do what he wanted, and let's not make a joke of this by saying that there is some legislation that will not pass in the future that gives me the OK to vote for this, to vote against this resolution. That fig leaf makes a mockery of the whole Constitution and the whole process.

BUDGET PROPOSAL

President Trump put out his budget yesterday. It says ''promises kept.'' That is one of the biggest lies I have ever seen because if you look at the booklet, it is promises broken.

The President said he would never cut Medicare and Medicaid. He slashes them. It is an $845 billion cut to Medicare and $1.5 trillion cut to Medicaid.

The President says he believes in a strong infrastructure bill. Promises kept? This bill cuts transportation by over 20 percent.

The President said that education is the civil rights of this generation. Promises kept? The President cuts education dramatically.

On issue after issue after issue, the President's budget shows the real President Trump and how far away he is from the promises he makes to the working people of America. Many of them are catching on, many more will, and this budget will be a way to show who the President is.

Even worse—not ''even worse,'' but compounding the injury—there are huge giveaways to the wealthy, more tax breaks for the wealthiest of Americans. At a time when income distribution is getting more and more skewed to the top, when so much of the wealth of America and even the income of America goes to the top few, to have a budget that hurts the middle class, that hurts those trying to struggle to get to the middle class and makes it even easier for the wealthy to garner even more money—how out of touch is this budget?

I repeat my challenge. Leader MCCONNELL, this is your President. You seem to go along with him. Put this budget on the floor. Let's see if even a single Republican will vote for it. I would like to ask every one of my 53 Republican colleagues: How many of you will say, ''I support this budget''? I bet not one—not one.

This budget is a slap on the face to every American who has worked hard every day, paid his or her taxes, expects Medicare in retirement, expects some way to afford healthcare for retirement.

President Trump's budget is inhumane. We Democrats will fight it and fight these heartless cuts at every single turn.

TARIFFS

Finally, on China, yesterday U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer told the Senate Finance Committee that he could predict the success of a trade agreement with China, saying there are major issues left to be resolved. I hope these major issues are the sinew—the meat—of what China does to us.

This is not an issue of soybeans or imports or balance of trade, which is getting worse, even with what President Trump did. This is an issue of China's stealing the greatness of the American economy. This is an example of China's being able to cascade huge amounts of products into America and not letting us sell our products freely there, or seldom, under such conditions that it isn't worth it, such as turning our intellectual property and know-how to China or to Chinese Government-controlled companies.

Lighthizer is doing a good job, but I worry that the President is more focused on getting a win than getting a good deal. The President should be proud that he stood up to North Korea and walked away. He should do the same thing here.

President Xi is not going to give him much, and the President should have the guts to walk away because China is in a much weaker position, in part, because of the tariffs that the President correctly imposed on China.

If the President walks away from a weak deal, the odds are very high that he will be able to come back to the table with a much better deal because China will have to relent. Stay strong. Don't cave. This is America's whole future at stake.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The Senator from Hawaii.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, two weeks ago, the Senate broke a century of precedent and confirmed a judge, Eric Miller, to the Ninth Circuit over the objection of both home State Senators.

Last week, the majority leader filed cloture on two circuit court nominees, Paul Matey for the Third Circuit and Neomi Rao to replace Brett Kavanaugh in the DC Circuit.

Yesterday, Paul Matey became the second person in Senate history, after Eric Miller, to be confirmed without blue slips from both home State Senators. By eliminating the blue slip—a century-old policy that requires meaningful consultation between the President and home State Senators on judicial nominations—Senate Republicans have been able to speed through confirming partisan judges with strong ideological perspectives and agendas.

Donald Trump appointed 30 circuit court judges in his first 2 years in office. That is 17 percent of the Federal appellate bench. By contrast, President Obama appointed only 16 circuit court judges in his first 2 years in office, and President George Bush appointed 17.

Donald Trump and the majority leader, with the help of the chair of the Judiciary Committee, are breaking nearly every rule that stands in their way to stack, at breakneck speed, the Federal courts with deeply partisan and ideological judges.

