

the very supplemental background investigation for which my Democratic friends had clamored would suddenly become insufficient and that no matter what accommodations would be made, no matter what agreements would be reached, the Senate Democrats would find more excuses to continue moving the goalposts one more time.

Granted, this was not exactly a radical prediction. This body and this Nation have spent months watching their friends across the aisle grasp at every imaginable excuse to delay this process and damage this nominee. So I felt pretty safe in saying the last goalposts would soon be on the move yet again, but even I was not sure it would happen this quickly.

Let's start with the Democratic leader and the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee. In a letter released on September 23, they suggested that the FBI had ample time to conduct a supplemental investigation before the hearing that was scheduled just 4 days later. They insisted an inquiry would "not take a 'tremendous amount of time.'" The Democratic leader brushed aside the notion that this—the seventh background investigation of Judge Kavanaugh—would delay the process, saying, "It will only take a few days." Well, that was, of course, before we agreed last Friday to delay the proceedings by no more than 1 week to accommodate just such an inquiry.

Naturally, we are now hearing a different tune. Yesterday, the ranking member stated her view that voting this Friday on Judge Kavanaugh's nomination as planned would be "too soon." There go those goalposts again, moving right on down. In that same letter, the Democratic leader and the senior Senator from California called for the supplemental investigation because "conducting background investigations on nominees has long been the FBI's standard practice." Here is what "standard practice" means: The FBI conducts interviews, prepares a careful report, and makes it available for Senators to review. "Standard practice" does not mean what the Democratic leader decided to demand for the first time yesterday now that the FBI is concluding its review. You get the picture.

As it concludes the review, it is not enough. We are to have yet another delay so FBI agents are made to appear—listen to this—for in-person briefings and so that Democrats can cross-examine the agents to see if they are satisfied with how they did their jobs. Is anybody surprised about this? There go those goalposts again.

Well, guess what. Our Democratic colleagues have made it abundantly clear they will never ever be satisfied, not ever. Does anyone really think the same people who said any nominee of this President would result "in the destruction of the Constitution" will be satisfied? Does anyone really think the same people who called Judge Kavanaugh "evil" long before they

heard one word of testimony from anyone will be satisfied? Does anyone really think the same people who said their goal was to delay this nomination past the election will be satisfied? To ask the question is to answer it. If my friends across the aisle were to have their way, the goalposts on Judge Kavanaugh's nomination would be in another time zone by now.

Our Democratic colleagues are quickly running out of material. One of their last efforts seems to be the new argument—notwithstanding whether these allegations can be corroborated in any way—that the real crime here is that Judge Kavanaugh stood up for his family and took umbrage at this disgraceful spectacle. He is now expected to witness this disgraceful spectacle and not get upset about it.

I would ask any of my colleagues: How would you feel if your entire reputation had been destroyed in this mudslide? Would you be calm about it?

For weeks now, a national media feeding frenzy has literally dragged Judge Kavanaugh and his family through the mud. He has been subjected to the most vile and disgusting accusations. His wife has been threatened and his young daughters traumatized.

In many instances, my Democratic colleagues have ushered on these absurdly disgusting accusations and tried to give them a veneer of credibility, specifically citing them now as a reason why Judge Kavanaugh should not be confirmed. Our Democratic colleagues are enabling this mudslide and encouraging it. Now the same Democratic Senators have the temerity to say Judge Kavanaugh disqualified himself for the Supreme Court because he got a little testy at the hearing after they drug him through the mud—because he told them how much damage these accusations had caused him and his family.

Let's get one thing straight right now: I don't want to meet the man or woman who wouldn't be frustrated and angry by a coordinated strategy to destroy his or her good name on the altar of partisan politics.

The Senate has received an incredible volume of testimony about Judge Kavanaugh's exemplary judicial temperament. We have heard from faculty of his alma mater, who called him "a fair-minded jurist who believes in the rule of law" and "commands wide and deep respect" among his legal peers, and from his former law clerks who say: "He listens carefully to the views of his colleagues and clerks, even—indeed, especially—when they differ from his own." Yet some still prioritize partisan point-scoring ahead of Judge Kavanaugh's actual record.

