

the opposite and reinforce many of President Trump's worst instincts. Mr. Tillerson's lack of focus on human rights and the rule of law indicate that he seems not to appreciate the role of American in the world—particularly dangerous traits when President Trump is retreating from America's 70-year special role in the world, retreating—in the words of a recent article in *The Atlantic*—to a pre-1941 world of “closed borders, limited trade, intolerance to diversity, arms races, and a go-it-alone national race to the bottom.”

Finally, I seriously question Mr. Tillerson's commitment to working with our allies and cosigners of the Paris Climate Agreement to confront one of our greatest global challenges. While at certain points, he has acknowledged the dangers of climate change, he has more recently questioned the science and the human contribution. In his hearing, he acknowledged that climate change does exist and that the United States needed to have a seat at the table, but he failed to express any urgency to respond or a clear commitment to the Paris Agreement.

While Mr. Tillerson may be a skilled business dealmaker, the job of the Secretary of State and the leader of our State Department requires the experience and determination to meet our current challenges. Given his extensive ties to Russia and questionable commitment to advancing human rights and combatting climate change, I do not believe that Mr. Tillerson is the right person for this job, and I will vote against his confirmation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

#### NOMINATION OF NEIL GORSUCH

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, last night President Trump announced the nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court. He will fill the spot left vacant by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia.

Justice Scalia left a profound mark on our judicial history. He had a brilliant mind, a ready wit, and a vivid and colorful writing style that made reading his decisions not only illuminating but enjoyable. But most importantly, Antonin Scalia had a profound respect for the rule of law and the Constitution. He knew that he was a judge, not a legislator, and his job was not to make the law but to interpret the law. That is exactly what he did.

For 30 years, Justice Scalia ruled on the plain meaning of the laws and the Constitution. His politics, his personal opinions, his own feelings about a case—none of those was allowed to play a role in his decision. He asked what the law said, what the Constitution said, and he ruled accordingly, even when he didn't like the result. Justice Scalia once said:

If you are going to be a good and faithful judge, you have to resign yourself to the fact that you're not always going to like the conclusions you reach. If you like them all the time, you are probably doing something wrong.

Needless to say, Justice Scalia left some big shoes to fill. But after learning a little about Judge Gorsuch, I have to say that if anyone can come to fill them, I think Judge Gorsuch can. Like Justice Scalia, Judge Gorsuch has a brilliant mind. He shares Justice Scalia's gift for the written word. The Washington Post noted the many people “who have praised Gorsuch's lucid and occasionally lyrical writing style.” Slate called Judge Gorsuch's writing “superb, incisive, witty, and accessible.”

But most importantly, like Justice Scalia, Judge Gorsuch understands the role of a Supreme Court Justice. He knows that a Justice's job is to interpret the law, not write it. In a speech last year, Judge Gorsuch said the following: “Perhaps the greatest project of Justice Scalia's career was to remind us of the differences between judges and legislators.”

Understanding those differences is indispensable. Brilliance, eloquence, learning, compassion—none of those things matter if you don't understand the proper role of the Supreme Court. That role is to interpret the law, not make the law—to judge, not legislate; to call balls and strikes, not to try and rewrite the rules of the game.

It is great to have strong opinions. It is great to have sympathy for causes or organizations. It is great to have plans for fixing society's problems. But none of those things has any business influencing your ruling when you sit on the Supreme Court. Judge Gorsuch understands this. That is why I trust him to sit on the Supreme Court.

When Judge Gorsuch was nominated to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals 10 years ago, he was confirmed by a unanimous vote here in the Senate. You can't really get a more bipartisan confirmation than that. At the time, then-Senator Ken Salazar, a Colorado Democrat who later became Interior Secretary under Obama, noted that Judge Gorsuch ‘has a sense of fairness and impartiality that is a keystone of being a judge.’

Given the wide respect in which Judge Gorsuch is held, his outstanding record, and his previous overwhelmingly bipartisan confirmation, I am hopeful that his nomination will move quickly through the Senate. Senate Democrats have spoken a lot about the need to fill the ninth seat on the Supreme Court. Now is the chance.

I congratulate Judge Gorsuch on his nomination, and I look forward to seeing him confirmed to the Supreme Court.

