

I do want to say clearly that “doing something” does not mean arming educators or bringing more guns into our schools. Teachers are hired to teach, not to be security guards. Instead of putting guns in the hands of educators, we need to get them out of the hands of attackers in the first place.

Let me conclude with these words of one of the survivors of the Capital Gazette shooting. Reporter Selene San Felice shared her thoughts in a July 1 opinion piece for the paper. She recounted the moments of the shooting and shared pretty succinctly what she thinks needs to happen next in this country. Selene wrote:

I watched John McNamara die. I had to step over Wendi Winters to escape . . .

If your help ends at thoughts and prayers, I don't want them. What I want is action.

I'm not just talking to the president, or our governor, or our elected officials. I'm talking to every single person in this nation.

We must do better. We must vote better. We must push for legislation so that this doesn't feel normal.

Rob Hiaasen, Gerald Fischman, Wendi Winters, John McNamara, Rebecca Smith and thousands of people are dead because of shootings like the one I lived through.

The man who killed the people I love bought this gun legally. His record of stalking and harassment had been expunged. But even if it hadn't been, he still could have bought the gun he used to shoot Rebecca, Wendi, Rob, Gerald and John.

This is not political. I'm not asking for change as a liberal media puppet. I'm asking for something to be done for the sake of our humanity.

I think, quite frankly, Selene is speaking for many, many people in our community. We need to act. Now. For Rebecca, Wendi, Rob, Gerald, John, and the thousands of other innocent people who have been lost to needless gun violence, Congress must act. We must show that we can protect the American people, which is perhaps the most important task we have as lawmakers.

We cannot stand by and pretend we are helpless and powerless to prevent another tragedy. We can do something powerful today.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I rise to honor the victims and the survivors of the terrible shooting at the Capital Gazette newspaper which occurred on June 28. I thank my friend and colleague Senator CARDIN for his remarks earlier today on this floor and thank the Senate for taking up a resolution in memory of the victims.

Our State of Maryland and the country were horrified by the tragic attacks on one of our great Maryland institutions—the Capital Gazette newspaper, the local newspaper of our State cap-

ital in Annapolis, which has been operating since 1727. It was, and is, your quintessential smalltown newspaper, which serves Annapolis and Anne Arundel County but is also a newspaper read throughout the State of Maryland.

In that awful shooting, we lost five members of the Capital Gazette: Gerald Fischman, Rob Hiaasen, John McNamara, Rebecca Smith, and Wendi Winters.

Gerald Fischman was an editorial page editor whose thoughtful columns and sly wit shed light on critical community issues. He was well known for his insatiable curiosity and his love of family, and his talent for writing extended to poems he composed for his wife Erica.

Rob Hiaasen was a big man with a big presence who applied his considerable skills as a journalist to mentor others, both fellow reporters and students at the University of Maryland College of Journalism. He gave of his time, and he gave of his talent.

John McNamara was a sports writer and sports fan—a big fan of the University of Maryland Terps. He covered everything from the Orioles to the local Little League. He was always generous with his time and known to many who follow sports around the country.

Sales Assistant Rebecca Smith was strong and smart and a fixture at her fiancé Dwayne's softball tournaments. She was also known to be unfailingly kind and always took the time to make people feel at home at the Gazette.

Wendi Winters had a great sense of humor and an incredible ability to pull stories out of just about anyone. Her colleagues say she charged at the shooter, displaying the bravery and determination she had so many times before in her life and saving the lives of others at the newspaper in the process.

Community newspapers like the Capital Gazette are more than just sources of news; they represent the lifeblood of our communities around the country and our Nation. They report on everything, big issues and small issues, because no issue is too small if it affects people in a particular community. I think all of us know these are the reporters who stay out late at local council meetings, they are the folks at the PTA meetings, they are the folks busy collecting news important to people in a local community. This newspaper has been at this for hundreds of years.

Even after that awful shooting, the next day the Capital Gazette put out a newspaper, as they have every day since then, with the help of fellow journalists at the Baltimore Sun and elsewhere. They put out a newspaper that talked about the terrible shooting they experienced at the Capital Gazette and remembered the victims and thanked the first responders.

I also salute the first responders, an incredible and brave response from local, State, and Federal agencies. At the local level, they were on the scene within 60 to 90 seconds. Had that not

happened, we would have had even more than the terrible loss we saw that awful day.

It also should cause all of us to think again about measures we can take in our communities, in our States, and at the Federal level to stop the violence. One of the victims, Gerald Fischman, who had been an editorial writer there, had written earlier in the aftermath of the terrible shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, and here is what Gerald Fischman wrote at that time:

Of all the words this week, hopelessness may be the most dangerous. We must believe there is a solution, a way to prevent another mass shooting. We must believe that we can find it if only we try a little harder.

