

understand, they will soon introduce the Senate version of the radical healthcare proposal that I have come to call Medicare for None.

It is only the latest installment in the steady drumbeat of calls for socialist central planning that we have been hearing from our Democratic colleagues as of late.

Earlier this year, we saw the Speaker of the House declare her top priority as the Democrat politician protection act, an effort to literally rewrite the rules of free speech in American elections and give political campaigns a big dose of taxpayer dollars, all so the outcome of the political process could be more to the Democrats' liking.

We have seen all but a tiny handful of our Democratic colleagues unable to reject an absurdly intrusive and mind-bogglingly expensive plan to forcibly remodel the U.S. economy and American families' lives until they are sufficiently "green."

Now, perhaps as soon as this week, the latest new scheme will make landfall in the Senate. I am sure it will grab a new round of headlines, but under the Cadillac hood, it will offer only the same old push mower engine, the same tired, debunked logic that Washington knows best and the American people can't be trusted to decide what is best for themselves and their families.

That tired, old engine cannot power the kind of healthcare that Americans deserve. The legislation my colleagues want to brand as Medicare for All hollows out the actual Medicare Program that our seniors rely on until the only thing left is the label. Then it takes that label and slaps it on a brandnew, untested, government-run plan that every single American would be forced into—forced into—whether they like it or not. In fact, competing private insurance policies, such as the ones that 180 million Americans currently use, would be banned outright—gone.

For the privilege of having their existing Medicare or existing employer-provided plans ripped away from them by the same old Washington experts who brought us ObamaCare with sky-high premiums and deductibles, out-of-pocket costs, and dysfunction—for that privilege the American people would have to pick up a historic \$32 trillion tab. That is just the rough estimate for the first 10 years—\$32 trillion over 10 years. That is more than the Federal Government has spent on everything—everything—over the past 8 years combined. It is so much that even senior Democrats aren't claiming to know how it will be paid for. That price is so steep that even left-leaning analysts are admitting that the tax burden is virtually certain to land on the shoulders of the middle class.

Here is the Washington Post, verbatim: "Medicare-for-all in particular would require tax hikes on middle class families."

To give you a sense of scale for this nightmare, one think tank has cal-

culated that "doubling all Federal individual and corporate income taxes"—doubling them—"would be insufficient to fully finance the plan."

Doubling all of the corporate and individual income taxes would be insufficient to fully finance the plan. Doubling what Americans send to the IRS in income taxes would take away all of the competition and choice in the health insurance market. The failures and foibles of ObamaCare, as painful as they are for so many families, would likely be just the warmup act to this socialist bonanza.

Apparently this is what my Democratic colleagues believe will pass for a political winner. We are looking forward to that debate.

I will give them this: With Republicans standing for preserving what works and fixing what doesn't, for reducing tax rates instead of shooting them sky-high, and for strengthening the employer-sponsored and Medicare Advantage plans that American families actually rely on instead of snatching those plans away, my Democratic friends are certainly working hard to paint a contrast—and we welcome it.

S. 1057

Madam President, on one final matter, even as the Senate grapples with these kinds of major disagreements, I want to highlight that there were still bipartisan accomplishments constantly coming out of this Chamber. They don't always make national front-page news, but they often represent hugely significant progress for the American people.

Just yesterday afternoon, the Senate passed legislation from Senator MARTHA MCSALLY to formalize a landmark drought contingency plan for the Colorado River Basin. Our Senate colleagues from the West have been working with State and local leaders literally for years to develop this bipartisan, bicameral solution. Seven States, countless local and Tribal authorities, and both the United States and Mexico have skin in this game, so hammering out this coordinated plan was no small feat.

Now that this agreement will be codified in Federal law, tens of millions of Americans will be able to rest easier, knowing that their supply of drinking water and irrigation will be better protected from water shortages.

I want to congratulate all of our colleagues who worked hard to make this happen, particularly Senator MCSALLY and Senator GARDNER, who have been strong voices for this agreement and the people of Arizona and Colorado. I look forward to the President signing this into law in the very near future.

#### COLORADO RIVER DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLAN AUTHORIZATION ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the order of April 8, 2019, the Senate, having received from the House H.R. 2030 and the text being

identical to S. 1057, the bill is considered read three times and passed, and the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

The bill (H.R. 2030) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

H.R. 1602

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, there is one thing pretty much every American can agree on. It is that illegal robocalls are a major nuisance. Who hasn't been annoyed after answering the phone and discovering it is an automated message asking you to purchase some product or provide sensitive personal information?