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.

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

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

#### NOMINATION OF BETSY DEVOS

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I come to the floor to announce a very difficult decision that I have made; that is, to vote against the confirmation of Betsy DeVos to be our Nation's next Secretary of Education. This is not a decision that I have made lightly. I have a great deal of respect for Mrs. DeVos. I believe she is a good person. I know she cares deeply about the children of this Nation. But for the reasons that I will explain, I simply cannot support her confirmation.

Later today, the Senate will vote on a motion to proceed to the DeVos nomination. I will vote to proceed to the nomination because I believe that Presidents are entitled to considerable deference for the selection of Cabinet members, regardless of which political party is in power, and that each and every Senator should have the right to cast his or her vote on nominees for the Cabinet. That is why, during President Obama's administration, I voted for procedural motions, including cloture, to allow the President's nominees for Secretary of Defense and for Secretary of Labor to receive up-or-down votes by the full Senate, even though I ultimately voted against those two nominees on the Senate floor. At the time, I stated that it is appropriate for every Senator to have an opportunity to vote for or against an individual Cabinet member, and I still believe that is the right approach.

Let me again make clear what I said at the beginning of my remarks, which explains why this has been a decision that I have not made lightly. I know that Mrs. DeVos cares deeply about children. I recognize that she has devoted much time and resources to try to improve the education of at-risk children in cities whose public schools have failed them. I commend her for those efforts.

I wrote to Mrs. DeVos, seeking her assurances in writing that she would not support any Federal legislation mandating that States adopt vouchers nor would she condition Federal funding on the presence of voucher programs in States. She has provided that commitment, and I ask unanimous consent that the exchange of correspondence with Mrs. DeVos be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my statement.

Nevertheless, like all of us, Mrs. DeVos is the product of her experience. She appears to view education through the lens of her experience in promoting alternatives to public education in Detroit and other cities where she has, no doubt, done valuable work. Her concentration on charter schools and vouchers, however, raises the question about whether she fully appreciates that the Secretary of Education's primary focus must be on helping States and communities, parents, teachers, school board members, and administrators strengthen our public schools.

While it is unrealistic and unfair to expect a nominee to know the details

of all the programs under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education, I am troubled and surprised by Mrs. DeVos's apparent lack of familiarity with the landmark 1975 law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—known as the IDEA—that guarantees a free and appropriate education to children with special needs.

The mission of the Department of Education is broad, but supporting public education is at its core. I am concerned that Mrs. DeVos's lack of experience with public schools will make it difficult for her to fully understand, identify, and assist with those challenges, particularly for our rural schools in States like Maine.

In keeping with my past practice, I will vote today to proceed to debate on Mrs. DeVos's nomination. But I will not, I cannot, vote to confirm her as our Nation's next Secretary of Education.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, January 24, 2017.

Mrs. BETSY DEVOS.

*Education Secretary-Designate,*

*Washington, DC.*

DEAR MRS. DEVOS: I am writing to follow up on the questions posed to you in your confirmation hearing regarding your position on school vouchers should you be confirmed as Secretary of Education. I have concerns about the impact of such a voucher program, especially on rural school districts with limited budgets and numbers of students.

The needs of public schools in Maine are very different from those in large urban areas, where some schools have failed our children. The majority of Maine's schools and school districts are small and rural, and the constraints on resources and the realities of distance greatly influence the policies and practices for delivering high-quality education in those settings. The concern I hear in Maine from teachers, administrators, and parents is that school vouchers will divert scarce resources from public schools.

During my time as a U.S. Senator, I have visited more than 200 schools in Maine. At each visit, I have seen repeatedly the skilled and dedicated teachers, administrators, and staff working closely with parents to deliver the best possible education for their students. Likewise, I have spoken with students who are vibrant members of their communities and excited about learning. Our public schools have a tremendous impact on students and communities, and the U.S. Department of Education is an important partner in fulfilling the promise of high-quality public education for all students.

Please respond in writing to the following question: Would you oppose a federal mandate that would require states to adopt private school vouchers? I ask that you respond prior to the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee mark-up on January 31.

Sincerely,

SUSAN M. COLLINS,  
United States Senator.

JANUARY 25, 2017.