We have heard overwhelming testimony that Judge Kavanaugh's time on the Federal bench has been defined by equanimity, even-handedness, and fair treatment of all parties.

It is time to put this embarrassing spectacle behind us. The American peo-

ple are sick of the display that has been put on here in the U.S. Senate in the guise of a confirmation process.

The FBI is finishing up a supplemental background investigation. It will soon add this information to Judge Kavanaugh's file for Senators' consideration. This is the standard practice. Then, pursuant to last week's agreement of a delay no longer than 1 week, the Senate will vote on this nomination this week. The Senate will vote on this nomination this week.

When we do, we will be voting on one of the most impressive and most stunningly qualified Supreme Court nominees in our Nation's history. We will be voting to confirm a new Supreme Court Justice who possesses sterling academic credentials, widely acknowledged legal brilliance, an exemplary legal temperament, and a proven commitment to complete fairness on the bench. That is what the Senate will do this week.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION AND THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. McCONNELL. Now, on a completely different matter, Mr. President, the Senate is also attending to other matters of critical, nationwide importance this week.

Today, we will pass a fulsome reauthorization for the critical functions of the Federal Aviation Administration. We will also take up and pass landmark opioids legislation. It is set to deliver major relief to American communities that have been decimated by the scourge of substance abuse and addiction.

Every one of our colleagues represents families who have grappled with the loss of livelihoods and loved ones at the hands of this crisis, and nearly every one of them has contributed provisions to make this a truly comprehensive response.

The legislation before us is the collaborative product of contributions from 70-plus Members of this body. Five different committees had a say. The result is a landmark package that will deliver critical resources to establish opioid-specific recovery centers and equip local medical practitioners. It will help law enforcement to stop the flow of opioids across borders and increase safeguards against overprescription.

I hope each of my colleagues will join me in voting to pass this landmark legislation. I hope they will join me in getting more assistance, more tools, and more training in the hands of first responders.

There will be more access to housing and work opportunities for those in recovery, thanks to my CAREER Act—which, I am proud to say, is included in this legislation—and more resources for State, local, and community leaders as they stand up treatment and recovery programs.

With today's vote, the Senate will say this to every American affected by

the opioid epidemic: America is fighting back against this crisis. More help is on the way.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 302

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following disposition of the House message to accompany H.R. 302, the majority leader or his designee be recognized to make a motion to concur in the House message to accompany H.R. 6, and that notwithstanding the previous order in relation to H.R. 6, the Senate vote on the motion to concur without further intervening action or debate at 3:15 p.m. today, all as in legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, I am glad that the majority leader and I get along. I am glad we are able to do certain things together, like the opioid bill and the appropriations bill, but that cannot hold me back from responding to the blatant falsehoods he tells day after day after day on this floor.

First, from the man who singlehandedly delayed the filling of Justice Scalia's seat for 10 months to complain about a 1-week delay to get the truth—give me a break. It is classic, diversionary, blame-the-other-person tactics, when he himself is the master of delay. It is galling and appalling day after day to hear the majority leader get on his high horse about delay, when he almost invented the word when it comes to judicial nominations.

Second, he blames Democrats for the delay, which is about the most blatant falsehood I have heard uttered on the floor in a long time. The majority leader knows darn well that he has the sole power to determine when to put the Kavanaugh nomination on the floor. He could have done it 2 weeks ago. He could have done it last week. He is now insisting he will do it this week.

Democrats have no say. He talked about an agreement that caused a week's delay. Who was the agreement with? Three Republican Senators.

The majority leader knows—knows—that it was Republicans who caused him to delay, both for the FBI investigation and for Judge Kavanaugh and Dr. Ford to testify. He didn't have to do that. He had the power. He is to blame for the delay, but he couldn't do anything otherwise because his own Republicans insisted on it.

Again, it is a blatant falsehood. I am so tempted to use the L word, but he is

my friend. To say that Democrats caused the delay—Mr. Leader, assert your power to determine what is put on the floor, and be a man. Man up and say it is your decision, not ours. We have nothing to do with it.

