

and I heard their concerns. This is not a political issue. These tariffs aren't targeted toward Democrats or Republicans. They are targeted at everyone. Ag producers at this moment in time are probably carrying the majority of the load. It needs to stop before the damage is irreversible.

My grandparents homesteaded the land that we farm and lived through the 1930s. My folks, who took over the land, took the farm over in the early 1940s and lived through a lot of hard times themselves. My wife and I took the farm over in the late 1970s, and we saw what happened in the 1980s. We have seen what happens in agriculture, where so many of the folks can't make it on the farm anymore, and they have to have jobs off the farm to be able to make the books balance.

These tariffs are making things harder. We have been down difficult paths in this country before. I don't believe we can afford another punch to the gut in rural America. I will continue to fight for and defend the folks who put food on our table, but their bottom lines are being severely, severely impacted by this trade war.

Now look, the legislation we passed last week is a start. The Senate version of the farm bill provides a safety net, but I am here to state that if things continue to go south for our markets, we are going to be faced with a bill that dumps a bunch of money into production agriculture to keep these folks afloat. Why? Because of tariffs that are being put on ag products. It doesn't have to be this way.

We are an equal branch of government. I believe that both Republicans and Democrats can work on this issue in a commonsense way, especially in this body. The administration needs to understand that if they keep continuing down this war of who can put the most tariffs on products, we are going to have a hard time keeping our businesses afloat, particularly our family farms and ranches in this country. That will not help with food security for our country, and the long-term negative impacts of that are unacceptable.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, it has been a little more than a week since President Trump announced his nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court left by the impending retirement of Justice Anthony Kennedy. In that short period of time, we have seen some of our friends across the aisle run through an almost impressive set of rhetorical calisthenics in an attempt to tank Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation before it even had a chance to begin.

"He will overturn this case or this law," they claim. "He will not be a check on the President," they have tried to say. They have even suggested that he charged too much for baseball

season tickets on his credit card—horror of horrors. Multiple fact-checkers have debunked each of these claims, so they have moved on.

More recently, we have heard from some of our Democratic colleagues that they want to review every single piece of paper—every email, every memo, every document that has passed across Brett Kavanaugh's desk at any point in his career.

Reviewing relevant and important documents is a perfectly normal part of confirming a judicial nominee, but using that as an excuse to delay, foot-drag, and obstruct is not acceptable. We know that the effort to get every memo from the Bush White House during the time he served as Staff Secretary there is really laughable and is only a fishing expedition designed to delay his confirmation until after the Supreme Court begins its work the first Monday in October.

For example, as Staff Secretary, he would have had the responsibility to basically manage the paper flow across the President's desk. These aren't just documents that he, himself, has generated. In fact, I suspect that with the overwhelming majority of them, he would have had nothing to do with creating them. He wouldn't be the author. He wouldn't be making policy recommendations. Basically, he would have navigated all of the documents that went across the President's desk to make sure that they had been reviewed by the appropriate person and that they would have been checked for accuracy. The ideas that every single piece of paper that went across President George W. Bush's desk should be somehow relevant and that we should delay confirmation until we have all had a chance to read it are ridiculous. Is what President Bush had for dinner 14 years ago relevant to Judge Kavanaugh's fitness to serve on the Supreme Court? Obviously not.

Just as, in 2010, the committee quickly processed Justice Kagan, who spent many years in the Clinton White House, I am confident we can expeditiously and efficiently review Judge Kavanaugh's relevant background materials to make sure the vote on his confirmation occurs before the Supreme Court reconvenes in October.

Under Chairman GRASSLEY's leadership, the Judiciary Committee will work to produce as many documents as are relevant and possible so that every Senator can do their due diligence. An important part of our constitutional responsibility is to provide advice and consent, as the Constitution itself says.

The most important thing to remember is that unlike the Kagan nomination, we have 12 years of service on the bench by Judge Kavanaugh. He served on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals in what has often been called the second most important court in the Nation because it is located in the District of Columbia. Most of the major cases involving huge policy disputes confronting

the Federal Government have made their way through his court, and he has written opinions—majority opinions and dissenting opinions—which have all been reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court. I submit that would be the best evidence of what kind of Justice he would be on the Supreme Court. What kind of judge has he been on the DC Circuit? That is the best evidence.