But, of course, these calls aren't merely a nuisance. Scammers use these calls to successfully prey on vulnerable populations, like the elderly, who may be less technologically savvy. It is no surprise that people are deceived. I think most of us have received robocalls that sounded pretty credible, and the practice of spoofing numbers adds another layer of deception. Scammers can disguise the actual number they are calling from so the call looks like it is coming from a legitimate number. You may recognize the number calling you as a trustworthy local number, but the actual call may be from a scam artist.

I remember an article from my home State a couple of years ago that reported that scammers had successfully spoofed the number of the Watertown Police Department. So to anyone who received that call, it looked as if it was really the Watertown Police Department calling.

If the source looks credible and the call sounds credible, it can be difficult not to believe it, which is why people fall prey to robocall scam artists every single day, sometimes with devastating consequences.

Scammers' goal is to steal the kind of personal information that can be used to steal your money and your identity. When scammers are successful, they can destroy people's lives.

There are laws and fines in place right now to prevent scam artists from preying on people through the telephone, but unfortunately, these measures have been insufficient. Almost a year ago today, when I was chairman of the Commerce Committee, I subpoenaed Adrian Abramovich, a notorious mass robocaller, to testify before the committee. His testimony made it clear that current fines are insufficient to discourage robocallers. Robocallers just figure that those fines are part of the cost of doing business.

In addition, the Federal Communications Commission's anti-robocall enforcement efforts are currently hampered by a tight time window for pursuing violations. To address these problems, at the end of last year I introduced the Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence Act, or the TRACED Act.

Last week, my bipartisan legislation passed the Commerce Committee by unanimous vote. The TRACED Act provides tools to discourage illegal robocalls, protect consumers, and crack down on offenders. It expands the window in which the FCC can pursue intentional scammers from 1 year to 3 years, and in years 2 and 3, it increases the financial penalty for those individuals making robocalls from zero dollars to \$10,000 per call to make it more difficult for robocallers to figure fines into their cost of doing business.

It also requires telephone service providers to adopt new call verification technologies that would help to prevent illegal robocalls from reaching consumers. Importantly, it convenes a working group with representatives from the Department of Justice, the FCC, the Federal Trade Commission, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, State attorneys general, and others to identify ways to criminally prosecute illegal robocalling.

Criminal prosecution of illegal robocalling can be challenging. Scammers are frequently based abroad and can quickly shut down shop before authorities can get to them, but I believe we need to find ways to hold scammers criminally accountable. There are few things more despicable than preying on and exploiting the vulnerable, and scammers should face criminal prosecution for the damage that they do.

I am very pleased that the TRACED Act has now moved to the full Senate for consideration. I am grateful to Senator MARKEY for partnering with me on this legislation, and I am pleased that this bipartisan bill has been embraced by all 50 attorneys general, by the Commissioners at the Federal Trade Commission and the Federal Communications Commission, and by major industry associations and leading consumer groups.

Later this week, I will hold a hearing on the Commerce Committee Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet, which I chair, to further examine the problem of illegal robocalling. I will work to get the TRACED Act to the President's desk as soon as possible.

This legislation will not prevent all illegal robocalling, but it is a big step in the right direction. I look forward to helping consumers by enacting the TRACED Act's protections as soon as possible.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, the watchword in the executive branch today is "chaos." This chaos stems from one source and one source only—President Donald Trump and his extreme agenda—and America is paying the price.

Everyone agrees there are issues at the border, but if you are the President and if you are in charge of our national security, you don't tweet your way into a strategy; you don't keep changing policies; and you don't keep switching personnel if you want to make progress on the most challenging issue that is facing our country.

Every day, we hear this is the President's new policy, and 2 days later, we hear it is not happening. People are being fired because they tell the President, according to news reports, that he can't break the law when he wants to do something. You cannot keep changing personnel, changing strategy, and tweeting your way through a problem as serious as this. That is why there is chaos when it comes to border issues—all created by the President and his whimsical, erratic, and oftentimes nasty pursuit of policy.

Even the Republicans are worried sick about the chaos President Trump has created over the week. My friend JOHN CORNYN says this is all a giant "mess"—his words. Well, my friend from Texas is correct. Yet this dysfunction is not confined to a few Agencies; this chaos is throughout the executive branch because Donald Trump has the same kind of switching of personnel, changing of policies, and trying to tweet his way through a problem in other areas as he does with regard to the border.

Let me remind my colleagues that the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Interior Secretary, and the EPA Administrator each resigned amid scandal. The Trump administration has not yet nominated anyone for probably the most important Cabinet position, the Secretary of Defense, since Secretary Mattis's departure, and when he departed, Secretary Mattis had a scathing rebuke of President Trump's policies.