I ask every Member of the Senate, every Member of this Congress, every elected official, and every citizen, let's work harder to find a way to end the violence. There are things we can do to reduce the chances and the awful losses we are seeing around our country, both in mass shootings and daily violence.

As we remember these victims, I ask that we dedicate ourselves to the mission of ending the violence.

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. CORNYN. Mr. 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 BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday, I had the chance to meet with the President's nominee to fill the vacancy left by the retirement of Justice Anthony Kennedy on the Supreme Court, and I am pleased with the nominee the President has chosen. After talking to him yesterday morning, I look forward to supporting his nomination and doing whatever I can to ensure his bipartisan confirmation.

My conversation with Judge Kavanaugh refreshed my memory that we actually had met back in 2000 when I was attorney general of Texas and I was preparing to deliver an oral argument before the U.S. Supreme Court—something I had never done before. Thanks to Judge Kavanaugh, who wasn't a judge at the time, Paul Clement and Ted Olson—both of whom had been Solicitor General of the United States—helped me get prepared and do the best job I was capable of doing before the Court, providing me a moot court opportunity. So it was good to catch up with Judge Kavanaugh.

I have followed Judge Kavanaugh's career closely. In the interim, obviously he has served as a circuit court judge on the DC Circuit Court. Some might call it the second most important court in the Nation, and that is primarily because it is located here in the District of Columbia, and most of the major cases involving administrative authority, Federal power, end up finding their way one way or the other

through the DC Circuit Court of Appeals. So he has had a great judicial career over the last 12 years and has written on a variety of topics. I would say he is a pretty well-known quantity.

While you are going to hear a lot of demands for additional information—and I am all for as much transparency as can be provided, and Senators certainly have a right to get their hands on as much information as possible about the nominee and his qualifications, his background, and how he might perform as a Supreme Court Justice—I hope this doesn't turn into a delay-of-game tactic.

He has had a long career in the government. He worked at the White House as Staff Secretary, which, for those who aren't familiar with that, means he was the last person who saw a piece of paper before it was presented to the President for signature. That doesn't mean he was the publisher or the author of that paper, and many times it was really to make sure that it was correct, that it was accurate, that it had been verified and authenticated, but he was the one who decided to turn it over to the President for the President to sign, and it could have been major matters or minor matters. But I hope we don't get to a point where people say that every document or email that he happens to have been copied on or have seen somehow becomes essential for a Senator before they can decide whether to support his confirmation.

I would add that some Senators have come out and announced their opposition to the nominee before he was even announced. I think our friend from Pennsylvania did that—in other words, announced his opposition to anybody this President might nominate to fill the vacancy left by Anthony Kennedy. So I hope we don't hear from people like that, that now they need more information so they can make a decision. They have already made their decision, and it really is just a waste of everybody's time and really an insult to the rest of the Senators who are doing their due diligence and trying to perform their constitutional responsibilities when it comes to providing advice and consent on a nominee to the highest Court in the country.

Many people are familiar with the arc of Judge Kavanaugh's career, but let me mention a few things, lest they be lost in all of the noise here in Washington.

Of course, he graduated with honors from Yale College and attended Yale Law School—two of the elite universities and law schools in the country. He clerked for two Federal appellate judges before Justice Anthony Kennedy on the Supreme Court. As the Presiding Officer knows, those are the types of jobs that are highly competitive, and only the best of the best get asked to serve as law clerks to Federal appellate judges and certainly to the Supreme Court. Then he went on to work in private practice, in the White

House Counsel's office thereafter, and finally as Staff Secretary, which I mentioned a few minutes ago, before being confirmed to the Federal bench in Washington.

I want to step back for a moment because in the weeks ahead, we are going to have plenty of time to talk about his credentials, his experience, and his decisions, and we will have plenty of time to parse all of the dissents, the concurrences, the majority opinions he has written on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals, but I think it is also important to know the man, to know the person, because unfortunately, Washington, DC, has a way of chewing up people, and their personality and their humanity become separated from the political basis or ideological basis upon which people may oppose them. So I think it is important to know the qualities of this man because it informs us about his character, which I hope we would all agree is an important element in the qualifications of a Federal judge.

Judge Kavanaugh is one who is active in his community, as we heard on the night the announcement his nomination was made. He is known as Coach K on his daughter's basketball team and acts as a lector at his church. He serves meals to needy families on a regular basis and tutors children at local elementary schools. Frankly, I don't know where he finds the time to do all those things while serving as a member of the DC Circuit Court of Appeals. One friend called him a regular old "carpool dad." I think we all know what that is; it is a dad who drives the kids to school. That comment was reported in the Washington Post. This friend wrote that those who know Judge Kavanaugh's character would render a "unanimous verdict in his favor."