We shouldn't indulge requests for these fishing expeditions and paper chases that will lead to nothing other than delay. It is important that the vetting process be deliberative and thorough, and it will be. But the volume of documents requested shouldn't be just a pretext to draw this out for political purposes.

Here is an important factoid: Nearly half of the Democratic caucus has already said that they will vote no on Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation to the Supreme Court. Are they going to be requesting documents? Are they going to be saying "Well, I want to look at everything that came across his desk" when they have already announced their public opposition?

Five of them announced their opposition before Judge Kavanaugh was even named. In other words, they would oppose anyone who is nominated by this President. We saw an attempt to filibuster the nomination of Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court, which resulted in the change of the precedent. We lowered the number of votes to close off debate from 60 votes to 51 votes because we realized that some across the aisle were so determined to vote against any nominee of this President—no matter how well qualified—there was no way we could confirm a well-qualified candidate. So we changed that.

Both Justices Sotomayor and Gorsuch were confirmed just 66 days after they were nominated. In the case of Judge Kavanaugh, if that same timetable held up, we would be voting on his confirmation about September 13—well in advance of the October deadline when the Court reconvenes. We will have plenty of time to thoroughly vet this nominee in a similar timeframe, which is consistent with the confirmation process for both Republican and Democratic Presidents.

I had the good fortune to sit down with Judge Kavanaugh last week and to renew my acquaintance with him, which first occurred in 2000. As I have recounted here on the floor, when I was attorney general of Texas, I had the privilege to argue a case in front of the U.S. Supreme Court. As one of the best qualified appellate lawyers in the country, having clerked on the Supreme Court, as well, he was one of the lawyers who helped me get ready for that oral argument.

I had a chance not only to get to know him in 2000 but to follow his career on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals. He has consistently impressed me with his thoughtfulness, his deliberativeness, his outstanding legal and

academic credentials, and, of course, his experience on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals. He was candid and open, professional and impressive.

I hope all of our colleagues will meet with Judge Kavanaugh to see for themselves. I have been told that he has been making calls to some Democratic Senators' offices, and they refuse to see him at all.

He is an accomplished jurist who will fairly and faithfully apply the law as written and adhere to the text of the Constitution, as judges are obligated to do, and leave the policymaking and the politics to the Congress and the executive branch. I look forward to continuing our vetting process and voting to confirm Judge Kavanaugh this fall—well in advance of the October term of the Supreme Court.

On a separate note, Mr. President, this afternoon, we will vote to confirm another accomplished legal mind, Andy Oldham, to the Federal Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, which includes Texas.

Andy will join two other judges whom we have already confirmed in the Fifth Circuit earlier this year: Don Willett, a former member of the Texas Supreme Court, and Jim Ho, my former chief counsel, someone with impeccable legal credentials. They are already on the Fifth Circuit. I am delighted that Andy Oldham will be joining them.

As we like to say in Texas, Andy wasn't born there, but he got there as fast as he could. He grew up in Richmond, VA, where his parents instilled within him a sense of hard work. His father put himself through college, and his mother was one of the first women to attend the University of Virginia.

Following their examples, Andy attended the University of Virginia and was awarded the prestigious title of Jefferson Scholar. While he was at UVA, he helped found an advocacy group to prevent sexual assault. His group was particularly focused on educating young men on their responsibilities when it comes to sexual violence.

From there, he attended the University of Cambridge as a Truman Scholar, graduated with first class honors, and then went to law school at Harvard—very impressive academic credentials.

During law school, he helped represent a death row inmate in a habeas corpus petition and won a temporary stay of execution in the U.S. Supreme Court. Based on Andy's hard work, the then-Governor of Virginia, who is now a Member of the Senate, commuted the defendant's sentence to life without parole based upon Andy's legal representation.

After law school, he went on to clerk for Judge Sentelle on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals, which I spoke about in connection with Brett Kavanaugh. Then he served as an attorney to the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel; that is, the lawyers for the lawyers at the Department of Justice's

Office of Legal Counsel, who issue authoritative guidance for the Department of Justice. And then, of course, he served as a law clerk for Justice Alito on the Supreme Court.