Look at the chaos at the State Department, where the damage extends way beyond America's borders. Because of incompetence and inaction, there are no nominees to more than 30 vacant key positions at State, including Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights. There are no nominees to be our Ambassador to Pakistan or Egypt and none for Qatar or Thailand.

This is not the Senate blocking nominees as much as the President likes to blame somebody else for his problems; this is the President's own administration that has failed to nominate people for such important positions, and many of these positions have been long vacant. The areas we mentioned are ever important in our changing world, and this administration is simply failing to nominate anyone.

We should be projecting stability and continuity through our State Department. Instead, it has been battered and belittled by its own administration to the point at which both sides in Congress have spoken out. Just yesterday, we learned the administration is pushing out the head of the Secret Service amid a new scandal surrounding a security breach at Mar-a-Lago, the so-called winter White House. Now joining the others who are gone—fired by Twitter or whatever—is the head of the Secret Service. All of this chaos has one source and one source only—the President of the United States and his erratic, vacillating attitudes toward policy and personnel.

Across a broad spectrum of issues, his policies are so extreme that even good-faith nominees eventually face a choice—leave the administration or be consumed by the quicksand of the Trump swamp.

I hope the President or some of the people around him will realize that his administration is far from a fine-tuned machine; it is a slow-motion disaster that the American people see in action every day.

#### WOMEN'S HEALTH

Madam President, on women's health, the Senate Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing today on a sham bill that would further restrict women's access to care.

Every woman and every family in America should shudder at the Republicans' campaign to take away the rights of women to make decisions about their own health just to satisfy a hard-right, radical agenda that the vast majority of Americans completely disagrees with.

This bill would unduly restrict women's rights to make their own health decisions. Dr. Jennifer Conti, who is a clinical assistant professor of OB/GYN at Stanford, described the 20-week mark set by the bill as "just an arbitrary limit set in place by politicians that has no medical or scientific backing." Let me repeat—"an arbitrary limit set in place by politicians"—politicians making decisions about women's health. That is what is wrong here.

What is more, a 20-week ban is, arguably, unconstitutional. Just 2 weeks ago, a Federal judge in North Carolina ruled it was. We know the 20-week ban is just a start among those who want to take away women's rights. They will try to go for a 10-week ban, then a 6-week ban. It is all part of a radical, relentless effort to completely and unequivocally strip women of their right

to make their own healthcare decisions.

The rhetoric we will hear from the Republicans in this hearing will be much the same we have heard for years. Whether it is a vote we took in the Senate or a new law protecting one's rights in my home State of New York, the Republicans have repeatedly used scare tactics and falsehoods to mislead the public. Yes, these are nothing but scare tactics, but don't take my word for it. Time and time again, fact checkers have ruled the Republicans' rhetoric on these issues to be outright false.

Let's be clear. Across the country, the reproductive rights of women are under attack. In statehouses across the country, the Republicans are forcing through radical proposals that would dramatically limit women's rights to make their own choices—in Mississippi, in Georgia, in Kentucky. This is a threat to women in all 50 States, not just in those 3. It is dangerously out of step with the American people.

The Trump administration is even imposing a gag rule on healthcare providers to stop them from discussing the full range of options with women who consider having abortions. They are literally preventing doctors from doing their jobs. It is illogical, intrusive, and hypocritical that the Republicans in Washington would tell a doctor what he or she can or cannot say to a patient in a private medical conversation.

I have been around here long enough to remember when the Republicans were preaching that government should never come between a patient and his or her doctor. Why the change? Since taking office, President Trump and his Republican colleagues have repeatedly prioritized restricting women's reproductive freedoms and have strategically placed obstacles in the way of their accessing the healthcare they deserve. Donald Trump and our Republican friends believe they know better than American women. That is wrong, and American women totally disagree with them.

Yet, while the Republicans across the country push these proposals, they look the other way when President Trump proposes cutting programs that help newborns and young children.

The President wants to cut Medicaid by more than \$1 trillion. That provides healthcare coverage for 37 million children. He wants to eliminate programs that support emergency medical health services for children and that address autism and developmental disorders.

I hope my Republican colleagues will join us instead of slipping down this radical, ideological, and deeply misguided path to strip away the rights of women.

H.R. 268

Now on disaster relief, as I said yesterday, the question of providing funding for our fellow Americans hurt by natural disasters is not an either-or proposition, but Republicans have treated it like one. They argue that we

can either have funding for our neighbors in the Midwest, or we can pursue aid for Puerto Rico that the President opposes. For the President of the United States to pit American citizens against each other is simply un-American, and for Republicans in the Senate to go along with him is exhibit A of their refusal to stand up.