Hon. SUSAN COLLINS,  
U.S. Senate,  
Washington, DC.

Dear SENATOR COLLINS: Thank you for the opportunity to answer your question about my position on federal education mandates regarding private school vouchers.

As a strong proponent of local control, I believe the decision of whether to provide vouchers, scholarships, or other public support for students who choose to attend a nonpublic school should not be mandated by the federal government. Rather, this is a state and school district matter.

The Every Student Succeeds Act made great strides in returning control over education decisions to states and local communities, and I applaud your efforts in passing that important law. Decisions about whether to provide parental choice will vary from state to state and district to district, reflecting local needs.

As I stated during my confirmation hearing before the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee on January 17, while I am a strong supporter of school choice, I am also respectful of state and local decisions on this issue. Therefore, if confirmed, I will not impose a school choice program on any state or school district.

Senator Collins, I look forward to working with you to support Maine's teachers, schools and districts as they work to provide a high quality education to every student.

Sincerely,

BETSY DEVOS.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak on the upcoming motion to proceed to the DeVos nomination for a period of 5 minutes.

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

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I would like to share my thoughts with my colleagues today about the President's nominee to be Secretary of Education. I shared many of these thoughts yesterday with my colleagues on the Senate HELP Committee.

Like my colleague from Maine, this nomination has been a very difficult one for me. It has been very personal. As I mentioned in committee, I take very personally the education of the children in my State. I take very personally the contributions that our educators, our administrators in the schools—all that they provide and the importance that we should all place on the education of America's children.

I don't think it is an overstatement to say that I have struggled with how I will cast my vote on the nomination of Mrs. DeVos. Again, I take very personally the success of Alaska's schools and the success of Alaska's schoolchildren. We have a lot of schools in Alaska, as we all do around the country. My schools, I would challenge you all, are a little bit more diverse than

perhaps in other parts of America just because of our geography. We are isolated. Eighty-two percent of the communities are not attached by a road. The communities are small. The schools are smaller.

In our urban centers, what some find unusual is we have more diversity in our populations than most people could understand or even imagine. One of the neighborhoods in my hometown of Anchorage hosts the most ethnically diverse schools in the United States of America. So I have urban schools that have rich diversity, and I have very rural, very remote, extremely remote schools that face challenges when it comes to how we deliver education. So knowing that we have the strongest public school system is a priority for me.

I have spent considerable time one-on-one with Mrs. DeVos before and after the committee hearing. I spent the entirety of the Senate HELP Committee listening carefully to the questions that colleagues put to her. Afterward, I reviewed not only her written responses to me but those that she had responded to other colleagues. I requested further that she provide certain commitments in writing. After speaking with her at length and considering everything that I have learned, I have the following comments to share:

First, I must state that I absolutely believe Betsy DeVos cares deeply for all children. I think we all acknowledge that she could have spent her time, her energy, and her considerable resources on almost anything else that she chose to do. I admire her for choosing to help children to access a better education because she could have chosen to do many other things, but she chose to work for children, and I appreciate that.

Now, as Senators, we are in the position to provide advice and consent on the President's nominee. My view has been—and has been since I came to the U.S. Senate—that under almost all circumstances, a President has the right to have their nominees considered and to receive a full vote by the entire Senate.

So I have gone back, and I have looked at how I, as a Senator, have handled confirmations under President Bush and President Obama. When cloture votes have been called on Cabinet nominees, my practice has been to vote aye. I voted aye twice for Secretary of Defense Hagel. I voted aye for Secretary of Labor Perez, even though I voted against his confirmation in the final vote.

So, Mrs. DeVos.

She has answered thousands of questions that have been put to her. Neither the Office of Government Ethics, the Senate HELP Committee, nor I have found any substantive reason to question Mrs. DeVos's name or reputation, but yet I have heard from thousands—truly thousands of Alaskans who share their concerns about Mrs. DeVos as Secretary of Education. They

have contacted me by phone, by email, in person, and their concerns center—as mine do—on Mrs. DeVos’s lack of experience with public education and the lack of knowledge she portrayed in her confirmation hearing.

