

that makes Americans furious with Washington, DC.

President Trump got elected because he was going to drain the swamp. President Trump got elected because he said the system was rigged. President Trump got elected because he doesn't want this pay-to-play. President Trump got elected because this place needs to be cleaned out. Then he appoints somebody to be the head of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau who only really wants to talk to you if you gave him campaign money, which is fundamentally what he said.

If the policy at his congressional office has been his policy at OMB and his policy at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, it has corrupted all of his work. It is hard to believe otherwise. Mr. Mulvaney should resign. He should resign.

Mr. Mulvaney should release his schedule since he has been head of the Bureau. One of the functions of the U.S. Senate, of either party, regardless of the President, is to oversee what exactly is happening in the executive branch of government, and I think it is important that we see Mr. Mulvaney's schedule. Who is he meeting with? What kind of contributions did they make to him when he was a Congressman? Is he directing money to the Senate majority or to the House majority Members to help Speaker RYAN? Is he sending money to political candidates who have been his allies in trying to emasculate the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau?

Mr. Mulvaney should resign. He should release his schedule. The White House should quickly nominate a permanent CFPB Director with bipartisan support and, may I suggest, a moral compass. I will say that again. The White House should quickly nominate a permanent Director of the Bureau with bipartisan support and a moral compass. Banks and payday lenders already have armies of lobbyists on their side; they don't need one more.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from Texas.

CORRECTIONS ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this afternoon, the House Judiciary Committee will begin to consider their version of a bill I have introduced here in the Senate with the junior Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, called the CORRECTIONS Act. This legislation addresses prison reform—an issue at the forefront of how justice is administered in this country—by focusing on reducing rates of recidivism, or repeat offenders, and ensuring that those reentering society can become productive members of our communities without threatening the crime rate.

Our efforts here are important, as re-offense rates in our country remain at high levels. In other words, our criminal justice system has become a revolving door, with reoffense rates of more than 75 percent for State pris-

oners and nearly 50 percent for Federal prisoners. So there is a 75-percent chance that somebody who goes to State prison will end up going back and a 50-percent chance that a Federal prisoner will end up going back unless we do something about it.

In law school, students are taught that the bedrock principles of our criminal justice system are deterrence, retribution, incapacitation, and rehabilitation. The reality is that somewhere along the way, we forgot about rehabilitation, and our prisons have literally become a warehouse for people who have been convicted of criminal offenses. That reality is part of the reason that my State of Texas and several other States have led the way not just to be tough on crime but to be smart on crime too.

Texas focused on the important role rehabilitation can play by implementing statewide prison reforms to help offenders learn to overcome the reasons they went to prison in the first place—whether it is a drug or alcohol habit or an addiction, whether it is simply being unprepared to enter the workforce because they dropped out of school or, perhaps, they have some sort of learning disability.

By using recidivism reduction programs like job training or alcohol and drug rehabilitation and letting prisoners go to school while they are in prison to earn a GED or to learn a marketable skill, Texas has reduced its incarceration rate and crime rate by double digits at the same time. Let me say that again. We have reduced our incarceration rate and our crime rate by double digits at the same time.

The end all and be all, in my view, of our criminal justice system must be to reduce the crime rate. In other words, whatever else we do, if the crime rate doesn't go down, we are not getting it right. As a result of the State-based reforms that I am talking about, we have actually been able to reduce incarceration rates and crime rates too.

I must say that when we talk about rehabilitation of prisoners, we are not talking about something we do to them. They have to want it. They have to want to turn their lives around, and they have to take advantage of the opportunities we provide them to do so, because that sort of personal transformation requires extraordinary commitment. Again, it is not something the government can do to somebody. They need to do it for themselves with the help we provide.

By doing so, we found that we can save billions of dollars for taxpayers, and we spared countless victims from further criminal activity. You have to wonder, from the time somebody comes out of prison to the time they reoffend and go back, how many crimes have they committed? How many people's lives have changed forever?

