

he voted against included significant new language that closed a glaring loophole in the jurisdictional requirements of this basic law. The bill guaranteed and granted tribal communities power over non-Indian defendants who commit domestic violence against Native Americans in Indian Country. Before the reauthorization act, tribal courts lacked jurisdiction to prosecute these horrific crimes and often the assailant would escape prosecution entirely.

During his confirmation hearing, Senator SESSIONS told us that he had “a big concern” about that jurisdictional provision in the reauthorization act. He was concerned that the law would leave non-Native Americans open to prosecution under tribal law, despite safeguards in the bill that were clear and unequivocal. The large gaps that the original law left were apparently acceptable to him.

Additionally, the VAWA reauthorization included a nondiscrimination clause. This provision protects members of the LGBT community from discrimination in housing and employment, schools, and other areas of civil rights cases.

Senator SESSIONS also took this issue with the nondiscrimination provisions in the reauthorization act, including the protection for LGBT individuals. He took issue with those provisions.

I am concerned, also, by several other votes that Senator SESSIONS took in 2004. He voted against extending Federal unemployment benefits to people who leave their jobs as a result of being victims of domestic or sexual assault.

In 2009, he voted against an amendment which would have strengthened the rights of victims of wage discrimination, contributing to the roadblocks and hurdles that women encounter while facing issues of inequality.

As recently as March of 2015, Senator SESSIONS voted against the Paycheck Fairness Act, a vote he has taken multiple times before. These bills sought to strengthen women’s rights and opportunities in the workplace.

In 2017, our world is one where women still struggle to obtain the same pay levels as men in the workplace for the same work. This kind of discrimination is un-American and really an embarrassment to our Nation.

Senator SESSIONS’ voting record consistently shows his opposition to this kind of key legislation designed to protect women from oppression and discrimination and protect women’s autonomy and choice, and I cannot support an Attorney General with this record.

Speaking on the floor some time ago, I added other details as to the reasons why I have opposed Senator SESSIONS. I see colleagues on the floor right now so I will end here with this point. Over the past weeks, I have received an outpouring of outrage from throughout my State of Connecticut, more than

4,500 letters from Connecticut residents opposing this nomination because they recognize the need, the desperate imperative for a true champion of civil rights and liberties, constitutional freedoms in this office facing the threat that is more real and urgent than ever before in our history.

Just hours ago, I received a million signatures on a petition from civil rights groups. They are contained magically on a thumb drive that is so easy to display, even if the signatures are not readily visible, but these million brave and steadfast individuals and the organizations that represent them. The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and Liberties, other groups that have proudly and actively worked on this cause are to be thanked, as are the advocates throughout the country who have galvanized public opinion, raised awareness, and shown what democracy looks like.

This is what democracy looks like. This is what America looks like. This is what Connecticut looks like—people rallying and rising up against an unconstitutional immigration ban, against a set of nominees that fail to reflect and serve America against an Attorney General nominee, in particular, who cannot be relied upon to actively and aggressively, vigorously, and vigilantly protect our constitutional rights and liberties. We need a champion of those rights and liberties.

I regretfully oppose JEFF SESSIONS as our next Attorney General because we cannot count on him to do so, and I urge my colleagues to join in this opposition.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following my 5 minutes, the distinguished senior Senator from New Hampshire, Mrs. SHAHEEN, be recognized for 5 minutes; and following Mrs. SHAHEEN, the distinguished whip of the Republican Party, Mr. CORNYN, be recognized.

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

BIENNIAL BUDGET PROCESS

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I come to the floor with a labor of love before the U.S. Senate. We are talking about confirmations of people for Secretary positions on the Cabinet of the new President. We are talking about all kinds of things. We are in a budget period of time. We are talking about this year having two budgets—one we are going to use early and one we are going to use late.

The truth is, since 1980, we haven’t passed all 12 appropriations bills in the year but twice. In other words, in the last 37 years, we have only twice done our job that we ought to do every year. So 2 years out of 37 we did it; 35 years we did not do it.