Alaskans are not satisfied that she would uphold Federal civil rights laws in schools that receive Federal funds. They question her commitment to students with disabilities’ rights under IDEA. They fear that the voucher programs that are intended to serve them may actually rob them of the opportunity to benefit from an education in an inclusive environment with their nondisabled peers.

After 8 years of the micromanagement that we have seen from this previous administration, quite honestly, they are very concerned that Mrs. DeVos will force vouchers on Alaska. Now, she has said that she has not. She has committed publicly and to me personally that she will not seek to impose vouchers on our States. She has committed to implementing Federal education laws as they are written and intended, and this is a welcome departure from what we had seen with the two previous Secretaries of Education.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator’s time has expired.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 1½ minutes.

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

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. President.

She has committed that the focus she will give, not only to Alaska but to all States will not undermine, erode, or ignore public schools and that she will, in fact, work to support our public schools. She has committed to me that she will come to Alaska in order to learn from Alaska’s educators, our parents, school board members, and our tribal representatives to see for herself the challenges we face.

I still continue to have concerns. I think Mrs. DeVos has much to learn about our Nation’s public schools, how they work and the challenges they face.

I have serious concerns about a nominee to be Secretary of Education who has been so involved in one side of the equation—so immersed in the push for vouchers—that she may be unaware of what actually is successful within the public schools and also what is broken and how to fix them.

Betsy DeVos must show us that she truly understands the children of Alaska and across America, both urban and rural, who are not able to access an alternative choice in education, as in so many of my communities. She must show us that she will work to help the struggling public schools that strive to educate children whose parents are unable to drive them across town to get to a better school. That she will not ignore the homeless students whose main worry is finding somewhere safe to sleep and for whom their public school

is truly a refuge. And that she will fight for the children whose parents don’t even know how to navigate these educational options.

I believe that my colleagues here in the Senate and the many, many they represent have the right to debate these questions, to air their thoughts and concerns and perspectives about this nomination, and again I believe that any President has the right to expect that we do so.

I conclude my remarks to make clear that my colleagues know firmly that I do not intend to vote, on final passage, to support Mrs. DeVos to be Secretary of Education. I thank the chairman of the committee for working with me and with my colleagues on this matter, but I cannot support this nominee.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes.

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

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I come to the floor to thank the Senator from Alaska and the Senator from Maine for this reason: They are following a long and venerable tradition in the United States Senate that too many Senators do not follow. They are allowing—despite their final view on the substance of an issue—the full Senate to make a decision on an important issue.

It used to be that a motion to proceed to an issue was routine. It used to be that after a certain period of time, we would cut off the vote so we could have an up-or-down vote, 51, on an important issue.

We have gotten away from that, but Senator COLLINS and Senator MURKOWSKI have been among the most consistent Senators who would say, absent extraordinary circumstances, “I am going to vote to allow the vote to come to the floor so the full Senate can make its decision,” and I thank them for that.

Madam President, as to Mrs. DeVos, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD, following my remarks, an article about why the Senate should promptly confirm Betsy DeVos as U.S. Education Secretary, which I believe it will do so.

Mrs. DeVos will be an excellent Education Secretary. She has commitment to public education. She has said that. There is no better example of that than her work on the most important reform of public schools in the last 30 years, which is charter schools.

Charter public schools are the fastest growing form of public education to give teachers more freedom and parents more choices, and she has been at the forefront of that public school activity. Second, she has spent her time truly helping to give low-income parents more choices and better schools for their children, but is that a reason not to support her? I would be sur-

prised if any President supported an Education Secretary who didn’t support charter schools. I would be surprised if a Republican President nominated an Education Secretary who didn’t believe in school choice.

What I especially like about Mrs. DeVos is that she believes in the local school board, instead of the national school board. She has made it clear that there will be no mandates from Washington to adopt Common Core in Arkansas or Tennessee if she is the Education Secretary, there will be no mandate in Washington to evaluate teachers in Washington State this way or that way if she is the Secretary, and there will be no mandate from Washington to have vouchers in Maine or Alaska if she is the Secretary.

She believes in the bill we passed in December of 2015, with 85 votes, that restores to States and classroom teachers and local school boards the responsibility for making decisions about standards, about tests, about how to help improve schools, about how to evaluate teachers. That passed because people were so sick and tired of Washington telling local schools so much about what to do.