And why are they doing this? They are packing the courts to achieve, through the courts, what they haven't been able to accomplish through legislation or executive action—undermining Roe v. Wade, dismantling the Affordable Care Act, eliminating protections for workers, women, minorities, LGBTQ individuals, immigrants, and the environment.

The courts, with non-Trump judges, have been the constitutional guardrails stopping the Trump administration's deeply questionable policies and decisions, such as separating immigrant children from their parents, summarily ending DACA protections, and asking whether census respondents are U.S. citizens. All of these administration decisions have been stopped, for now, by Federal judges.

Trump's judicial nominees have extensive records of advocating for right-wing, ideologically-driven causes. In fact, these records are the reasons they are being nominated in the first place.

The nominees tell us to ignore their records and trust them when they say they will follow precedent and rule impartially, but after they are confirmed as judges, they can ignore promises made under oath during their confirmation hearing because they can. Short of impeaching these judges, there is nothing we can do about it—great for them, not great for Americans.

By the way, the average Trump judge tends to be younger, less diverse, and less experienced. They will be making rules that affect our lives for decades.

This week we are considering yet another Trump nominee, Neomi Rao, who should make us seriously ask how far the majority leader is willing to go to let Donald Trump pack the courts with extreme nominees and undermine the independence and impartiality of the Federal judiciary.

Neomi Rao is a nominee who has not only expressed offensive and controversial views in her twenties, but she has also continued to make concerning statements as a law professor. Her recent actions as Donald Trump's Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OIRA, have shown that her controversial statements in her twenties cannot be ignored as merely youthful indiscretions.

At the hearing, I asked her why, as a law professor, she defended dwarf-tossing by arguing that a ban on dwarf-tossing ''coerces individuals'' to accept a societal view of dignity that negates the dignity of an individual's choice to be tossed.

Does she seriously believe that dwarfs who are tossed do not share a societal view of dignity that being tossed is an affront to human dignity?

Ms. Rao asserted that she was only talking about a particular case and not taking a position one way or another on these issues. It is hard to understand what distinction she is making, but describing a ban on dwarf-tossing as not coercion is bizarre, especially coming from someone who purports to worry about the dignitary harm caused by affirmative action or diversity in education programs.

When I asked her about the strong ideological perspectives reflected in her writings and public statements, she claimed that she ''come[s] here to this committee with no agenda and no ideology and [she] would strive, if [she] were confirmed, to follow the law in every case.''

Ms. Rao would have us ignore all of her controversial statements and positions and simply trust her blanket assertion that she has no agenda or ideology. In this, she is like the other Trump judicial nominees.

As a college student, Ms. Rao criticized environmental student groups for focusing on ''three major environmental boogymen, the greenhouse effect, the depleting ozone layer, and the dangers of acid rain . . . though all three theories have come under serious scientific attack.''

More than two decades later, Ms. Rao demonstrated the same disregard for environmental concerns as the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OIRA. In this position she has consistently used her power and influence to strip away critical protections for clean air and clean water. For example, Ms. Rao supported efforts to replace the Clean Power Plan, which would have reduced greenhouse gas emissions with a rule that would actually increase air pollution and could lead to up to 1,400 additional premature deaths.

Her claim that she would simply follow precedent is also contradicted by her statements and positions relating to racial injustice. In her twenties, while discussing the Yale Women's Center and what she called ''cultural awareness groups,'' she argued that ''[m]yths of sexual and racial oppression propogate [sic] themselves, create hysteria and finally lead to the formation of some whining new group.''

I just wonder, what are these whining new groups that she refers to? Could it be women who want to support programs that support women?

In 2015, as a law professor, she disparagingly described the Supreme Court case that reaffirmed the Fair Housing Act's protections against disparate impact discrimination as a ''rul[ing] by talking points,'' not law.

In Texas Department of Housing v. Inclusive Communities Project, the Supreme Court recognized that the disparate impact doctrine is an important way ''to counteract unconscious prejudices and disguised animus'' based on a policy's discriminatory effects. Despite the Supreme Court precedent, when Ms. Rao became the OIRA Administrator, she began working to weaken rules protecting against disparate impact discrimination—upheld by the Supreme Court, by the way—particularly in the area of housing.

