

I have had my disagreements with him. We all have. But we have always respected each other. He has been a leader whom almost all of us from both parties have relied on for guidance, including national security issues and on issues when, in my first year in the Senate, I worked with Senator MCCAIN on keeping down the costs of prescription drugs.

He has been a critical fighter for sanctions to hold our adversaries accountable. Last year, we worked together, along with Senators CRAPO, SCHUMER, GRAHAM, RUBIO, CORKER, and CARDIN, to pass tough, new sanctions on Russia, Iran, and North Korea.

He has always been clear that we don't only honor the rule of law or refrain from torture when it is easy or convenient. He authored a 2015 amendment to prohibit the use of torture as an interrogation method.

He has been forceful in defending our allies against Russian aggression in Crimea and Georgia and Montenegro. After the Helsinki summit, Senator MCCAIN—one of the few Republicans in this body who is willing to call the President out when he does something, especially on foreign soil, to attack the United States of America—spoke out forcefully against the President cozying up to Putin and his attacks on journalists.

He said: “The President [of the United States, Donald Trump.] made a conscious choice to defend a tyrant against the fair questions of a free press, and to grant Putin an uncontested platform to spew propaganda and lies to the world.”

He said: “All that makes us who we are—a republic of free people dedicated to the cause of liberty at home and abroad.”

Those words stood out because so few Republicans were willing to utter them.

Throughout his life and career, he has lived the motto of “country first.” I thank my colleague from Arizona for his work on the National Defense Authorization Act this year. I look forward to continuing our work together to protect our national security and together to serve the people of this great country.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, every day I meet all sorts of people—small business owners, working moms, students, seniors, and servicemembers—and they are concerned about all sorts of things: the growing cost of healthcare, the cost of child care, the cost of college, the cost of student loan debt, stagnant wages, fixing our broken criminal justice system, gun violence in schools—you name it.

But in the thousands of conversations I have had, I haven't met a single person who has said they are concerned

that Washington doesn't work well enough for big businesses. If you ask any of them, they will tell you that, when it comes to the wealthy and the powerful, Washington works just like a dream, but for everyone else, Washington just isn't working.

That is not a coincidence. Powerful interests have been working for years to capture every single branch of government to tilt the scales in their favor and against everyone else.

Our courts are no exception in this. Powerful interests have worked for years, pouring incredible amounts of money into capturing our courts. It has been a real one-two punch.

The first punch has been working with Republicans to stop fair-minded, impartial judges from sitting on the Federal bench, slowing down or stopping those nominations, holding open a Supreme Court seat, and keeping fair people off the bench whenever possible.

Then came the second punch. Whenever they get the chance, it is stacking our courts with judges dedicated to a vision of the law where the wealthy and well-connected get to call the shots—people who are willing to leave behind women, workers, people of color, LGBTQ individuals, students, families, and everyone else who doesn't have money or power.

Donald Trump's decision to nominate Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court is just the latest example of this. Minutes after Donald Trump announced Kavanaugh's nomination, the White House blasted out a document. To whom? To business lobbyists around Washington touting Judge Kavanaugh's rulings in favor of corporate interests and against the interests of everyone else. They are not even hiding it anymore.

Think about that. The first move by the White House is not a memo to the American people talking about the nominee's independence or talking about his commitment to justice for everyone but a memo to business lobbyists highlighting Judge Kavanaugh's loyalty to big business. That is a key part of Donald Trump's public case for Judge Kavanaugh—the promise that Judge Kavanaugh will tilt the playing field even further in favor of corporations and against working people.

Take a look at cases the White House included in its sales pitch to corporate lobbyists. In one recent case, Judge Kavanaugh ruled that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau was unconstitutional, calling independent agencies like the consumer bureau “a significant threat to individual liberty.” Really? That is the consumer agency that a bipartisan group of 60 Senators and 237 Representatives created after the most devastating financial crisis in generations. It is the agency that is a tough watchdog for American families, the agency that in just 7 years has returned \$12 billion directly to people who were cheated by big banks, credit card companies, and student loan servicers. But I guess all

Judge Kavanaugh saw was a threat to the individual liberty of companies that were looking to cheat people.