She will be that kind of Education Secretary. She will be an excellent Education Secretary. The two Senators have followed a venerable and honorable tradition in the Senate by saying they will vote to allow the full Senate to consider her nomination, and when we do, I am confident she will be confirmed.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows: [Jan. 24, 2017]

**SENATE SHOULD PROMPTLY CONFIRM BETSY DEVOS**

(By Sen. Lamar Alexander)

Democrats desperately are searching for a valid reason to oppose Betsy DeVos for U.S. Education Secretary because they don’t want Americans to know the real reason for their opposition.

That real reason? She has spent more than three decades helping children from low-income families choose a better school. Specifically, Democrats resent her support for allowing tax dollars to follow children to schools their low-income parents’ choose—although wealthy families choose their children’s schools every day.

Tax dollars supporting school choice is hardly subversive or new. In 2016, \$121 billion in federal Pell Grants and new student loans followed 11 million college students to accredited public, private or religious schools of their choice, whether Notre Dame, Yeshiva, the University of Tennessee or Nashville’s auto diesel college. These aid payments are, according to Webster’s—“vouchers”—exactly the same form of payments that Mrs. DeVos supports for schools.

America’s experience with education vouchers began in 1944 with the GI Bill. As veterans returned from World War II, federal tax dollars followed them to the college of their choice.

Why, then, is an idea that helped produce the Greatest Generation and the world’s best colleges such a dangerous idea for our children?

Mrs. DeVos testified that she opposes Washington, D.C., requiring states to adopt vouchers, unlike her critics who delight in a

National School Board imposing their mandates on states, for example, Common Core academic standards.

So, who is in the mainstream here? The GI Bill, Pell Grants, student loans, both Presidents Bush, President Trump, the 25 states that allow parents to choose among public and private schools. Congress with its passage of the Washington, D.C. voucher program, 45 U.S. senators who voted in 2015 to allow states to use existing federal dollars for vouchers, Betsy DeVos—or her senate critics?

The second reason Democrats oppose Mrs. DeVos is that she supports charter schools—public schools with fewer government and union rules so that teachers have more freedom to teach and parents have more freedom to choose the schools. In 1992, Minnesota's Democratic-Farmer-Labor party created a dozen charter schools. Today there are 6,800 in 43 states and the District of Columbia. President Obama's last Education Secretary was a charter school founder. Again, who is in the mainstream? Minnesota's Democratic-Farmer-Labor party, Presidents Bush, Clinton and Obama; the last six U.S. Education Secretaries, the U.S. Congress, 43 states and the District of Columbia, Betsy DeVos—or her senate critics?

Her critics dislike that she is wealthy. Would they be happier if she had spent her money denying children from low-income families choices of schools?

Mrs. DeVos' senate opponents are grasping for straws. We didn't have time to question her, they say, even though she met with each one of them in their offices, and her hearing lasted nearly an hour and a half longer than either of President Obama's education secretaries.

Now she is answering 837 written follow up questions from Democratic committee members—1,397 if you include all the questions within a question. By comparison, Republicans asked President Obama's first education secretary 53 written follow-up questions and his second education secretary 56 written follow-up questions, including questions within a question. In other words, Democrats have asked Mrs. DeVos 25 times as many follow-up questions as Republicans asked of either of President Obama's education secretaries.

Finally, Democrats are throwing around conflict of interest accusations. But Betsy DeVos has signed an agreement with the independent Office of Government Ethics to divest, within 90 days of her confirmation, possible conflicts of interest identified by the ethics office, as every cabinet secretary is required to do. That agreement is on the internet.

Tax returns? Federal law does not require disclosure of tax returns for cabinet members, or for U.S. Senators. Both cabinet members and senators are already required to publish extensive disclosures of their holdings, income and debts. Cabinet members must also sign an agreement with the Office of Government Ethics to eliminate potential conflicts of interest.

One year ago, because I believe presidents should have their cabinet in place in order to govern, I worked to confirm promptly President Obama's nomination of John King to be Education Secretary, even though I disagreed with him.

