

this man on the Federal bench is a national disgrace.

The cherry on top of this nomination is the fact that Barack Obama nominated two African-American women to serve on this court. Under the leadership of the gentleman down the hall, the Republican leader, MITCH MCCONNELL, this body didn't even give them a hearing. Instead of the choice of two African-American women who led over a decade, they want to put a man on the bench who defended segregationists and voter suppression. They want to put that kind of judge in that seat. It is a throwback to the worst moments of our history. This body shouldn't stand for it.

#### GM LORDSTOWN CLOSURE

Mr. President, around the time of the auto rescue almost a decade ago, I was watching the first Chevy Cruze come off the line in Lordstown, OH, at a plant that had been there in Youngstown, OH, for almost a decade. Two years ago, I was at the GM Lordstown plant for its 50th anniversary. I saw the pride the community takes in that plant. GM itself estimated 10,000 people turned out to watch the parade. The line to tour the plant stretched down the street and around the block. It is what this plant and this auto industry mean to the communities they serve.

When the news broke late Sunday night or early Monday morning that General Motors is closing this plant and laying off up to 15,000 workers in Ohio and around the country, one reporter for the Youngstown Vindicator tweeted that it was an "all hands on deck day, with just about everyone in the newsroom dropping everything to cover the GM Lordstown story."

Those reporters are not enemies of the people. In fact, these reporters are people who care about their communities, who don't make a lot of money, and who are willing to afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted. They are not enemies of the people. These reporters understood what these job losses will mean, not just to those workers but to this community in Mahoning Valley of about a half a million people.

While people's lives were being upended in Mahoning Valley and around country and while parents were having painful conversations around kitchen tables, local businesses were nervously looking at their balance sheets, do you know what happened? Wall Street traders were celebrating. As the announcement to lay off workers happened, the stock price went up. Look at what happened to their stock price after their announcement.

Wall Street and its cronies in Washington simply don't value workers, and they don't understand the dignity of work. They don't look at workers as vital to a company's success. Indeed, they view the American worker as nothing more than a cost to be minimized, and Wall Street rewards companies when they lay off workers. They reward companies when the workers'

pay is cut or their benefits are scaled back. Wall Street rewards companies when their workers get hurt.

Of course, we expect companies to always try to maximize profits, but we weren't elected in this body to serve corporations. We were elected to stand up for the Americans we serve and to stand up for the small business owners. This broken business model is exactly why we need a trade and tax policy that actually invests in American workers. Instead, this crowd in Washington is only making it worse.

Earlier this summer, on the very same day that GM Lordstown laid off the second shift in Mahoning Valley, we got word that GM plans to build its new Chevy Blazer in Mexico, bypassing American workers and sending more jobs to Mexico. There are 1,500 workers who lost their jobs on the same day General Motors announced they were building a plant in Mexico. How stupid do we have to be to think there is not a connection there? That decision was no coincidence.

The tax bill this Congress passed and this President signed, which almost every single Republican voted for and every single Democrat voted against, provides a 50-percent-off coupon off of the taxes for every company that moves overseas.

For instance, the Chevy Cruze is made in Youngstown, OH. General Motors pays a 21-percent corporate tax rate. Another kind of Chevy Cruze made by General Motors in Mexico pays a 10.5-percent tax rate. So if you work in the United States, you pay 21 percent in taxes. If you go overseas, you get a 50-percent coupon off on your taxes. Do you know why? Because this Congress and President Trump signed a bill that will do nothing but outsource jobs. It didn't have to be that way.

The Patriot Corporation Act, which I handed to the President in the President's Cabinet Room a year and a half ago, would have simply said this: If you pay your workers well, if you provide healthcare and retirement for your workers, and if you make your product in the United States of America, you get a lower tax rate. I handed a copy of that bill to the President. He said he liked it. Do you know what happened then? Instead, that bill—which could have been the Patriot Corporation Act, which could have been the taxpayers' bill of rights, which could have been the corporate freeloader fee, where, when companies abuse their workers, they pay a fee—made its way down to the majority leader's office. And do you know what happened? The special interests went to work.

Do you know what happened then, when the special interests went to work? They created this 50-percent-off coupon for their taxes so those companies that moved to Mexico or moved to France or moved to Bangladesh or anywhere else get a 50-percent tax cut. Who suffers the consequences? It is the American workers.