Finally, when they get apprehended for committing a crime, we tend to look at that in isolation, but the truth is, for people who live lives of crimi-

nality, this is what they do full time. They commit numerous crimes against property and against people. If we can reduce the crime rate, we can help them get back on their feet and become productive members of society, and we can save money at the same time. It strikes me that this is a pretty good deal.

For years I have tried to bring the successful State-based experiments and models to Washington, DC. That is why I felt it was important to reintroduce the bipartisan CORRECTIONS Act with the junior Senator from Rhode Island. Senator WHITEHOUSE of Rhode Island, my cosponsor of this legislation, and I have very different perspectives on the world. He is a Democrat. I am a Republican. I am a conservative, and I would say he is at least a liberal. I don't know if maybe he would call himself a progressive. The fact is that we tried this and it works. Rather than having the Federal Government and the entire country be a laboratory for experimentation when it comes to things like this, isn't it better to let the States do what they always were conceived of being capable of doing, which is to be the laboratories of democracy? See what works and then take those successful experiments and scale them up so the whole Nation can benefit—that is what this legislation does.

This bill requires the Department of Justice to develop assessment tools that will assess the recidivism risk on all eligible offenders. In other words, we are not going to give hardcore multiple offenders—violent criminals—the benefit of these programs. What we will do is to start with the low-risk and moderate-risk offenders. We have scientific tools, tests, and the like that can help us make better decisions on who ought to be eligible and who should not.

We also shift the Federal Bureau of Prisons resources toward those most likely to commit future crimes. In other words, if we take low-level and mid-level offenders and we give them a way out to turn their lives around and become productive and we reduce the crime rate, that gives us more opportunity to focus on the hardcore violent criminals that are the greatest threat to our communities across the board. Focusing on less restrictive conditions for lower risk inmates and focusing on the hardcore violent criminals gives us a chance to concentrate our efforts on the people most likely to commit future crimes and to reoffend.

Our bill requires the Bureau of Prisons to partner with private organizations, including ones that are not-for-profit or faith-based, to promote recidivism reduction. We have had some very successful programs in Texas where religious organizations will go into the prisons and offer people a chance, not only to learn the skills they need in order to succeed on the outside but to turn their lives around by recognizing a higher power in their life. This is the

sort of experience that causes many people's lives to be transformed forever. Again, it is not because of something government does to them but because of what they embraced and have done for themselves.

I am more encouraged than ever that we will see some positive momentum on prison reform as the President and some of his closest advisers see prison reform as a top priority. Jared Kushner, the President's son-in-law, had a piece today—I believe it was in the *Wall Street Journal*—talking about this initiative. He has been a great partner, working with House colleagues and Senate colleagues to try to make this a priority, as well as urging the President and the Attorney General to do so as well.

Earlier this year, the President held an important meeting on this subject after 6 months of exploring the issue with his team. Attorney General Sessions attended, as did my friend and fellow Texan Brooke Rollins, the head of the Texas Public Policy Foundation, whose Right on Crime Program has been on the leading edge of those prison reforms in Texas and, then, taking that message nationwide. That meeting with the President was very productive.

In my discussions with colleagues and at the White House since that time, what we have repeatedly come back to is the idea of taking those success stories at the State level and scaling them up into a Federal reform package.

Our State began this effort back in 2007. A number of States have done the same thing. Over the last decade, we closed or consolidated multiple prisons, saving significant taxpayer dollars. The crime rate has fallen Statewide, even while our State's population has exploded during that same period of time. Something is clearly working back home in the Lone Star State. It has worked in places like North Carolina, where the Presiding Officer played an important role in the reforms in his State, as speaker of the house. It has worked in places like Rhode Island and Georgia, just to name a few.

That is part of the reason why prison reform has enjoyed such broad bipartisan support. It is an issue that unites liberals and conservatives around shared principles of saving money, reducing crime, and successfully reintegrating our citizens into society upon release.

I believe in the essential dignity of every human life. If there is a human life we can help salvage by giving people access to some of these programs and by changing the way we look at incarceration as—not just a warehouse where we put people, but also by providing people who are willing to take advantage of these programs the opportunity to turn their life around—it strikes me that we are giving people a second chance. It seems to me like the right and just thing to do.