Some of my colleagues have said: Well, we are giving Puerto Rico just food stamp money. OK. Let's give all the other States just food stamp money. See if they think that is going to help them rebuild their homes and deal with the roads and all the other things that natural disasters have brought. Of course not.

That is the double standard, and it is not going to happen. We know the House, to their credit, is standing firm.

Let's come up with a compromise that funds both. As Americans have always done when American citizens in one part of the country are in trouble because of disaster, we come together and help them all—not just the ones the President likes or finds politically advantageous but all. We don't say: We will give just food stamps to some but complete disaster relief to the others. That is wrong, and that hurts American citizens in Puerto Rico and elsewhere.

Last week, Senator LEAHY and I presented a solution that solves all the problems—\$16.7 billion in relief for all Americans affected by natural disasters, including \$2.5 billion in new funding that could help communities with the new disasters in the Midwest. It had support for Puerto Rico and the people in the other territories.

It is about time we stop this standoff, pass disaster relief, and help our fellow Americans before the next storms make their unwelcome arrival.

#### NOMINATIONS

Finally, on judges, today, the Republican leader will follow through on his plan to remake the judiciary in the image of President Trump. Irony of ironies, the first nominee we will consider is a gentleman who supported the Republican leader's decision to not consider even a committee hearing or a vote on Merrick Garland. That is galling.

Mr. Domenico and the other nominees we will consider today are outside the mainstream—way outside the mainstream—and should not be rushed through this body. Two hours of debate on a lifetime appointment? Shame on our Republican friends who went along with that.

By participating in this sham process, every Republican will fully own each and every radical decision each of these nominees makes. We see what is happening now. A very conservative justice in Texas is taking healthcare away from millions of Americans. He is taking away their protection for pre-existing conditions.

My fellow Republicans, you are on warning: If you keep voting for these judges, you are going to carry the bur-

den of their awful decisions that will hurt so many Americans. They are so far out of the mainstream.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 3 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### WOMEN'S HEALTH

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, as the minority leader explained, we unfortunately expect that today Senate Republicans will again make an effort to spread lies and misinformation about why some women decide to have abortions later in pregnancy, and they will do so instead of listening to women like Judy, from my home State of Washington, who learned that her son's organs were not developing properly—one lung was just 20 percent formed, and the other was missing entirely; women like Darla, from Texas, who learned that the complications one of her twins was facing could endanger the other's life as well; women like Alyson, a mother of six, who learned that one of her twins had died in the womb and the other was facing severe complications and that her own health was in severe risk from the pregnancy; or countless patients in States that have so severely undermined access to safe, legal abortion that women struggle to exercise their rights protected under our Constitution.

It is worth asking, with so much else going on, why are Republicans spending time doubling down on lies to undermine women's reproductive health? The unfortunate truth is that my Republican colleagues are not repeating these falsehoods because they are concerned about children or families; instead, they are doing whatever they think will help them reach their goal of taking away access to safe abortion in the United States of America.

Republicans may not be listening to women or doctors or families like the ones I just mentioned who had to make extremely difficult decisions, but Democrats are listening. We know women need to be able to make the healthcare choices that are right for them and their families, and healthcare providers need to be able to let medical standards, not politics, drive patients' care.

None of this should be controversial, and for the vast majority of people across the country, it is not. But as long as Republicans are holding partisan hearings to spread misinformation and lies or pushing anti-doctor, anti-women, and anti-family legislation or putting up new barriers to make it harder for women to access reproductive healthcare or trying to defund trusted healthcare providers like Planned Parenthood through harmful gag rules or jamming through far-right, ideological judges to chip

away at *Roe v. Wade*, Democrats are not going to stop fighting back on behalf of women, men, and families in this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I have two unanimous consent requests.

I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

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

Mr. GARDNER. And I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to complete my remarks before the vote.

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

#### NOMINATION OF DANIEL DESMOND DOMENICO

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak in support of Dan Domenico, the district judge we will be voting on shortly.

I strongly support Dan Domenico for the district court position in the District of Colorado. Dan has impeccable academic and legal credentials. A native Coloradan, he is well known and well respected throughout the entire Colorado legal community. These characteristics make him very well suited to be on the bench.

A native of Boulder, CO, Dan received his undergraduate degree from Georgetown University and his juris doctorate from the University of Virginia—it has been a good week for the University of Virginia: a new Federal judge and a national championship—where he graduated order of the coif and was the editor of the law review.