We need to stand up for the people whom we serve, and we need to fix this.

After GM ended the second shift at Lordstown, I met with GM's CEO, Mary Barra, and demanded answers. She said that retooling the plant to go from the Cruze to the SUV Chevy Blazer would simply cost too much. It was too expensive. So we came up with a plan. First of all, they had just taken their huge tax cut, which they could have invested in workers, but instead they invested it in corporate buybacks, executive buybacks, so that executives make 300 times what the average well-paid worker at GM makes.

I came up with a plan to fix this. If they are not going to reinvest that money, we could level the playing field. We call it the American Cars, American Jobs Act.

There are two simple parts. First, customers who buy cars that are made in the United States get \$3,500 off at the dealership—real dollars, real money at the dealership. Under our definition of "Made in America," the discount would apply to nearly 100 cars, trucks, and SUVs, including all passenger vehicles, including the Jeep Cherokee, which is made in Toledo, and all passenger vehicles assembled in Ohio.

Second, the companies that cut the number of American jobs they had on the day the GOP tax bill passed and added those jobs overseas lose their tax break. We take away that 50 percent off coupon on their taxes. If you choose to send jobs overseas, you lose that coupon. If you keep jobs in the United States, you keep your discounted rate.

Remember back in July, I believe, of 2017? Donald Trump, the President of the United States, was in Youngstown. He said to the people of Youngstown: "We never again will sacrifice Ohio jobs and those in other states to enrich other countries." He then said: Don't sell your homes. We are going to bring all of these jobs back into these old plants, or we are going to knock down these old plants and build new plants. We are going to bring back all of these jobs.

But when he said that we will never again sacrifice all of these jobs—that is what his tax bill did. His tax bill provided that 50-percent-off coupon.

People trusted him in Mahoning Valley. He won areas that Democrats used to win. They put their faith in him. What did Trump do? He gave these corporations a huge tax break that will cause more jobs to go overseas.

It is all part of this President's phony populism. He pits one group against another to distract from the fact that this White House looks like a retreat for Wall Street executives, except for the days it looks like a retreat for pharmaceutical executives, except for the days it looks like a retreat for gun lobby executives. He campaigns across States like Ohio, saying he is for working people, and then he passes tax cuts for companies that are sending their jobs overseas.

While campaigning in Ohio in 2016, he said:

If I am elected, you won't lose one plant, you'll have plants coming into this country. . . . I promise you that.

If the President of the United States meant what he said—if he said you are not going to lose plants, if he said the companies that have moved overseas are going to come back to Lordstown, come back to Mansfield, come back to Toledo, and come back to Dayton, then, Mr. President, what you need to do is support the American Cars, American Jobs Act. Let's end this tax break, this incentive for companies to shut down production in Xenia, OH, and move overseas. Let's end this tax cut for corporations that shut down these American plants and move American jobs overseas. If you love this country, you fight for the people to make it work. Mr. President, let's do that and pass the American Cars, American Jobs Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

YEMEN

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I want to express my strong support for the bipartisan resolution—54—that is before us today. The strong, bipartisan support we are seeing on the floor—most recently from my colleague Senator LEE of Utah—shows how necessary and important this resolution is to end the complicity of the United States in the murderous war waged by Saudi Arabia in Yemen.

The United States is complicit because we are providing fuel, intelligence, and other support that is only increasing the barbaric power of the Saudis in that civil war—murderous activities that are taking a toll on civilians. The blood will be on our hands if we continue to support the Saudis in this brutal effort.

The resolution before us is carefully crafted to preserve our national security and our national interests while at the same time removing our involvement from the Saudi war crimes. There seems to be no other word for what we are seeing the Saudis do. The arguments made by the administration for our support and participation carry no weight. We should never compromise our national value for the sake of arms sales. In fact, the arms contracts are a pittance or a fraction of what the administration claims. So I am proud to support this measure. It will do too little and too late what should have been done long ago: Renounce our moral and legal responsibility, as well as our practical involvement for the murderous and brutal Saudi attacks on civilians and others in Yemen.

NOMINATION OF THOMAS FARR

Mr. President, I rise today to speak out on a less bipartisan issue against the concerted campaign by the administration and its allies to dramatically reshape our judiciary—to fill the courts with partisans and ideologues.