Are we going to be able to save everybody? I am not naive enough to think that we are going to be able to save everybody. Some people are simply going to have to be incarcerated and kept off the streets so our communities can be safe, but that is not true for everybody. Looking at low-level and mid-level offenders, doing the sort of risk assessments I am talking about, giving them access to these programs where they themselves can turn their lives around while making our communities safe, and giving them an opportunity for a second chance and to save money—that strikes me as something we need to do.

Every day we fail to act on this issue we allow our prisons in the United States to become more bloated, more inefficient, and more wasteful. State and local governments spend more than \$200 billion a year on criminal justice, and a large fraction of that is spent on locking people up. I know there are some people who think we ought to lock them up and throw away the key, but that doesn't happen. People get out after a few years. The question is, Are they going to be prepared to reenter lawful society or will they simply go back to the same old lifestyle, reoffend, and end up back in prison?

There are even more consequential and less tangible costs on our communities when people continue to reoffend, because they don't find a way out of their life of crime. There is the cost on strained and broken families, on lost incomes and savings, on children who have to grow up without one or both parents. Those are some of the collateral damages of our criminal justice system when we don't take advantage of commonsense, proven reforms like I am talking about.

When people go to jail, the ripple impact affects all of us. It affects all of our families, all of our friends, and all of our neighborhoods. Some people need to go to jail. They need to stay there to pay for their crime and to be separated or segregated from law-abiding society to keep our communities safe.

Again, if we can help address the problems by expanding programming like substance abuse treatment and vocational training, which have been proven to reduce recidivism, these programs can help break the vicious cycle of imprisonment. For people who want a better life but simply have not found a way out of it, by investing in programs that focus on job training, education, drug rehabilitation, and mental health treatment, we can save taxpayer dollars and lower crime and incarceration rates and decrease recidivism.

More importantly, in the end, I think we can help people to change their lives for the better. We can give them hope and give them some opportunity and let them accept the power of transforming their lives and the promise that provides to them and to all of us.

I applaud the administration and the Attorney General's efforts to refocus our criminal justice reforms on the prison reform issue and for their work so far. I am encouraged by Speaker RYAN's meeting with members of the President's staff last week and by the House Judiciary's action starting today. I know it will not end today, but they are taking up a version that closely mirrors the CORRECTIONS Act, which I have addressed in these remarks.

I also greatly appreciate the leadership of my cosponsor, Senator WHITEHOUSE. I know that other people have other ideas—perhaps about sentencing reform and the like—but in this political environment, I am for doing what we can do rather than spinning our wheels being frustrated about things we can't do because there is simply not the political support in the House, the Senate, and at the White House to get it done.

The prison reform bill, I believe—the CORRECTIONS Act—is the way to go. I am looking forward to working with all of my colleagues in the House and the Senate, as well as the President, to get this done.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. CAPITO. 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. CAPITO. Mr. President, I am glad to be here today to be on the Senate floor to rise to urge my colleagues to confirm Mike Pompeo as our next Secretary of State.

The Senate is an institution built on history and tradition. We hear that quite a bit as we walk the halls, particularly where it comes to confirmations.

Confirming the President's Cabinet, confirming judges, confirming a Supreme Court Justice, I think, is one of the greatest honors that we enjoy as Senators.

Recent Secretaries of State have enjoyed strong bipartisan support from this Chamber during their own confirmation process. Hillary Clinton was confirmed by a vote of 94 to 2. John Kerry was confirmed by a vote of 94 to 3. These are overwhelming, bipartisan votes, and it is not because everybody in this Chamber agrees with everything Secretary Clinton or Secretary Kerry would have done on most of the foreign policy questions. The result is the Senate's strong tradition of confirming qualified nominees to represent the United States on the world stage. This very crucial position, Secretary of State, gives the President his or her voice around the world in the diplomatic realm. But when it comes to the confirmation of this nominee, Mike Pompeo, many of my colleagues have

seemed way too ready to brush aside this long-held tradition. What is the reason for this? I think you would agree with me—the reason is pretty obvious—that it is just flat-out partisanship. Partisanship is the only explanation because it certainly could not be, is not, and will not be the nominee's qualifications.