Following a period of private practice, the State of Texas came calling, and Andy became a deputy solicitor general in the office of the Texas attorney general; then it was Greg Abbott, whom he later followed to the Governor's office, where he now serves as Governor Abbott's general counsel.

On behalf of the State of Texas, Andy has argued two cases before the U.S. Supreme Court and filed countless briefs in support of the State. Because of his background and experience, Andy has earned bipartisan support, receiving recommendations from the general counsel to the Obama Foundation, as well as the Texas attorney general's office.

In his confirmation hearing before the Judiciary Committee, Andy spoke about his transition from a role as an advocate to that of a jurist. He explained how he views the role of a jurist as "fundamentally different," which it is.

He went on to say that "the oath of a jurist is simply to administer justice impartially, to do equal right by rich and poor, and to discharge justice in an equal and fair manner." This is exactly the type of judge we should want serving on our courts—someone who is impartial, not someone who will push for a particular ideology or political agenda on the bench. I believe Andy will follow this philosophy of impartially and fairly administering the law.

Andy spent all but 3 years of his career in public service, and he has advocated on behalf of Texans for many years. I am confident he will continue to serve them and the rest of the country well, and I look forward to supporting his nomination this afternoon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from Utah.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the confirmation process for Brett Kavanaugh. By any honest measure, President Trump's nominee, Judge Kavanaugh, is exceptionally well qualified to serve on the Supreme Court. When he was nominated to the DC Circuit, he already had stellar credentials, a keen intellect, and an impressive knowledge of the law. He was confirmed to the DC Circuit Court in 2006, following years of Democratic obstruction. I have followed his work closely on that court for over a decade. His judicial record never ceases to impress.

A nominee with such a sterling reputation should receive wide bipartisan support. But over the years, I have seen firsthand the deterioration of the judicial confirmation process. When Justice Kennedy announced his retirement, I knew the Democrats would, again, play politics with the Supreme Court. It is what they have done for more than three decades. It is a matter

of grave concern to me, especially with an eminently qualified nominee. They are casting about looking for something—really, anything—to stop Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation.

Because Democrats want political judges, they politicize the confirmation process. This is what they did to oppose Justice Neil Gorsuch when he was nominated. They took a few cases out of the thousands he had decided and distorted what he had said. They attacked him as being unfit to serve. They said he was unqualified to be a Justice, but Justice Gorsuch had an unassailable record as a principled jurist on the Federal bench.

We fought back against the misrepresentations, the caricatures, and the exaggerations, and the American people saw through the Democrats' ruse. They saw the kind of Justice Neil Gorsuch would be—a Justice who says what the law is, not what he wants it to be, a Justice who respects the separation of powers, a Justice who will stand up to the executive and legislative branches when they overreach. I believe the American people will see the same thing when they look at Judge Kavanaugh.

The debate over Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation should be a debate over his qualifications. Does he understand the proper role of a judge under our Constitution? Does he have the experience needed? Will he respect our Constitution and the rule of law?

With hundreds of opinions, Judge Kavanaugh has built a reputation as being one of the most respected and influential judges in the entire country. His incisive reasoning has led the Supreme Court to adopt his positions in at least 12 cases.

Fidelity to the Constitution and to the rule of law are hallmarks of his opinions. Importantly, his vast body of work shows a deep commitment to the separation of powers. His opinions demonstrate his commitment to the principle that judges should interpret the law, not make it.

Judge Kavanaugh should be asked questions about his rulings and his approach to the law. As a judge, he has developed a reputation for his preparation in court. I have no doubt that he can stand up under the most rigorous questioning.

Yet what we have seen so far is a mix of hyperbole, mudslinging, and distortion. Attacks aimed at Judge Kavanaugh have not focused on whether he is qualified to serve. They have not focused on whether he understands the role of a judge. They have not focused on how he will interpret the Constitution and the laws passed by Congress. When it comes to what we should be asking about a nominee, what we have seen so far is not even in the ballpark.

After scouring Judge Kavanaugh's financial disclosure, progressives thought they had struck gold with a shocking revelation that would, surely, turn public opinion against him. So