Even though they disagree with her, Democrats should also promptly confirm Betsy DeVos. Few Americans have done as much to help low-income students have a choice of better schools. She is on the side of our children. Her critics may resent that, but this says more about them than it does about her.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

#### TRAVEL BAN

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I came to the floor today to join with Senators and people across this country in speaking out against the President's misguided and, I believe, destructive Executive order that has abruptly closed our borders to all refugees as well as citizens from seven Muslim-majority countries.

During the campaign, Candidate Trump called for a “total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States.” I had certainly hoped that once in office, he would receive wise and prudent counsel and he would realize that elevating such a Muslim ban to the status of official U.S. policy would have very negative consequences.

Instead, what we have seen is that a small group in the White House acting in secret produced this Executive order. They did so without legal review and even without the knowledge of the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Secretary of Defense, or the nominee to be Secretary of State. As a result, as we all know, we saw a weekend of chaos and confusion—a self-inflicted wound to our national security and to our reputation in the world.

The consequences go far beyond the scenes of disorder that we witnessed in recent days. By singling out Muslim-majority countries and banning their citizens from entry into the United States and by denying entry to all refugees, the President has greatly damaged America's image across the world and, perhaps, worst of all, this Executive order is a gift to ISIS, Al Qaeda, and to every other radical jihadist group. On social media they celebrated the travel ban as a confirmation to their narrative that the United States is at war with Islam and that they are engaged in a clash of civilizations. One ISIS sympathizer praised the Executive order as a “blessed ban,” comparing it to what he called “the blessed invasion” of Iraq, which inflamed anti-American anger across the Islamic world. This is dangerous because this is a powerful recruitment tool for our enemies.

I am also deeply concerned that this Executive order endangers our troops and our diplomats who are in the field. Today, more than 5,000 American troops are supporting Iraqi troops in the fight to reclaim Mosul and drive ISIS out of Iraq. By discriminating based on religion and nationality, the President's order undermines the local alliances and the trust established by our troops and diplomats in the field. This order is so ill-considered that, as originally drafted, it even barred Iraqi civilians, including translators who provided essential assistance to the U.S. mission.

Just to be clear, this Muslim ban is un-American. It is offensive to our Nation's core values and ideals. The right way forward is not to carve out small

exceptions to the Muslim ban. It is to repeal the ban entirely. The President has called for what he has termed “extreme vetting,” but the truth is that our vetting procedures are already thorough and rigorous. It takes as long as 24 months for a refugee to make it through the process and come to the United States. The entire screening process takes place outside the United States. So it doesn't pose a threat to people here in America.

In my home State of New Hampshire, the President's Executive order has caused shock and profound concern, especially in our business and academic communities, as well as in our immigrant communities. T.J. Parker is the CEO of PillPack, a company that employs nearly 400 people in Manchester, which is the largest city in New Hampshire. He said on Monday: “This ban is wrong and goes against our values as a company and as Americans.”

He continued: “I'm also deeply concerned about any measures that could discourage talented individuals from studying and working in the U.S.”

The Union Leader newspaper reported yesterday that more than 700 refugees who settled in New Hampshire over the past decade are from the seven countries singled out in the Executive order and would have been banned from entry. These immigrants are not Iraqis, Somalis, Sudanese or Syrians. They are proud loyal members of our diverse American family. Many of them have spouses or children still in refugee camps, and they hope to be united with their families. The President's order has now slammed the door on these hopes.

Yesterday the Associated Press in New Hampshire reported on Dr. Omid Moghimi, an internist at New Hampshire Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. An American citizen, he fell in love with a childhood friend in Iran and married her in Tehran in 2015. Here is the picture of the two of them on their wedding day. After months of vetting for entry to the United States, his wife had an appointment for her visa interview. That appointment was abruptly canceled after the President's Executive order, and Dr. Moghimi worries that this could become permanent. He is now in his first year of a 3-year residency, and he fears he will have to leave the United States in order to live with his wife, who volunteers at daycare centers and an orphanage. Dr. Moghimi told the AP: “There's no evidence that she is in any way even a minuscule threat, security risk, and there are many, many cases like her out there.”

If this Executive order stays in effect, we lose the opportunity to have Dr. Moghimi practice in the United States and maybe serve a community in New Hampshire, and it has a real impact on their lives. The ill-advised words and actions, including this Executive order, have damaged America's standing in the world and harmed our national security. But the Senate has