I am joining with the distinguished Senator from New Hampshire, a great Governor of that State and now a great Member of the U.S. Senate, to pro-

pound for the third Congress in a row an idea that is so simple and so great that it works and it works for all the American people. It is called a biennial budget process. What it does is it embraces a discipline for how you budget to bring about the right solutions in terms of what you do budget.

What the biennial budget process does is it says this. We would be far better off if we had more oversight of spending, more authorization projects, and more discipline in the way we spend money we are already spending before we start appropriating more.

Therefore, in every even-numbered year, we ought to do oversight of our spending, we ought to do accountability in our spending processes, we ought to do accountability in our spending process, and we ought to do no appropriations.

In our odd-numbered years, the non-election years, is when you appropriate. Every other year you are spending, and then every other year you are doing accountability. What that causes is the cream to rise to the top. All of a sudden in 1 year, instead of departments coming to say we don’t have time to oversight, we have to authorize more, they come to you and say: Here is how we spent our money, here are the savings we have found, and here is how we want to move forward in a more efficient way.

It is a little bit like my kitchen table and my family. All the way through my 49 years of marriage, my wife and I and our kids have sat around the kitchen table, decided what our family priorities are, from our vacations to our jobs, and then we budget our money for that year so we can pay our bills, enjoy the time we had together, and end up not being broke at the end of the year.

What happens when you don’t do that and you are a government is you end up owing \$19 trillion and don’t know how to pay for it. We cannot continue to spend at the escalated rate that we are spending without more accountability on the process so I think the biennial process is the right way to go.

There is some documentation for that. The distinguished Senator from New Hampshire was a Governor of her State who had a biennial budget, but 19 of the 50 States have biennial budgets already. They work, and they work fine. They give them the luxury of doing what we don’t do in Washington, they give them the luxury of having the time to study their appropriations, find savings in existing taxation before they start raising anybody’s taxes or appropriating anymore.

It is a simple, disciplined way to go about the business of spending the people’s money in the same way they make their determination.

I ran a pretty large company for 19 years and was in business for 35 years before I came to Congress. I know that running a business is hard, but it is not hard because it is complex; it is hard because it is tough. Prioritizing your appropriations is tough business.

Somebody has to do it, and the people who are elected to the Congress of the United States are elected to do that job.

I am proud to join Senator SHAHEEN on the floor today and urge all Members to vote for a biennial budget process in the Congress of the United States. I remind everyone in the room that we had this vote a few years ago as a test vote on an all-night vote-arama on the budget, and we got 72 votes, if I remember correctly, in favor of the biennial budget. We have had past Budget Committee chairmen vote in favor of the biennial budget.

We have had people from the majority and the minority vote for it. The fact is, it is a good idea whose time has come. I am pleased to join Senator SHAHEEN from New Hampshire and plead to the Members of the U.S. Senate to do what we ask the American people to do. Let's prioritize the way we spend our money, find savings where we can, and run a more efficient, more honest government, and a more transparent government for all.

Mr. President, I yield to the distinguished Senator from New Hampshire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am really pleased to be able to join my colleague Senator ISAKSON from Georgia as we have introduced our bipartisan legislation, the Biennial Budgeting and Appropriations Act. I think this is a welcomed piece of bipartisan legislation at this point in the year.

I want to start by thanking the Senator from Georgia for his very good work on this legislation. He has been leading this effort since he first came to the Senate in 2005, and I have been fortunate enough to partner with him on the legislation in the past two Congresses.

I think that by working together, we could pass this commonsense, bipartisan legislation that could change the way we do business in Washington for the better. As Senator ISAKSON said, there is no question that our budget process is broken.

Since 1980, we have only finished two budgets on time. In that timeframe, Congress has resorted to nearly 170 short-term funding bills or continuing resolutions. We also experienced a costly and dangerous government shutdown in October of 2013 that cost our economy \$24 billion.

It hurt small businesses. It hurt the people across this country.

That is no way to govern. I understand, as Senator ISAKSON said, that biennial budgeting will not fix everything, but it is a reform that will encourage us to work across the aisle to become better stewards of taxpayer dollars. I can attest to this personally because, as Governor of New Hampshire, I saw how you make a biennial budget work.