We have all heard Mike Pompeo's résumé by now. His list of experience and accomplishments make him more than qualified to serve as this Nation's top diplomat. I think some of his qualifications are worth repeating.

He was first in his class at West Point. He was a cavalry officer in the U.S. Army and served honorably. He is a graduate of Harvard Law School. He was an editor of the Harvard Law Review and the Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy.

After law school, Mike worked at one of the country's very prestigious and top law firms before he cofounded a company where he served as CEO. He then joined another company where, again, he served as the CEO.

That was all before Mike was elected to serve four terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, where I was very fortunate, in my years as a U.S. Congresswoman, to serve and work alongside him and to call him my colleague.

During his time in Congress, he served on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Just on the title alone, "Permanent Select"—it is a committee selected by the Speaker and the minority leader—you know that it is extremely important because it deals with all of the Nation's intelligence.

We know that after he left that position as a Congressman, he became President Trump's Director of the CIA. By all accounts and by all reports, he has done an absolutely exceptional job. He revitalized the morale within the CIA and put us on even footing on one of our core missions.

I think it is an impressive list of qualifications that he has, especially when you compare some of our previous Secretaries of State.

I would ask the question: What does it take for a military officer, a lawyer, a CEO, a Congressman, and now a CIA Director to get one Democratic vote out of committee? Why is there such pushback on such a qualified nominee? I believe it is because of a partisan campaign to obstruct. We have seen it on other nominations and certainly on this one.

This sort of obstruction does not help our government function. It doesn't help the career folks over at the State Department do their job—and they are ready. It doesn't help our country lead on the global stage, and it certainly doesn't help the people we serve.

This is an important time in our Nation's history, particularly around the world. You and I just heard the French President—the Chief Executive—talk about the needs of Europe and his views on terrorism and America's place

as a world leader. Now, more than ever, we need a strong and qualified Secretary of State. We need a leader to negotiate with North Korea. These negotiations are coming up rapidly, and we know that Mike Pompeo has already developed a relationship.

We need him to counter the Russian aggression we see cropping up in other areas all around this globe. We need a strong leader to address the chemical weapons situation in Syria, as tragic as it is. The list could go on and on.

And do you know what? Mike Pompeo is up to this job, and we should give it to him. We should give it to him in this Chamber by confirmation.

The American people want Washington to work. They want us to work together. They want us to work as a team. That is how we are set up. So how can that happen if the President can't even get the opportunity to put his own team in place?

I am going to vote for Mike Pompeo to be our next Secretary of State because I want the President to have his team. I want the Nation to have a strong leader. I want our State Department to be functioning as fully, as vibrantly, and as aggressively as we can around the world in these dangerous times.

With that, I urge my colleagues to put partisanship aside and confirm Mike Pompeo as our next Secretary of State.

I yield back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUNT. 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. BLUNT. Mr. President, I rise to join the Presiding Officer and others who have been on the floor hoping that we will move this week to support the confirmation of Mike Pompeo, who has been nominated to be the Secretary of State.

It is a critically important time for the country. I think we heard this morning in a joint meeting from the President of France the importance of our country and those who agree with our defense of freedom and security to stand up for that. There are threats all over the globe, and certainly everybody realizes that Mike Pompeo, the current Director of the CIA, would have the knowledge he needs to do the job. He clearly has the experience he needs to do the job, and he has the support of the President, whom he would be representing.

Historically, this body, until recent years, always dealt with foreign policy as if we were sure that bipartisanship starts at the water's edge and partisanship ends at the water's edge. That long tradition was always evident, particularly in the Secretary of State's job and confirming people to important

positions that relate to our national security.

John Kerry was confirmed as Secretary of State by a vote of 94 to 3. Hillary Clinton was confirmed by a vote of 94 to 2. Condoleezza Rice received 85 votes when she was confirmed, and Colin Powell was confirmed unanimously. That is the tradition the country has always set for this job.