Judge Kavanaugh is the former captain of his high school basketball team. He has run the Boston Marathon—something I aspire to do. I just made it through a half-marathon years ago but never a full marathon, much less the Boston Marathon. He has won his court's annual 5K race five times. As a matter of fact, I have seen him year after year over in Anacostia when we have a race for charity that many of our Senate offices participate in, along with the press and the Federal agencies, including the courts. I believe I have seen him run in those 5K races with his team.

Professionally, Judge Kavanaugh is known as a distinguished legal professional, but it is important to know that even amidst the hustle and bustle of a high-powered legal career, he found time to do a lot of very important things. While in private practice, for example, he was head of a practice group devoted to protecting religious liberties. You don't earn a big fee as a lawyer by advocating in cases involving religious liberties. Typically, these are cases where you volunteer your time because you believe in the right of

the citizen to have their case heard by the courts. Particularly when it comes to religious liberties, Judge Kavanaugh's record is crystal clear. He has advocated on behalf of those—regardless of their ability to pay—whose religious liberties were at risk. He also wrote two briefs for the Supreme Court of the United States supporting the cause of religious liberty, including the case I mentioned earlier that I argued in the Supreme Court involving the Santa Fe Independent School District, which was sued by the American Civil Liberties Union to prevent them from allowing a student to volunteer their time to offer an inspirational saying or a prayer before a football game in Texas. He authored an amicus brief in support of that case.

When he is not volunteering for causes he believes in, he is the father of two daughters—something near to my heart, and I know the Presiding Officer has two daughters as well. He has been a mentor to many law students whom he has taught over the years.

His colleague, Jack Goldsmith, a distinguished lawyer in his own right at Harvard, described him as having "many, many considerable strengths as a judge and potential Justice, and [also] as a person."

His former professor, Akhil Amar, who supported Hillary Clinton in the last election, wrote in the New York Times a couple of days ago that Judge Kavanaugh is a "superb nominee" who has "already shown flashes of greatness." I believe the headline of that op-ed piece by Professor Amar talked about the liberal case for Brett Kavanaugh, and I appreciate his willingness to talk about the man and his professional credentials and not get bogged down in the polarized politics of judicial confirmations here in Washington. He called the nomination of Judge Kavanaugh President Trump's "finest hour, his classiest move." That is pretty impressive.

These are just a few of the reasons why here in the Senate we need to now move forward confidently and deliberately with the confirmation process. We will proceed thoroughly but with expedition. It is, after all, our constitutional role—now the President has discharged his constitutional role—to offer advice and consent on the President's nominee. I believe the President has chosen wisely, just as he did when he chose Neil Gorsuch for the vacancy created by the unfortunate death of Justice Scalia. The President has chosen well again, and I believe this nominee is deserving of this high honor to serve on our Nation's highest Court.

There are some who said that we need to wait or that there is not enough time before the midterm election to confirm Judge Kavanaugh. Well, that is a pretty transparent stalling tactic. Justice Kennedy said he is vacating the Bench at the end of this month, so when the Supreme Court reconvenes on October 1—I believe it is the first Monday in October—it would

be good to have that vacancy left by the retirement of Judge Kennedy filled with this nominee. So the idea that we can somehow put this off until after the midterm elections I think makes no sense, or if it makes sense, it makes sense only from the standpoint of stalling the confirmation process.

I agree with the senior Senator from Connecticut, who said recently that the Senate should do nothing to artificially delay consideration of the next Justice. I agree with him. Since Justice Gorsuch and Justice Sotomayor were confirmed just 66 days from the time they were nominated, a similar amount of time should not be unreasonable for Judge Kavanaugh. I am not suggesting it be exactly 66 days; it might be a few days earlier or a few days later. But just to sort of orient everybody as to the timeframe we are talking about, if it were 66 days, like Justice Gorsuch and Justice Sotomayor, that would mean we would vote to confirm Justice Kavanaugh on September 13, if my math is correct.

Well, we know that these judicial nominations—particularly for the Supreme Court of the United States—are hotly contested, and that is because on the left, they see the Court as an end run around the democratic process. In other words, what you can't win in an election and what you can't win in a debate and vote of Congress, well, if you can get the Court to do it—unelected, lifetime-appointed judges—then you have basically won in advancing your policy position at the Federal level. I would say that the opposite philosophy is one that was embraced by Alexander Hamilton and James Madison, who viewed the courts as what they called the least dangerous branch because they viewed the courts as not being political and judges as being impartial arbiters of the law and letting the chips fall where they may. But on the left, if they can't achieve their desired policy outcomes through the normal legislative process, well, doing it by lawsuit and by court decision becomes the means to their end. That is why they are so upset, I think, about this President's nominee. He is what I would call a traditional judge in the James Madison, Alexander Hamilton mold—someone who believes that judges have a very important job in our government, but it is a limited job and role.