President Trump has made no secret of his frustration at judges nominated by both Republicans and Democrats who choose to uphold the rule of law

and, as Chief Justice Roberts has said, “do equal right to those appearing before them.” He is wrong to talk about Obama judges or Bush judges. In fact, the Chief Justice is absolutely right that when a person puts on the robe, they are no longer a judge nominated by any President; they are a judge doing the right thing, hopefully, from the bench in a completely bipartisan, nonpartisan way.

Yet this administration has repeatedly put forward extreme nominees who will seek to undo decades of critically important progress in recognizing and protecting reproductive rights, LGBTQ rights, voting rights, workers' rights, environmental protections, and more.

In fact, we are scheduled to vote on a nominee for the Eastern District of North Carolina, Thomas Farr, who exemplifies this administration's efforts to remake the judiciary. He has been nominated for a judgeship that has been open for years. In fact, it is the longest open judicial vacancy in the country.

In 2013, President Obama nominated Assistant U.S. Attorney Jennifer May-Parker to fill the seat. Senator Hagan returned a blue slip, but Senator BURR—despite formally recommending May-Parker to the White House for the position—declined to return his blue slip. At that time, the Senate still adhered to its longstanding practice of respecting blue slips and referring to home State Senators, so the nomination was never considered. To accommodate Senator BURR's obstruction, Senator Obama nominated North Carolina Supreme Court Justice Patricia Timmons-Goodson to fill the vacancy on the district court in 2016. Neither Senators Burr nor Tillis returned blue slips on her nomination.

Senator BURR had the right—and I may have misspoken when I referred to obstruction—when he declined to return that blue slip. Would that that right were still observed in this body. He had that right. He exercised it. But now President Trump has nominated Thomas Farr, an attorney whose career is defined by efforts to dilute African-American votes and suppress them through redistricting and to make it more difficult for African Americans to vote in the first place.

Mr. Farr has worked to suppress minority votes since at least the early 1990s. The Department of Justice under George H.W. Bush alleged that Farr engaged in acts of voter intimidation during the 1990 election. In fact, during that election, Farr served as legal counsel to Senator Jesse Helms. The Department of Justice alleged that Senator Helms' campaign sent out to Black communities tens of thousands of postcards that falsely told voters they could be found ineligible to vote based on various conditions. President Bush's Justice Department described this mail campaign as “intended to intimidate thousands of African-American residents and discourage them from voting in a 1990 Senate election.”

Since then, Farr has become an attorney of choice for North Carolina's Republican politicians when they have sought to gerrymander and suppress voter efforts. Notably and most recently, he successfully represented the North Carolina legislature in *Cooper v. Harris*. That case involved two districts that were redrawn after the 2010 census as majority Black districts by removing African-American voters from other predominantly White districts. The redrawn districts effectively diluted the voting power of African Americans by concentrating the Black population in a smaller number of districts that already elected candidates who received strong support from African-American voters.

The Supreme Court rejected Farr's defense of the redrawn districts and found that the legislature had engaged in unconstitutional racial gerrymandering. That ruling was remarkable—absolutely exceptional in Supreme Court jurisdiction—indicating the blatant and flagrant disregard for constitutional law in that gerrymandering.

Farr also defended the North Carolina legislature in a challenge to its restrictive voter ID law. The day after the Supreme Court decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* struck down the preclearance requirements of section 5 in the Voting Rights Act, the Republicans in the North Carolina legislature requested data regarding the racial breakdown of the usage of various voting access tools.

The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals found that the law discriminated against African-American voters “with almost surgical precision.”

The court said: “This sequence of events—the General Assembly's eagerness to, at the historic moment of Shelby County's issuance, rush through the legislative process the most restrictive voting law North Carolina has seen since the era of Jim Crow—speaks a certain purpose.”

Thomas Farr argued in favor of those legislative districts that restricted representation of African-American voters in their State and Federal Government.

President Trump has chosen this man to serve as a judge. I cannot vote for him. I hope my colleagues will join me in rejecting this nominee. His nomination alone speaks volumes about the intentions and predilections of this administration. This nominee is not suited to the vital task that judges—particularly Federal district court judges—are empowered to carry out.

This nominee is not fit for this job. I will vote no. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I rise to strongly oppose the nomination of Thomas Farr to the Federal bench, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against him.