorsuch was groomed by hard-right conservative billionaires, like Mr. Phillip Anschutz. We have principled concerns about how Judge Gorsuch was selected off a preapproved list of conservative judges made by organizations who spent three decades campaigning to move our judiciary far to the right.

Judge Gorsuch had a chance to answer these concerns in his hearings. We were all waiting and hoping, but our questions were met with practiced evasions. He couldn't even answer whether *Brown v. Board* was decided correctly.

Instead of considering the possibility of another nominee should Judge Gorsuch fail to reach 60 votes, our Republican friends are threatening to press the big red button for him.

Again, the Republicans are creating a false choice—Judge Gorsuch or the nuclear option—in an attempt to avoid the blame if they change the rules, and it just doesn't wash. The Republicans control this body. They are in the driver's seat, and they are the only reason that we are here today. They held this seat open for over 1 year so that this President could install someone hand-picked by the Heritage Foundation and the Federalist Society—a lifetime appointment for this President, whose campaign is under investigation by the FBI for potential ties to Russia.

I just repeat to my Republican colleagues: You don't need to change the rules if Judge Gorsuch doesn't get 60

votes. You are not required to do so. You just need to change the nominee and do some bipartisan consultation as Presidents of both parties have done in the past.

#### AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Now on the ACA, Mr. President. The HHS Secretary appeared before the House appropriators yesterday and testified that, under his direction, the Department of Health and Human Services may try to undermine our Nation's healthcare system in several ways. Specifically, he hinted that he might make it easier for insurers to offer coverage without certain essential benefits and refused to say if he would continue certain programs that stabilize our healthcare markets. That is in line with steps this administration has already taken to undermine the healthcare law, such as when they discontinued the public advertising campaigns that encouraged people to sign up for insurance. All of these things harm our Nation's healthcare system, and they should be ceased immediately.

I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

#### DISAPPROVING A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.J. Res. 67, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 67) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to savings arrangements established by qualified State political subdivisions for non-governmental employees.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, all time is expired.

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

Mr. RUBIO. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. STRANGE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 99 Leg.]

#### YEAS—50

Alexander	Flake	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heller	Rubio
Cassidy	Hoeven	Sasse
Cochran	Inhofe	Scott
Collins	Johnson	Shelby
Cornyn	Kennedy	Strange
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Crapo	Lee	Thune
Cruz	McCain	Tillis
Daines	McConnell	Toomey
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Paul	

#### NAYS—49

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Nelson
Bennet	Harris	Peters
Blumenthal	Hassan	Reed
Booker	Heinrich	Sanders
Brown	Heitkamp	Schatz
Cantwell	Hirono	Schumer
Cardin	Kaine	Shaheen
Carper	King	Stabenow
Casey	Klobuchar	Tester
Coons	Leahy	Udall
Corker	Manchin	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Markey	Warner
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warren
Duckworth	Menendez	Whitehouse
Durbin	Merkley	Wyden
Feinstein	Murphy	
Franken	Murray	

#### NOT VOTING—1

Isakson

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 67) was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to H.J. Res. 43.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to H.J. Res. 43, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule submitted by Secretary of Health and Human Services relating to compliance with title X requirements by project recipients in selecting sub-recipients.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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 bill clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 100 Leg.]

#### YEAS—50

Alexander	Flake	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heller	Rubio
Cassidy	Hoeven	Sasse
Cochran	Inhofe	Scott
Corker	Isakson	Shelby
Cornyn	Johnson	Strange
Cotton	Kennedy	Sullivan
Crapo	Lankford	Thune
Cruz	Lee	Tillis
Daines	McCain	Toomey
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young
Fischer	Paul	

#### NAYS—50

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Bennet	Harris	Nelson
Blumenthal	Hassan	Peters
Booker	Heinrich	Reed
Brown	Heitkamp	Sanders
Cantwell	Hirono	Schatz
Cardin	Kaine	Schumer
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Tester
Coons	Manchin	Udall
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Duckworth	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murkowski	Wyden
Franken	Murphy	

The VICE PRESIDENT. On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 50. The Senate being equally divided, the Vice President votes in the affirmative, and the motion to proceed is agreed to.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I yield back all Republican time in relation to H.J. Res. 43.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The time is yielded back.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, this vote had to be held open in order to allow time for Vice President PENCE to come down and break a tie.

My colleagues and I came to the floor weeks ago to make clear that this harmful legislation should not come to the floor. Republicans didn't listen to us, and they didn't listen to women across the country who made it clear that restricting women's access to the full range of reproductive care is unacceptable. We are not going to give up. We are going to keep holding them accountable, and we are going to keep making sure that women's voices are heard.

I want to thank all of my colleagues who have already come and will continue to come to the floor today to stand against this shameful, dangerous resolution.

The march that was held after President Trump was inaugurated was one of the most inspiring events I have ever had the opportunity to be a part of. Millions of people—men and women—marched in Seattle in my home State,

here in Washington, DC, and in cities and towns in between and all across the world. They carried signs, they chanted, and they made it absolutely clear that when it comes to women's rights and healthcare, people across the country do not want to go backward. Since then, millions of people have continued to speak up and stand up. And last Friday, by the way, was no different.

Republicans have been threatening for years now to dismantle the Affordable Care Act, but it took just a few weeks for families nationwide to stand up and fight back and shut down a deeply harmful plan that would have taken healthcare away from tens of millions of people, spiked our premiums, targeted seniors for higher costs, and cut off access to critical services at Planned Parenthood.

I was so inspired by the countless people who bravely shared their personal stories about their health and their loved ones in order to make clear just how damaging—and even deadly—TrumpCare would have been. I am proud to say that women led the way and made it known, in no uncertain terms, that Republicans would be held fully accountable for the disastrous TrumpCare legislation.

And try as they might, last week, Republicans couldn't ignore them. This was an absolute, undeniable victory for women and families in this country.

But while TrumpCare was dealt a significant blow last week, it is clear the terrible ideas that underpin it live on now, today, in this Republican Congress. It is unprecedented that we are here, with the Vice President breaking a tie vote on an attack on women's health across this country.

We are here today, once again, because President Trump and Republicans in Congress are not getting the message. Today, continuing on their extreme, anti-women agenda, Senate Republicans are rushing now to roll back a rule that protects family planning providers from being discriminated against and denied Federal funding.

Let me explain a little bit about what family planning providers mean to our communities. Those providers that are part of the title X program—which has, by the way, bipartisan history—deliver critical healthcare services nationwide, and they are especially needed in our rural and our frontier areas.

In 2015 alone, title X provided basic primary and preventive healthcare services—services like Pap tests and breast exams and birth control and HIV testing—to more than 4 million low-income women and men at nearly 4,000 health centers. In my home State of Washington, tens of thousands of patients are able to receive care at these centers each year, and they often have nowhere else to turn for their healthcare. In fact, 40 percent of women who receive care at health centers funded by title X consider it to be their only source of healthcare.