In other words, the main responsibility for making public policy should fall on the shoulders of Members of Congress and the President because we stand for election. If people don't like what we are doing, they can knock on our door and say: Senator, we don't like what you are doing. We want you to change your vote or your point of view.

That is entirely appropriate. If we don't, they reserve the time-honored right to throw the rascals out. You can't do that for a Federal judge. That is why their role under the Constitution is circumscribed as interpreting

the law and applying the facts to settled law.

I understand why our friends across the aisle are disappointed. They were hoping that President Hillary Clinton would be filling this vacancy, and they were hoping that Majority Leader CHUCK SCHUMER would be the one guiding that nomination through the Senate. Instead, they were disappointed—I understand it; it is a normal human reaction—that President Trump won, so he is the one making the nomination, and a Republican Senate, led by Majority Leader MCCONNELL, is the one guiding this nomination through.

I can understand their disappointment. It is no reason to drag your feet or obstruct an orderly and thoughtful deliberative process when it comes to filling this vacancy. We are going to have a chance to talk about this topic a lot in the coming weeks.

KEEP FAMILIES TOGETHER AND ENFORCE THE LAW ACT

Mr. President, on a separate note, I want to address the situation unfolding on the U.S.-Mexico border. As of 7 o'clock this morning, we heard that the Trump administration has now complied with a court order and completed the reunification of those children under the age of 5 who immigrated here with their parents unlawfully. Those children have been reunited with their parents, which I think we all should be grateful for.

Secretary Azar of Health and Human Services; Kirstjen Nielsen, Secretary of Homeland Security; Attorney General Sessions; and all those officials at the Departments of Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Justice have been working tirelessly to complete these initial reunifications. Their goal has always been the well-being of these children and returning them to a safe environment.

As we can see from this morning's report, the administration clearly needs time to vet all the people. In fact, in some instances, they actually have to take DNA tests to confirm the claim that the adult who brought the child across is, in fact, their biological parent. We know that the cartels, the human traffickers, are very sophisticated, and if they can simply pair up an unaccompanied child with an adult and send them across the border while claiming to be a family unit, they can basically navigate the gaps in our legal enforcement system against illegal immigration.

Over the next few weeks, we know Federal officials will be working to reunite all other separated families, as they should. This is one thing we all—Republicans and Democrats alike—agree on; these families should be kept together. This is consistent with President Trump's Executive order, as well as a bill that I have introduced, along with other colleagues, called the Keep Families Together and Enforce the Law Act.

As that bill suggests, there are two parts to it. One is treating families

with compassion by allowing them to remain together and, also, enforcing the immigration laws on our books. They don't have to be mutually exclusive, and our bill will ensure that they aren't. It will allow parents to stay with their children in a safe facility while awaiting their court proceedings.

In other words, a number of these children and these adults are claiming asylum in the United States. That can be finally decided only by an immigration judge. What we would like to do is move them to the head of the line and get them a hearing in front of an immigration judge on a timely basis. Our bill would also set mandatory standards of care for family residential centers and keep children safe by requiring that they be removed from the care of an individual who endangers their safety.

In conclusion, I will say that this is not a new problem. We know that several of the countries in Central America are basically in a meltdown mode. In other words, gangs and violent organizations threaten the safety and welfare of families in these Central American countries.

What we saw in 2014 is what President Obama called a humanitarian crisis—when tens of thousands of these children, unaccompanied by a parent, were turned over to these criminal organizations and transported from Central America all the way through Mexico into the United States, where they were then processed and placed with a sponsor in the United States, consistent with the law currently in effect. This is not a new scenario.

The cartels, the criminal organizations, have found a new way to circumvent American law unless we change it, unless we fix it. What they are hoping for, ultimately, is a restoration of the catch-and-release policies of the past.

What happens when people are not detained and when they are not presented before an immigration judge on a timely basis is that they are given a notice to appear in the future and told to come back for their hearing in months and maybe years later. It should surprise no one that the vast majority of those people don't show up for their hearing.

What has happened is, the criminal organizations who profit from this business model and the people who illegally immigrate to the United States have basically gamed the system. Unless we are willing to stand up and fix it, then shame on us.

This is really about two issues. One is compassionate treatment of the children, treating the adults with dignity and providing them a safe place. But it is also about making sure that our laws are enforced.

Some of our colleagues across the aisle have said: Well, let's just abolish law enforcement at the border. Let's abolish Immigration and Customs Enforcement, abolish ICE, as it is called. That would be a disaster of the first