After law school, Dan joined the respected firm of Hogan & Hartson and then clerked for Judge Tim Tymkovich, who is now the chief judge on the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Following his clerkship, Dan continued his public service as a Special Assistant to the Solicitor in the U.S. Department of the Interior. There, he advised the Secretary and the Department on matters related to national parks, fish and wildlife, Bureau of Land Management issues, and Indian affairs. These are all areas that matter a great deal to Colorado and the West.

Dan was then appointed to be the solicitor general for the State of Colorado. While he was the youngest person tapped for the position, he then became the longest serving solicitor general in our State's history, holding the position for 9 years. As solicitor general, Dan represented the State in both State and Federal courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court. He oversaw all major litigation for the State, and he provided legal advice to the Governor and State agencies.

Dan is currently the founding and managing partner at the Kittredge LLC, where he represents clients in high-stakes, complex litigation and appeals. He is an adjunct professor at the University of Denver's College of Law, where he teaches courses in natural resources law and constitutional law.

As impressive as this background is, it is also an insight into the type of

judge Dan would be. I am particularly struck by Dan's service as the Colorado solicitor general.

While the Democratic leader may object to Dan Domenico, two Democratic Governors in Colorado did not. In fact, they kept his service. In fact, Dan served as solicitor general for the State of Colorado during one Republican Governor and two Democratic Governors. He served, regardless of party, with competence and zeal. That is what the Colorado legal community would tell anyone who wishes to listen. His approach to the legal issues he confronted was the same regardless of the party in power. He looked to the law. And that is what we expect in every judge. That is what Colorado wants. That is what our country needs. We need experienced practitioners who are respected by their peers and who will faithfully apply the law regardless of politics or place in life. That is what I believe Dan will do, and that is why I enthusiastically support his nomination and hope my colleagues will follow suit as well.

I yield the floor.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Daniel Desmond Domenico, of Colorado, to be United States District Judge for the District of Colorado.

Mitch McConnell, Johnny Isakson, Roger F. Wicker, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, Pat Roberts, Roy Blunt, Deb Fischer, David Perdue, Todd Young, John Thune, Mike Rounds, Steve Daines, John Hoeven, Thom Tillis.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Daniel Desmond Domenico, of Colorado, to be United States District Judge for the District of Colorado, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 65 Ex.]

#### YEAS—55

Alexander	Gardner	Portman
Barraso	Graham	Risch
Bennet	Grassley	Roberts
Blackburn	Hawley	Romney
Blunt	Hoeven	Rounds
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Braun	Inhofe	Sasse
Burr	Isakson	Scott (FL)
Capito	Jones	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Shelby
Collins	Lankford	Sinema
Cornyn	Lee	Sullivan
Cotton	Manchin	Thune
Cramer	McConnell	Tillis
Crapo	McSally	Toomey
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Enzi	Murkowski	Young
Ernst	Paul	
Fischer	Perdue	

#### NAYS—42

Baldwin	Hassan	Rosen
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Sanders
Booker	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Smith
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Udall
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murphy	Warner
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Peters	Whitehouse
Harris	Reed	Wyden

#### NOT VOTING—3

Cruz Duckworth Johnson

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 55, the nays are 42.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Texas.

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time on the Domenico nomination expire at 2:15 p.m.; further, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action. I further ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess from 12:30 until 2:15 p.m. today.

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

#### SUPPORTING VETERANS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I was fortunate to grow up in a military family. My dad served for 31 years in the U.S. Air Force. He actually started out at a very young age as a B-17 pilot in the Army Air Corps before the Air Force was even created.

He was stationed at Molesworth Air Force Base in England and flew missions across the English Channel into Germany during World War II. He flew 26 of those missions, and he was successful in completing each one of them except for the last one. On the 26th mission, he was shot down and captured as a POW for the last 4 months of the war.

Growing up in a military family obviously means a lot to me. I grew up with a father who demonstrated every day what it means to be a patriot. Of course, like most military brats—that is what we called ourselves—I spent a lot of time traveling around the country. Of course, I was born in Texas and consider San Antonio home, but we

lived in Mississippi and in Kensington, MD, right outside the District of Columbia. I graduated from high school in Japan. This is pretty typical of a lot of military families because they tend to move around quite a bit. One of the biggest challenges, being a student growing up in a military family, is frequently having to change schools. That requires a little bit of resilience on the part of the student because they have to learn how to make friends, even in new settings.

Despite the challenges of moving around as a kid, there was one thing I was always grateful for. I had the privilege of witnessing not only my dad but so many others of our U.S. military servicemembers in action. Seeing their courage and sacrifice showed me early on that there is nothing we can do to adequately repay these men and women for their service to their country, but you better believe we have to try, and we are going to keep trying—not just to repay them but to recognize them and to honor them.