Her writings and actions related to sexual assault and rape are another reason we should be hesitant to believe her claim that she will merely follow the law free of her strongly held ideological views. In her twenties, Ms. Rao repeatedly wrote offensive statements about date rape and sexual assault that disparaged survivors. In writing about date rape, she argued that if a woman ''drinks to the point where she can no longer choose, well, getting to that point was part of her choice.''

In criticizing the feminist movement, she asserted she was ''not arguing that date rape victims ask for it'' but then argued that ''when playing the modern dating game, women have to understand and accept the consequences of their sexuality.''

At her hearing and in a subsequent letter to this Committee, Ms. Rao tried to walk away from these offensive writings, stating that she ''regret[s]'' some of them and believes ''[v]ictims should not be blamed.'' But at the hearing she continued to insist that her prior controversial statements were ''only trying to make the commonsense observation about the relationship between drinking and becoming a victim.'' That is not how her statements came across.

She seems to acknowledge that by further claiming that if she were addressing campus sexual assault and rape now, she ''would have more empathy and perspective.'' That claim rings hollow, as she only recently oversaw the Trump administration's proposed title IX rule that would make it harder for college sexual assault survivors to come forward and obtain justice.

Among other things, the proposed rule would require schools to conduct a live hearing where the accused's representatives can cross-examine the survivor. It would also have the school use a higher burden of proof for sexual misconduct cases than for other misconduct cases.

I will close by noting that Ms. Rao previously criticized the Senate Judiciary Committee's confirmation hearings for judicial nominees. In writing about the Supreme Court confirmation process, she complained that nominees are ''coached to choose from certain stock answers,'' such as ''repeatedly alleg[ing] fidelity to the law.''

Back then she readily acknowledged that ''judges draw on a variety of tools in interpreting the law, and that these tools differ for judges based on their constitutional values.'' But now that she has been nominated to become a judge, she is the one giving the Judiciary Committee the formulaic ''stock answers'' that she criticized.

Before she became a judicial nominee, she indicated that nominees should not be confirmed ''based on incantations of the right formulas without an examination of their actual beliefs.'' We should hold her to her own words.

An examination of Ms. Rao's record and actual beliefs show that the controversial views she held in her twenties are not so different from her statements and actions as a legal professional. That is why I will be voting against Ms. Rao's nomination, and I strongly urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, desperate to distract from the $93 trillion price tag of their so-called Green New Deal, the Democratic leadership here in the Senate has been coming down to the floor to claim that Republicans are ignoring climate change.

On February 14, the Democratic leader came to the floor and said: ''Since Republicans took control of this Chamber in 2015, they have not brought a single Republican bill to meaningfully reduce carbon emissions to the floor of the Senate. Not one bill.'' That is a quote from the Democratic leader just a month ago.

That would be news to me, and I think it would be news to some Democratic Senators here, as well. On January 14 of this year, for example, the President signed into law the Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act. That legislation, led by Republican Senator BARRASSO and cosponsored by both Republicans and Democrats, paves the way for new advanced nuclear technologies, which will help further reduce carbon emissions.

Here is what the Democratic ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee had to say about this bill:

> Nuclear power serves as our nation's largest source of reliable, carbon-free energy, which can help combat the negative impacts of climate change and at the same time, foster economic opportunities for Americans. . . . This is another important step in our fight against climate change.

That is from the Democratic ranking member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. Let me repeat that. ''This is another important step in our fight against climate change.'' That is coming from a key Democrat on a key committee that deals with this issue. That is not a Republican talking; that is the Democratic ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee.

Then, of course, there is the Furthering Carbon Capture, Utilization, Technology, Underground Storage, and Reduced Emissions Act. Granted, that is a fairly long title. Several Republicans are original cosponsors of that. It became law as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. The FUTURE Act, as it is referred to, extends and expands tax credits for facilities with carbon capture, utilization, and sequestration technologies, which are referred to as CCUS technologies.

Here is what the Clean Air Task Force had to say about this legislation:

> [T]he U.S. Congress took a landmark step by passing one of the most important bills for reducing global warming pollution in the last two decades.

That is a quote from the Clean Air Task Force and what they had to say about that legislation.

Then there is the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, led by Republican Senator MIKE CRAPO, which