In each biennium, I worked with a Republican legislature, and we put together a balanced budget in the first

year of the legislative session. In the second year, we had the opportunity to do oversight. That is exactly what this bill would allow us to do here in Washington. It is a reform that has worked in New Hampshire, and it has worked in 18 other States. So as Senator ISAKSON said, 19 States in all have biennial budgeting, and it really gives us a better opportunity to review the budget to see what is working, what is effective, and what is not.

One example that I think shows how we can do this better is looking at several reports that have been issued by the Government Accountability Office. They have found areas of waste, fraud, and duplicative programs. And they have identified ways to reform things, like our farm program, to cut down inefficiencies in defense, and to reduce fraud in health programs. But today, Congress hasn't really taken the time and effort to go through those recommendations. Under biennial budgeting, we would be able to look at those kinds of recommendations and implement savings in the second year of the budget process.

Biennial budgeting also reduces the number of opportunities for manufactured crises, like a government shutdown. As Senator ISAKSON said, we have gotten real momentum in the last couple of years. We had a great vote in 2013 in the Senate, where we had an overwhelming bipartisan group endorse the concept. We saw a vote in the House Budget Committee, where legislation on a biennial budget passed with a bipartisan vote. It not only passed the House but had over half of the House Members as cosponsors. And we saw a favorable hearing in the Senate Budget Committee on the legislation, so I think momentum is growing for this idea. It is a real way for us to take action to reform the budget process and make it work better.

The bill that we are introducing has 13 bipartisan cosponsors. We are going to keep working to get more bipartisan cosponsors, and I hope that all of our colleagues will join us in this effort.

I look forward to continuing to work with Senator ISAKSON and with Senators ENZI and SANDERS on the Budget Committee to get this important reform through the Senate.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I yield the remainder of my post closure debate time to Senator FEINSTEIN from California.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

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

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

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I came to the floor this afternoon to address the nominee for Attorney General of the United States, Mr. SESSIONS. The U.S. Constitution provides that the Senate will advise and consent on all nominees put forward by the President. This fundamental check on Executive power continues to give confidence to the public that the individuals charged with the immense responsibilities and authorities of our Federal Government are of the highest ethical and professional character, are highly qualified, and are committed to exercising those powers in a manner that is consistent with our founding principles.

Any person seeking to serve in such high positions of public trust ought to be able to explain his or her record of personal and professional conduct, not only to close colleagues and friends but also to the public they seek to serve.

I have great respect for Senator JEFF SESSIONS for his commitment to public service, but I don't believe that he is the right choice to serve as our Nation's chief law enforcement officer. Time and again in the course of his career, his actions have demonstrated disinterest or even hostility to many of the civil rights that we rely on the Attorney General to protect and defend, from voting rights to civil rights, to equality for women, minorities, the LGBTQ community, and people with disabilities.

Senator SESSIONS' record in the Senate provides little evidence that his views have evolved since the last time the Senate evaluated his fitness to serve in high Federal office, when President Reagan nominated him to serve as a Federal judge in 1986. Three decades ago, the Senate voted against his confirmation to serve as Federal judge. Today, I believe the Senate should not confirm him to serve as U.S. Attorney General.

At this time in our history, with the growing concern about this administration's commitment to basic democratic principles, such as equality before the law, separation of powers, freedom of the press, and protection of minority views, I cannot support a nominee who has failed to demonstrate appreciation for these ideals, regardless of our personal relationship. We need an Attorney General who will fight for justice and equal protection for all Americans, regardless of race, gender, religion, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

One of my principal objections to this nominee is his record of making it harder for certain groups of people to vote. In 2013, in *Shelby County v. Holder*, the Supreme Court struck down section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, also

known as the preclearance provision. And while the overwhelming majority of civil rights organizations considered this ruling, which invalidated a landmark achievement of the civil rights movement—a devastating defeat—Senator SESSIONS was quoted as saying that it was a “good thing for the South.” He has been quoted as saying that he views the Voting Rights Act as an intrusive piece of legislation. We often refer to the shorthand name for this case, calling it simply Shelby County. But I believe the full title is instructive: *Shelby County v. Holder*. Holder, of course, was Attorney General Eric Holder. And in this case, the Supreme Court ruled against the Department of Justice and against the views of this Congress, which voted in 2006 to extend section 5 for another 25 years.