Judge Kavanaugh's ruling was so out of the mainstream that the rest of his colleagues on the court promptly reversed his decision by an overwhelming vote. But if Judge Kavanaugh becomes Justice Kavanaugh, he could provide the decisive vote on the Supreme Court to strike down the CFPB and leave consumers at the mercy of predatory lenders again.

That wasn't the only time that Judge Kavanaugh ruled against consumers and in favor of the giant corporations that squashed them. Last year, he issued an opinion that would have set aside a lower court ruling and allowed a merger of two giant health insurance companies to move forward, despite evidence that the merger could hurt consumers in 14 States. Luckily, once again, Judge Kavanaugh's colleagues disagreed, and they criticized him for applying the law as he wished it were, not as it currently is. Again, Judge Kavanaugh found a way to rule in favor of corporate interests, no matter what the law said.

Judge Kavanaugh has also ruled time and again to reverse rules designed to address climate change and to protect the air we breathe. In three separate cases, the Trump administration highlighted for corporate lobbyists that Judge Kavanaugh argued that the Environmental Protection Agency had acted illegally in taking action to protect the environment and to protect public health. In each case, the EPA had spent years carefully considering the input of scientists, experts, and the industry, but in each case, Judge Kavanaugh found that wasn't enough. He put maximizing polluter profits ahead of protecting working families and the well-being of our planet.

The Trump White House and the Republican Congress have gone to bat for corporate interests time and again. They have showered them with \$1.5 trillion in tax giveaways, rolling back the rules on some of the country's biggest banks, and reversing rules to protect workers and consumers from corporate abuse.

But there may not be a single body in Washington that has delivered more victories for giant companies in the last 2 years—and more losses for everyone else—than the Supreme Court of the United States. In case after case, by 5-to-4 decisions, this Court has limited the rights of working people and expanded the ability of giant corporations to do pretty much whatever they please. It is no wonder that working families are working longer and harder, only to get squeezed between flat wages and rising costs.

Judge Kavanaugh would tip the balance of the Court even further in favor of those corporations and special interests. For the next 30 or 40 years, he would be a reliable vote in favor of whatever giant companies and their armies of lobbyists decide that they

want, whatever special favors they can't secure in Congress and can get only through the courts. The world's largest companies already throw their money around this place with reckless abandon and try to buy the outcomes they want. They don't need any more help on the Supreme Court. It is time for Washington to start working for the people again, and that starts with defeating Judge Kavanaugh's nomination.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CALLING FOR THE RELEASE OF PASTOR ANDREW BRUNSON

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I have come back again for the past several weeks and for every week I have to draw attention to what I think is a great injustice; that is, about this man, Andrew Brunson. Pastor Brunson has been in prison in Turkey since October of 2016. He has actually lived in Turkey for more than 20 years. He is a Presbyterian minister who is associated with the same church as the Reverend Billy Graham, in Western North Carolina.

He has been in Turkey doing missionary work and connecting with the Turkish people. He is not forcing the Word on anybody. He is simply sharing it with those who want to hear it. He has a small church in Izmir that only seats about 100 people. That started long after he started his mission.

He was living peacefully with his wife, Noreen, until October of 2016. That was shortly after the coup attempt—an illegal coup attempt—where anybody who was actually responsible for it should be in prison. It is not the appropriate way to change a regime in the United States or Turkey or in any other Western nation. After the coup attempt, President Erdogan of Turkey decided to implement emergency powers, which gives him the power to put anyone in prison. In fact, he put tens of thousands of people in prison—people in the military, people in the press, missionaries, NASA scientists—a number of people that I believe are illegally in prison, just like Pastor Brunson.

When this was brought to my attention about a year and a half ago, we treated it like casework. We were doing everything we could to get this North Carolinian, this U.S. citizen, released. After attempting to go through the diplomatic channels and recognizing that we were not making progress, we decided that we had to take other action.

This is actually a point where I would like to thank Senator INHOFE,

who is now acting on Senator MCCAIN's behalf as the chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee. With the help of a number of Senators in this body and with the concurrence of the House, we have provisions in the National Defense Authorization Act that are trying to put Turkey on notice—in as respectful a way as possible, as a NATO ally—that Pastor Brunson should be released.