In Congress we accomplished a lot for our military over the last few years. We restored America's defense with the greatest investment in the military in decades, including the largest troop pay raise in nearly 10 years. That is after we tried unsuccessfully to do what we have done from time to time, which is to cash in the "peace dividend." Unfortunately, we can't cash in the peace dividend because there never seems to be peace, as much as we would hope and pray for that.

But supporting our heroes on the battlefield is only part of our responsibility toward the military. We are also focused on ensuring that they get the care, support, and opportunities they need once they come home and take the uniform off as a veteran.

I have heard from many of my veterans in Texas who are frustrated with the services provided by VA facilities. They shared stories about having to travel hours upon hours to receive care, sometimes forcing them to accept lower quality care or sometimes to forego it entirely.

Both in Texas and across the country, VA facilities have notably been plagued by inefficiency, lack of accountability, and quality of care issues. Making matters more challenging, the VA has been hindered by unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles. The Veterans' Administration has more than 300,000 people working for them. So bureaucracy should be its middle name. It is not designed to be efficient, but it is incredibly frustrating and costly for our veterans as they seek to get the care we promised them and that we are dutybound to provide.

Sadly, in some cases veterans turn to alternative coping mechanisms that can lead to destructive addictions. We know that self-medication is a real problem, particularly for mental health issues, and veterans, unless they are diagnosed properly and receive the correct medical care, can spiral down

as a result of an alcohol or drug addiction, which is a coping or self-medication mechanism that does not work out well. Those stories do not end well at all. Those are some of the challenges we have facing our veterans and trying to provide them with the services they are entitled to and have earned.

But there is a good news part to this story. Last summer we took a major step to provide veterans with the healthcare they deserve when we passed the VA MISSION Act. This legislation will make significant reforms in the Department of Veterans Affairs and provide veterans with more flexibility to make decisions themselves regarding their healthcare. In other words, they don't have to adapt to the system. The system can adapt to them and be flexible to their needs.

One of the most common frustrations I hear from my Texas veterans is that it is sometimes impractical to travel to the next VA hospital when they need care. This legislation, the VA MISSION Act, consolidates and improves VA community programs. In other words, you can get the care in your community. It allows veterans to receive care from private hospitals and doctors.

It also provides funding for the Veterans Choice Program to continue until the approved Veterans Community Care Program matures and is fully in effect.

The VA MISSION Act included some of the most substantial reforms to the veterans healthcare system in years, lowering the barriers to care for veterans and giving them more treatment options. It has also provided the largest funding increase in recent history for veterans' care and services and modernized the VA's electronic health record system.

My hope is it will provide some needed relief to veterans and their families who aren't happy with the status quo, and we will continue to work with them until we get this right, to build on these reforms until we are able to provide the sort of care all of our veterans need and deserve. We don't want to just provide for these men and women's physical needs, we also need to ensure that they have adequate mental health resources as well.

Last Congress, I was an original cosponsor of the Veteran Urgent Access to Mental Healthcare Act. Enacted as part of the 2018 Consolidated Appropriations Act, this law now allows those discharged under certain other-than-honorable conditions access to critical mental health care facilities. Veterans who are struggling deserve to be carefully evaluated at the onset of their mental illness and supported with the VA medical treatment necessary for their recovery.

I was proud to introduce the Mental Health and Safe Communities Act, which established peer-to-peer services that connect qualified veterans with other veterans to provide support and mentorship. One of the things I hear from our servicemembers, when they

take the uniform off, is that what they miss most about the military is the camaraderie and sense of teamwork and mutual support. This legislation is designed to try to provide some transitional support for peer-to-peer services, to connect qualified veterans with other veterans during that period of time. It will also allow qualified veterans to obtain treatment, recovery, stabilization, and rehabilitation services.

While providing physical and mental healthcare for veterans is a top priority, it is only part of providing a smooth transition for those who leave military life to return to civilian life. We want to ensure that they have ample employment opportunities as well.

Last month, the veterans unemployment rate was 2.9 percent—down from 4.1 percent in March of last year and lower than the national unemployment rate. I would like to think that is, in part, a result of the concerted effort we have made to provide more opportunity to our veterans to transition into a meaningful career after life in the military. I am encouraged by those positive numbers. We will continue to follow them and make sure it is not just a blip on the radar screen.

Last Congress, I introduced the American Law Enforcement Heroes Act, which is now law. It amended a 1968 law to allow grant funds to be used to hire and train veterans as career law enforcement officers. Everywhere I go across the State of Texas, I talk to police departments that were really having huge challenges trying to fill the vacancies in their ranks. This will allow more of our veterans who are trained to serve as career law enforcement officers and use grant funds to hire and train them further to make sure they have the skills needed in a specific police department or law enforcement position. This bill makes sure veterans can get hired by local law enforcement agencies when they come out of the military with the very skills that are needed by those police agencies working to keep our communities safe.