It also demonstrated the awesome responsibility and discretion of the Attorney General. Eric Holder was fighting to protect minorities in States with a history of racial discrimination from future voter suppression efforts. In contrast, as U.S. Attorney General, JEFF SESSIONS prosecuted several members of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the great civil rights organization formerly led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He indicted these people for allegedly attempting to fraudulently register people in minority communities to vote. All of those counts were dismissed in that case. However, the chilling effect of this type of use of government authority on our civil society should not be underestimated. This illustrated the awesome power of the prosecutor in our judicial system. That power is exponentially greater in the Office of the U.S. Attorney General.

As I said, Senator SESSIONS is also an outspoken advocate for voter ID laws, including at the Federal level. In State after State, including my home State of New Hampshire, unnecessarily stringent voter ID laws have been passed by Republicans with the clear intent to deny access to the ballot box on the part of minorities, the young, and the poor. Striking down the laws passed by Republicans in North Carolina, a unanimous Federal court ruled that they “target African Americans with almost surgical precision”—that is a direct quote—and “impose cures for problems that did not exist.”

Invalidating similar laws in Wisconsin, U.S. District Court Judge James Peterson wrote: “The Wisconsin experience demonstrates that a preoccupation with mostly phantom election fraud leads to real incidents of disenfranchisement, which undermine rather than enhance confidence in the elections, particularly in minority communities.”

President Trump has falsely claimed on numerous occasions that 3 to 5 million undocumented immigrants voted in the election in November. We have even heard that claim in New Hampshire, where our deputy secretary of

State, a Republican, has said those claims are not accurate.

Throughout our history, these arguments, not grounded in fact and data, have been used as a pretext for advancing new voter ID laws, including at the national level. Yet, as Attorney General, Senator SESSIONS would enthusiastically support this agenda. I believe that to be disqualifying for any nominee to serve as Attorney General.

When I was Governor of New Hampshire, I had the honor of being able to appoint the attorney general in our State. My qualification was that the attorney general should be the people’s attorney. I think that is no less true of the Attorney General of the United States.

I am also deeply concerned by the nominee’s record on issues associated with women’s health and autonomy. For example, as Senator BLUMENTHAL said so eloquently earlier this afternoon: Senator SESSIONS voted against the 2013 reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. This law has been reauthorized on a bipartisan basis each time it has been brought up since 1994.

The 2013 reauthorization expanded the scope of domestic violence programs, yet Senator SESSIONS was one of only 22 who voted no. This is of particular concern when we see the framework for what is suggested will be the Trump administration’s budget, which would eliminate the Office on Violence Against Women at a time when one in five women is a victim of rape, either completed or attempted.

Senator SESSIONS has also been a fierce opponent of a woman’s right to choose. He voted against a resolution supporting the *Roe v. Wade* decision, which affirmed the constitutional right of women to control our own reproductive choices. He has cosponsored legislation to prohibit Federal funding for health insurance plans that include coverage of abortion. He even opposed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which removed barriers to women who bring charges of discriminatory wage practices.

Senator SESSIONS voted against it in 2008 and again in 2009, when it became law over his opposition. Senator SESSIONS has consistently argued for “color blind” enforcement of our Nation’s civil rights laws. He contends that racism in the United States has been effectively addressed, and, therefore, diversity programs unfairly discriminate against White Americans.

For the same reason, he has voted against legislation to protect the rights and safety of the LGBT community. In 2009, he vehemently opposed the Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Act, which protects LGBT Americans from hate crimes. In debate on that proposed law, Senator SESSIONS said:

Today I am not sure women or people with different sexual orientations face that kind of discrimination. I just don’t see it.

Well, Senator SESSIONS, if you talked to the members of the gay and lesbian

community, as I have, if you would talk to women across this country who have faced discrimination in employment practices, who have faced discrimination before the Affordable Care Act, in terms of our health insurance, who have faced discrimination in terms of getting justice in cases of violence against women, you would understand that we need to make sure that the laws protect women and minorities.