Pastor Brunson was arrested 663 days ago. Up until last week, he was in prison for the entire time. As a matter of fact, for about 17 months, he was in a prison cell that was designed for 8 people that had 21 people in it. Then, he was moved to a prison cell that he shared with one other person and had no access to any outdoors—none of the standards you would have for our prisons for the worst of the worst. He had been incarcerated and had very limited contact. His wife remained in Turkey because she was afraid if she left, they wouldn't let her back. His kids haven't seen him for 2 years because they were afraid if they went to Turkey, the Turkish Government wouldn't let them leave.

Through a lot of efforts of President Trump, Vice President PENCE, Ambassador Brownback, Senator SHAHEEN from New Hampshire, and a number of other Members—as a matter of fact, 72 Members of this body signed on to a letter that we sent to Turkey to express our concerns—we were at least able to get him into house arrest. Last week, he was released back in Izmir but limited to staying in the apartment he shares with his wife, Noreen.

That is a great step forward, but it is still an injustice. It is a better setting. The fact of the matter is, he is still incarcerated. He is incarcerated on some of the most absurd charges, and I firmly believe there is no first-year law student who couldn't derive a legal basis for saying that this person would not stay overnight in a U.S. jail. Yet he has been incarcerated for 663 days.

We are working very closely with the administration to try and take this positive step—his placement under house arrest—and to get him out of the country. I made a promise to Andrew Brunson. I visited him twice earlier this year, once in prison to let him know that he had people in Congress who cared about him and were going to share his story and make sure we didn't forget until he was released. Then, a little over a month later, I went back and spent 12 hours in a Turkish courtroom hearing the absurd charges levied against him. I am not going to get into the details now, but I will tell you that the indictment read like a fantasy. It is one that makes me so frustrated to think that this man could be kept in prison for 663 days.

I want to end my comments on a slightly more positive note. I want to thank the officials in Turkey who at least took the positive step to put him under house arrest. I spoke with him on Thursday afternoon. It was a very, very different experience. He had hope.

He was able to spend time with his wife.

I was thrilled to see that because, frankly, after my time with him in the prison earlier this year, I was worried about him. He had lost 50 pounds. He was under great stress, as anybody would be if they were in a U.S. prison, let alone a Turkish prison. I want to thank the Turkish government for taking positive steps. It is one step in a journey that needs to get Pastor Brunson home.

Also, I want Turkey to realize that we know they are a NATO ally. We know that when you join NATO, we have an article 5 commitment. What article 5 means is that if any aggressor attacks you on your soil, the members of NATO are committed to sending their sons and daughters to defend your freedom. We are in agreement with Turkey right now that, if they were to be attacked by an aggressor, we absolutely would answer the call and go to Turkey to protect their homeland and protect their people.

All I am asking Turkey to do is, in the spirit of that agreement that we have had with Turkey since 1952, is to protect Andrew Brunson, to send Andrew Brunson home, and to get back and honor the tenets of the NATO alliance, the agreement we have with the family of nations in NATO. It starts first by respecting the individual liberties that each and every citizen in Turkey should have and each and every citizen in the United States enjoys.

I hope this is the last week you have to hear my speech. I hope that next week the speech is thanking Turkey for sending Pastor Brunson home. Make no mistake about it. For as long as Andrew Brunson is in prison, and as long as other people like a NASA scientist, like a DEA officer, like some of the Turkish Embassy staff who are Turkish citizens are in prison, we will continue to be a voice for people in Turkey who I think are illegally imprisoned.

Mr. President, thank you for the opportunity to speak on this today.

To the American people, I hope when you say your prayers tonight, you say one for Pastor Brunson.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, first, let me join my colleague from North Carolina in his request for humanitarian care and the release of Pastor Brunson. It is something we share on a bipartisan basis. I thank him for calling that to the attention of the Senate and to those who are following our proceedings.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we know that President Trump during the course of his campaign made immigration a major issue. Almost from the beginning, he made it clear that he would take a different approach to immigration than previous Presidents of either