I also introduced the Jobs for Our Heroes Act, which was signed into law last January. This streamlines the process by which Active-Duty military reservists and veterans receive commercial driver's licenses.

Finally, another bill I will mention was the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act, which made much needed updates for veterans facing school closures while enrolled. It also increased the resources and opportunities for educational assistance for veterans pursuing STEM careers—science, technology, engineering, and math—something we need more of.

Every piece of legislation I mentioned was signed into law by President Trump and represents our commitment in the Senate to supporting America's veterans. I am proud of the

work we have been able to do together on a bipartisan basis—big and small—to provide America's veterans with the support and resources they need as they transition to civilian life.

There is more I would like to accomplish this Congress to provide greater care and open more doors to veterans. I look forward to working with all of my colleagues to do exactly that.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL PAUL E. FUNK II

Madam President, finally, I want to take just a moment to congratulate one outstanding servicemember from Texas who just received a big promotion. The Senate recently confirmed LTG Paul E. Funk II for his fourth star and for the position of commanding general of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.

Since 2017, General Funk has served as commanding general of the Third Armored Corps at Fort Hood, where he commands about 100,000 soldiers on five installations across five States. As excited as we were for him to take the helm at Fort Hood, it felt more like a homecoming for General Funk.

As a matter of fact, he was born at Fort Hood and is the son of a previous commander of the Third Corps at Fort Hood. They were the first father-son duo to command the unit and joined a small but impressive group of other fathers and sons who have commanded the same corps.

Throughout his career, General Funk has been deployed five times and led soldiers during Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, twice in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Inherent Resolve. General Funk is highly decorated and has received multiple Distinguished Service Medals, the Defense Superior Service Medal, multiple Legion of Merit awards, and numerous Bronze Stars, among other medals.

I wanted to say a few words to congratulate soon-to-be General Funk and his wife, Dr. Beth Funk, on this incredible accomplishment. He is an outstanding soldier, leader, and patriot, and will do great work at TRADOC. The State of Texas is sad to say farewell, but we wish him the very best as he heads to Virginia for this incredible opportunity and his continued service to our country.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The Senator from Louisiana.

#### STOP SILENCING VICTIMS ACT

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I want to talk briefly about two subjects. The first is sexual harassment. More specifically, I want to talk about a bill I am going to be introducing. It is about the abuse of nondisclosure agreements across government.

There are victims of sexual harassment who are prohibited from talking about their experiences because of a nondisclosure agreement that is attached to a settlement and has been paid for by taxpayers or, in some cases, with private funds. Victims are si-

lenced. Victims are silenced so voters can't find out about this disgusting behavior.

I have always believed that sunlight is the best antiseptic and the best disinfectant, and it is long past time, in my opinion, that we stop revictimizing people who wanted nothing more than to come to work every day and be treated with basic human dignity.

The title of my proposed law is the Stop Silencing Victims Act. It is really very simple. It would say that if you are a State or Federal employee or if you are a public official or a public employee and you are accused of sexual harassment and you settle that lawsuit—whether you settle it with taxpayer funds or private funds—then a nondisclosure agreement is prohibited in that settlement unless the victim wants to have a nondisclosure agreement. In other words, if you are accused of sexual harassment and you settle the case, the taxpayers are entitled to know about the settlement unless the victim decides otherwise.

I am going to be careful here. We believe passionately, as we should, in due process in America; that just because you are accused of something doesn't mean you are guilty of it. Some of my colleagues have suggested in the past that you are morally tainted if you don't automatically believe all accusers. I don't agree with that. I think you are morally tainted if you don't treat both the accuser and accused with respect and dignity and due process. So the purpose of my bill is not to take away anybody's due process. Just because you are accused of something doesn't mean you are guilty of it.

Having said that, I think we have to face the facts in America. We have had far too many instances of sexual harassment. We have seen it in Hollywood repeatedly. I don't know how the actors in Hollywood have time to make movies; they are too busy molesting each other.

It is not just in Hollywood. It is all across society. It is in the Halls of Congress. It is in the halls of State government. It is in the boardroom. It is all across America. For the first time in a long time, women who are usually—not always but usually—the victims of sexual harassment have started to speak up. I thank them for that.