In 2013, Senator SESSIONS voted against a measure to prohibit discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation or gender identity. He also voted in favor of a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage.

Mrs. McCASKILL. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for 1 sentence?

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I will yield to the honorable Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. McCASKILL. Thank you so much. I yield the remainder of my postclosure debate time to Senator FEINSTEIN.

I thank Senator SHAHEEN. I apologize for interrupting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. So in 2013, as I was saying, Senator SESSIONS voted against a measure to prohibit discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation or gender identity. And similarly, he voted in favor of a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage. Finally, Senator SESSIONS’ views on immigration are just outside the mainstream. Most Americans want fair, humane treatment for would-be immigrants to the United States, as well as for undocumented immigrants who are already here.

Senator SESSIONS has amply demonstrated that he does not agree with this view. Since he came to the Senate, he has been a leading opponent of bipartisan immigration reform efforts. In 2007 and again in 2013, he was instrumental in defeating immigration reform proposals that had widespread support in Congress and the country.

More recently, he has been a key adviser to Candidate Trump and now President Trump on immigration policies, encouraging extreme positions such as a ban on Muslim immigration and harsh treatment of DREAMers, those undocumented immigrants who arrived in the United States as young children.

I have also had the opportunity to work with Senator SESSIONS in trying to renew and extend the special immigrant visa program for those Afghans and Iraqis who helped our men and women in the military as we were fighting conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. We have heard from multiple members of our military who served that these interpreters and these people from Iraq and Afghanistan who worked with them to make sure that they could help keep them safe have saved lives and have made a difference in that military conflict because of the

help they provided to our fighting men and women.

Yet Senator SESSIONS, as we were trying to extend that program, was unwilling to allow us to make sure that we could bring them to the United States, with all of the vetting that goes on to make sure that the people who come here are actually people who helped us. He opposed extending that program to allow all of those folks to come here.

I believe we need an Attorney General who will not only insist on equal enforcement of the laws but who has a passion for pursuing justice and fairness for all Americans, as well as for those who want to visit or who want to immigrate to the United States. In my view, Senator SESSIONS has failed to demonstrate that commitment.

Indeed, I worry that as Attorney General, Senator SESSIONS would affirm and encourage Trump's most troubling tendencies, especially with regard to minorities, to women, to immigrants, and to the LGBTQ community. I believe Senator SESSIONS is the wrong person for the critically important post of U.S. Attorney General. I intend to vote against his confirmation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I yield the remainder of my postclosure debate time to Senator SCHUMER. I want to thank Senator THUNE for his courtesy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, we continue to just sort of—at a glacial pace—work our way through the nominations. We have in front of us the nomination for Attorney General of Senator JEFF SESSIONS, a colleague of ours. I am very excited to be able to support his nomination to be the next Attorney General of the United States.

But unfortunately it is taking an extraordinarily long time for us to plow through this because Democrats continue to use procedural roadblocks to keep the administration from being able to get their team in place. I say that, having concluded today, based on the research that we have been able to assemble, that this is the slowest pace for Cabinet approval since George Washington.

Now, that sounds a little melodramatic, but I think it is accurate. In fact, if you go back to the Eisenhower administration and roll forward to today, every President, going back to Eisenhower, has had their Cabinet completely or mostly in place by today. In fact, going back to the 1880s and up through the 1930s, the entire Cabinet for those administrations was approved on day one—day one of the Presidency.

Here we are, as we again continue to run into dilatory tactics by the Democrats here in the Senate. There have been now, I think, seven of the Cabinet-level nominees of President Trump in who have been confirmed. At this point

in President Obama's first term in office, there were 21 confirmed. So this idea that somehow some purpose is achieved or some goal accomplished by dragging this process on, I think, does a great disservice to the American people who, when they voted last fall, voted with an expectation that when they put a new President in office, that President would be able to assemble his team and get them about the important work of governing this country.

So it is regrettable that we are where we are. It is unprecedented and historic, the levels to which the Democrats here in this Chamber have taken their attempts to slow this process down. I hope that will change. I hope we can get back on track here, get this team put in place, and then let's get on with the important work we have to do.