My colleague from New York Senator SCHUMER said in 2013—and this is an exact quote: "Who in America doesn't think a President, Democrat or Republican, deserves his or her picks for who should run these agencies? Nobody." That is end of that quote. That is the answer to his own question. Apparently, that is no longer the answer to that question on the part of Senator SCHUMER and others.

Senator Kerry, and later Secretary of State Kerry, said in 2009:

It is essential that we provide the President with the tools and resources he needs to effect change. That starts by making sure he has the national security team he has chosen in place as soon as possible.

Secretary Kerry and Secretary Clinton were not confirmed because Republicans agreed with every single one of their policy positions. They weren't confirmed because their colleagues in the Senate agreed with every one of their votes. They were confirmed because they were qualified to do the job, and the President, who had nominated them, deserved to have his team in place to carry out the policies he had been elected to carry out.

Now the same standard should be extended to Director Pompeo, who is eminently qualified for the job. Director Pompeo graduated first in his class at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1986, and he served as a cavalry officer patrolling the Iron Curtain before the fall of the Berlin Wall.

After leaving Active Duty, Director Pompeo graduated from Harvard Law School where he edited the Harvard Law Review. This is a man of great accomplishment before he entered politics.

In addition to those things, he also ran two successful businesses before he was elected to the House of Representatives in 2010. He served in the House from 2010 to 2017. He was a member of the Intelligence Committee. In that role, he was at the forefront of information that is important to national security, ranging from the Iran nuclear accord to the PATRIOT Act. He understands these issues. He is a person of significant capacity. Again, maybe most important of all the qualifications, he was picked by the President of the United States who, after this time of working together with Director Pompeo as the Director of the CIA, the President should know exactly what he is getting, and, frankly, we should too.

President Trump decided to not only nominate Director Pompeo to be the Director of National Security, but when he was sworn in—when he was confirmed, before he was sworn in, 66

to 32 was the vote. Fourteen Senate Democrats, most of them still here—if not, they may all still be here—voted for Mike Pompeo to be the Director of the CIA. I would say he is more qualified today to be Secretary of State than he was then to be the Director of the CIA because not only has he done everything he has done up until then, but he has understood, from the unique perspective of the CIA, the foreign policy and the intelligence challenges we face every day.

He has taken the responsibilities seriously. He has briefed the President over and over again. The President knows exactly what he is getting and Director Pompeo should know exactly whom he is working for.

SENATE RULES ON NOMINATIONS

Given the numerous challenges we face here and around the globe, it is important that we swiftly confirm not just Mike Pompeo but the President's other nominees. Many of these positions still remain vacant because our colleagues across the aisle have, frankly, wasted hours and days obstructing the confirmation process. It is way beyond any normal way that this has been approached.

Right now, we are in the middle of a 30-hour debate. I don't see that many people debating. We had a big debate yesterday—at least time was reserved—at the insistence of the minority. I think the debate was about 28 minutes out of the 20 hours between the time the nominee could have been voted on, and he would have gotten the same number of votes he got almost 20 hours later, after 28 minutes of debate.

President Trump's nominees have faced 88 cloture votes. That is the time we are in now, where we have a cloture vote and then we have this long period of time for theoretical debate that doesn't occur. Those nominees have faced 28 cloture votes compared to 24 total cloture votes in the first entire 2 years of the 6 previous Presidents combined. So there was an average of four cloture votes for those Presidents in their first 2 years. President Trump has had 88 cloture votes in less than a year and a half.

Something is happening differently than has ever happened before. It takes an average of 85 days for the President's nominees to be confirmed once they get to the Senate, 20 days longer than President Obama's nominees. The other difference with President Obama's nominees is, we didn't stop all the work in the Senate during the 60 days that we were having hearings, getting the nomination ready for the floor. We didn't do exactly what we are doing right now, which is fully taking advantage of every right the minority has to insist on debate. The only thing missing in that debate is the debate. At the rate we are going, it would take more than 9 years to confirm all of the President's nominees. This would be 9 years of his 4-year term. If he didn't nominate anybody else, this would be longer than the President would have if

he were elected to two terms. It is unacceptable. It is ridiculous. It denies the President that counsel he needs of senior leaders, but it also denies the Senate the floor time it needs to deal with the issues.