Third, he says he is one of the most qualified nominees we have ever seen. We know what is going on here. Everyone—everyone—including the majority leader himself, knows that Kavanaugh is a deeply flawed candidate for a whole lot of reasons. Knowing that, the majority leader and the Republican majority have to divert attention from Kavanaugh. So they are focusing on people who did nothing wrong, like Senator FEINSTEIN, like the Judiciary Democratic minority, and like the Democratic Party.

It is outrageous, but they know that Kavanaugh is not very good, and they know his testimony hurt him across America. I was talking to a CEO, a Republican of a major company. He said his board was watching the debate, and every one of them changed their mind after seeing Kavanaugh testify. They said: This guy doesn't belong on the bench. We can do better. That is the overwhelming reaction of Americans.

Judge Kavanaugh hurt himself dramatically and permanently by his screed—his nasty, partisan screed. That is something of a new, unschooled, two-bit politician, not someone who wants to be on the Supreme Court of the United States.

He hurt himself. Leader MCCONNELL knows that. The Republican leadership knows it. Donald Trump knows it, but they have to get the focus off of Kavanaugh. So they come up with these straw men and women. They come up with these false innuendos, distortions, and dishonesty. It is not going to work. It is not going to work.

Now, let me turn to the President, and in the strongest possible terms, let me condemn the comments by President Trump last night about Dr. Ford. President Trump's outright mockery of a sexual assault survivor, riddled as it was with falsehoods, was reprehensible, beneath the office of the Presidency, and beneath common decency from one person to another. President Trump owes Dr. Ford an immediate apology.

For too long—far too long—survivors of sexual assaults have been afraid to come forward because they thought that powerful men would shout them down and destroy their character. The President of the United States, the most powerful man there is, confirmed those fears for millions of women in the most despicable way possible.

President Trump should send a message to the women of America right now that he is sorry for saying what he said about Dr. Blasey Ford and that survivors of sexual assault should not only be heard but treated with dignity and respect and compassion.

You don't have to believe everything Dr. Ford said—and I do—to refrain from the nasty and vicious attacks, riddled with lies, in sort of a moboc-

racy-type way, and yet Donald Trump shows no restraint and no regulator. He is the prime example of why the norms in America, regardless of politics and regardless of party, are declining, and we don't hear a peep out of my colleagues on the other side, with a few notable and noble exceptions.

He is ruining the norms of America. He is so degrading the way people treat each other. It is pathetic, and it does permanent damage to this Republic, unless his own party members or others close to him speak up.

Anyone who watched Dr. Blasey Ford saw a credible and courageous woman, who elected to relive the worst night of her life because she felt a civic duty to come forward. That action took immense courage.

She is not the first. It is not unusual anymore. We know thousands of women who were hurt and then afraid to come forward mainly because they thought they would be ridiculed and disbelieved, just as President Trump appallingly, despicably, and lowly did last night.

Dr. Ford's actions took courage. She is a woman who is far more honest than Donald Trump. She admitted that she was "terrified" to speak in public about her very private pain and trauma.

I have been disappointed by President Trump's comments before, but this is a new low. I repeat, President Trump should apologize immediately.

Now, what will my colleagues on the other side do? They will ignore President Trump's comments, sidestep President Trump's comments, and spend their time blaming Democrats, even though we had no say in the delay. The delay was through Republicans. We know what they will do. It is shameful.

The President is day by day tearing down the norms that have built this country up. We have had the greatest norms, the greatest character, and the greatest behavior of any Nation ever, but it is declining now because people of goodwill allow Trump to do it without criticizing him. It is about time they did. It is about time they did.

Now, shifting focus back to events here in Congress. We have to get back to reality and truth and focus on treating the Supreme Court nomination debate the right way. When all is said and done, this is about the nominee's credibility and temperament.

I have said it before, and I will say it again: There are many who say what happened when someone was 15 and 18 doesn't indicate their personality and what kind of person they are when they are 53.

Well, I believe Dr. Ford, and I believe what she said is very relevant. There are many who don't want to consider that, but there is an issue that should matter even to them, and that is the credibility and temperament of Judge Kavanaugh.

This is what he is at 53. If he can't tell the truth about previous encounters, engagements, behavior, and activity, which we have found over and over