There is a lot of stuff that needs to be done to make this country stronger, more competitive, safer for Americans today, to get the economy growing at a faster rate, to create better-paying jobs, and increase wages. There is just a lot of stuff that this body needs to be working on. Right now, what we are doing is simply human resources business. We are trying to confirm people to positions, but it could go so much smoother, so much easier, so much more quickly, and so much more efficiently if we would just get a little cooperation from the Democrats in the Senate. I hope that will happen because this is unprecedented, as I said, in the level of degree to which the Democrats are stooping.

NOMINATION OF NEIL GORSUCH

Last week, President Trump announced his nomination for the Supreme Court. He made an outstanding choice. Judge Neil Gorsuch has a distinguished resume. He graduated with honors from Harvard Law School and went on to receive a doctorate in legal philosophy from Oxford University, where he was a Marshall scholar.

He clerked for two Supreme Court Justices, Byron White and Anthony Kennedy. He worked in both private practice and at the Justice Department before being nominated to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals where he served with distinction for 10 years. He is widely regarded as a brilliant and thoughtful jurist and a gifted writer whose opinions are known for their clarity.

Above all—above all—he is known for his impartiality, for his commitment to following the law wherever it leads, whether he likes the results or not. A judge who likes every outcome he reaches is very likely a bad judge, Judge Gorsuch has said more than once. Why? Because a judge who likes every outcome he reaches is likely making decisions based on something other than the law. That is a problem.

The job of a judge is to interpret the law, not to write it; to call balls and strikes, not to design the rules of the game. Everyone's rights are put in jeopardy when judges step outside their

appointed role and start changing the meaning of the law to suit their personal opinions.

Judge Gorsuch's nomination has been greeted with praise by liberals as well as conservatives. I think one of the biggest reasons for that is that both groups know that Judge Gorsuch can be relied on to judge impartially. Here is what Neal Katyal, an Acting Solicitor General for President Obama had to say about Judge Gorsuch:

I have seen him up close and in action, both in court and on the Federal Appellate Rules Committee (where both of us serve); he brings a sense of fairness and decency to the job and a temperament that suits the Nation's highest Court. I, for one, wish it were a Democrat choosing the next justice, but since that is not to be, one basic criterion should be paramount: Is the nominee someone who will stand up for the rule of law and say no to a President or Congress that strays beyond the Constitution and law?

I have no doubt that if confirmed, Judge Gorsuch would help to restore confidence in the rule of law.

His years on the bench reveal a commitment to judicial independence, a record that should give the American people confidence that he will not compromise principle to favor the President who appointed him.

Again, those are the words of Neal Katyal, formerly an Acting Solicitor General for President Obama.

When Judge Gorsuch was nominated to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals, his nomination sailed through the Senate. Both of his home State Senators—one a Republican and one a Democrat—supported his nomination, and he was confirmed by a unanimous vote.

Then-Senator Obama could have objected to the nomination. He didn't. Senator SCHUMER could have objected to the nomination. He didn't. Then-Senators Biden or Clinton or Kennedy could have objected to the nomination, but they didn't. Why? Presumably because they saw what almost everybody sees today; that Judge Gorsuch is exactly the kind of judge we want on the bench—supremely qualified, thoughtful, fair, and impartial.

Unfortunately, this time around, some Senate Democrats are being less public-spirited. They are upset that their party didn't win the Presidential election so they are threatening to filibuster an eminently qualified nominee, an eminently qualified nominee that a number of them had previously supported.

The Democratic leader recently said:

Now more than ever, we need a Supreme Court Justice who is independent, eschews ideology, who will preserve our democracy, protect fundamental rights, and will stand up to a President who has already shown a willingness to bend the Constitution.

That, of course, is precisely the kind of judge that Judge Gorsuch is, as pretty much everyone who knows him—both liberal and conservative—can attest, but leaving that aside, if the Democratic leader really has these concerns about Judge Gorsuch, why did he allow him to receive a unanimous confirmation to the Tenth Circuit?