If people have watched the Senate in the last several years, and particularly if you have watched it over the last several months, the quorum call that we so often have—the one I suggested we remove ourselves from—is what you see when you turn on the Senate because we are waiting for a vote to happen, the debate of which does not occur.

So, later today, the Rules Committee I chair will be considering Senator LANKFORD's legislation to address these delays in the confirmation process. All Senator LANKFORD's resolution does is to make permanent the same rules Senate Democrats agreed to in 2013, when they were in the majority. While they were in the majority, a majority of Republicans and Democrats all agreed we would confirm President Obama's nominees with debate that more nearly met the likely debate for that office.

Senator LANKFORD's resolution would simply reduce debate for most executive branch offices from 30 hours down to 8 hours and for district judges from 30 hours to 2 hours. By the way, we don't have to use those 2 hours or those 8 hours either. If there is no debate, we should always move to the vote, but at least the debate time still gives the minority the protection that traditionally they have had. When you abuse the minority protections in the Senate, that is when those protections tend to go away.

The resolution still would have 30 hours of debate for the Supreme Court, for circuit courts, the courts of appeal for all the district courts, and for Cabinet-level nominees.

We are not opposed to debating nominees and really debating them. I think the opposition here is we are opposed to not debating and using up time simply as a delay tactic, where the result would be the same, whether you voted in 30 minutes or 30 hours.

Now, remember, this is the same framework the Senate passed by a vote of 78 to 16 in 2013. Fifty-two Democrats voted in favor of this exact same resolution in 2013, including the current minority leader. Senator LANKFORD's proposal would make that framework permanent. It would allow the Senate to expedite the confirmation process for the President's well-qualified nominees. It would also allow the Senate to get to the other work that the American people expect the Senate to do and have every reason to expect the Senate to do.

So, today and tomorrow, we will continue this process of waiting for the vote on the nominee to be Secretary of State; again, a vote that, prior to recent times, would have occurred right after the report was out and Members knew what they were going to do. So,

hopefully, we will begin to look at these rules and our work more seriously.

REMEMBERING TED VAN DER MEID

Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to Ted Van Der Meid, a longtime House of Representatives leadership staff member, who died of pancreatic cancer on March 19.

For the 10 years before Ted left the Congress, I worked with him every day the Congress was in session. He was a great public servant. Ted was emblematic of the professional staff that we count on here in the Senate and across the Rotunda in the House of Representatives. His dedication to the Constitution, the Congress, and democracy guided his work.

Ted didn't seek personal glory or seek to accumulate vast wealth. Instead, he woke up every day working to make the Congress a better and safer place for the American people.

He served as a staff member for several Members, including Jan Meyers and Lynn Martin, before serving as the general counsel to House Republican Leader Bob Michel where he worked on Congressional reform initiatives.

After leaving Leader Michel's office, he served as the chief counsel for the Ethics Committee.

When Denny Hastert became Speaker of the House, Ted became his chief of floor operations and chief legal counsel. In a wide portfolio, Van Der Meid coordinated with the House majority leader on all floor activities. He also was in charge of the institutional operations for the Speaker.

That institutional responsibility became especially important in the context of the 9/11 attacks.

It was Ted who drove the completion of the Visitor's Center that not only made the Congress more accessible to the American people, but also made the Capitol a safer and more secure place for the visitors and for those who come to work here every day. Ted was also involved in the potentially critical continuity of government discussions that overshadowed other concerns in 2002.

When Ted retired from the Congress, he eventually went to work for the Pew Charitable Trust, where once again he devoted his time in seeking to make this institution work better for the American people. In particular, he helped to establish forums where staff from a diverse set of Members got to know each other in more causal settings. It was Ted's view that the better staff and Members knew one another, the better they could find common ground and make progress on behalf of the voters.

Ted was taken away from us much too early. He fought the good fight and always thought about how he could make this Congress and this country a better place for all Americans.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the nomination of Mike