My bill will further enhance their voice. If they make an accusation of sexual harassment and the alleged perpetrator is a State employee or Federal employee and the lawsuit is settled, no longer will you be able to have an agreement that says nobody can talk about it unless the victim wants to. Once again, I think this kind of transparency will help us fight a very serious problem in America because this is no country for creepy old men or for creepy young men or for creepy middle-aged men or for anybody—man or woman—who would use his or her power to obtain sexual favors from somebody in fear of them in power in the workplace or otherwise.

#### IMMIGRATION

Madam President, I believe any President is entitled to surround himself with the advisers of his choice. I firmly believe that.

As you know, our recent Secretary of Homeland Security has been replaced. She and the President met on Sunday, and they mutually decided there would be a change at the top in Homeland Security. Secretary Nielsen decided to resign.

Shortly thereafter, her White House colleagues, her friends—the people she has worked with day in and day out to try to solve this crisis of illegal immigration into America—immediately became anonymous sources and proceeded to cut her to pieces off the record. Of course, our press, as it is entitled to do under the First Amendment, feasted on it. These were Secretary Nielsen's colleagues; the people she worked with on a daily basis.

This is America. Within reason, you can say what you want, but you ought to put your name to it. You shouldn't hide behind the label of an anonymous source. I believe, and I suspect the Presiding Officer does, too, that we should treat people with dignity and respect. I felt and still feel Secretary Nielsen's former colleagues did not show her dignity and respect. In fact, their behavior was classless.

I think Secretary Nielsen did the very best she could under difficult circumstances, for we do have a problem at the border. "Problem" is an understatement. In March, we had 100,000 people come into our country illegally. That is the most in 10 years. If that continues, we are going to set a record this year of the number of people entering our country illegally.

We are a nation of immigrants, and I am proud of that. Americans cannot be called anti-immigrant. Every year, we welcome a million people across the world to come into our country and become Americans. They do it legally. They follow the law—they are properly vetted; they get in line; they wait patiently. Then we welcome them in. We are a nation of immigrants, and I am very proud of that.

Unfortunately, we have another 500,000 to 600,000 people who don't follow the rules. They come into our country illegally. Illegal immigration is illegal. Even if you think it is a good idea—and I don't—if you care about the rule of law, which is one of the bedrock principles in America, then you would want to stop illegal immigration. It is just that simple.

I don't care who the President puts in charge of Homeland Security. I don't want to leave that statement in isolation or allow it to be taken out of context. Obviously, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security is a very important post, but I don't care which man or woman the President chooses, for we are not going to solve this problem until we do three things. Some brandnew, shiny, magical wonder pony is not going to gallop in and save



us here. We have to solve this problem ourselves.

The first thing we have to do is to build a wall. I am not talking about a wall from sea to shining sea. We have 1,900 miles of border. I am talking about barriers that are strategically placed. You cannot seal a 1,900-mile piece of real estate without having a barrier. It can't be done. If you don't believe me, ask Israel. That is why it has a 400-plus-mile border wall with the West Bank. That is why Saudi Arabia has a border wall with Yemen. That is why India has a border wall as do Bulgaria and Malaysia. I could keep going. Border walls work. All border walls say is: If you come into our country, come in legally because we believe in the rule of law.

The second thing we need to do, as the Presiding Officer well knows, is to pass asylum laws that look like somebody designed the things on purpose because what we have now doesn't fit that description. If you are coming from Central America—from El Salvador, from Nicaragua, from Guatemala—all you have to do is make it to American soil, say the magic words, and you will be allowed into our country. You will be told: We are going to give you a court date. Yet we are so far behind in our immigration court that the court date will likely come in a year and a half or 2 years. You will be released into the country, and you will be told to come back for the court date. Some do. Many don't.

No other country that I am aware of has an asylum law as upside down as ours. You could drive all across Washington, DC, and pick the first person you find who is living under the interstate and say: You draft an asylum law for us. It would be better than the asylum law we have right now.

The U.S. Senate ought to be debating America's asylum laws right this second. I am not saying the other things we are doing—we are in the personnel business—aren't important, but there is not a single issue right now that is more important. Congress needs to do its job, and the Senate ought to be debating this issue right now. I don't know how it will turn out. How about we just surprise ourselves for a change and do something intelligent by putting the issue on the floor of the Senate and by letting us debate it and offer amendments. We might be surprised at what we can achieve.

The third thing we are going to have to do to solve our problem is to convince our friends in Mexico and our friends in Central America—El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua—to work with us in terms of solving this problem. What I would like to see the President do is to call an immigration summit. He has declined to do it, but I am going to keep talking about it until I persuade him to call an immigration summit. Invite the President of Mexico and the President of the Northern Triangle Central American countries. Let's come together, and let's talk about the problem.

There are some bad people coming across the border. Some of them are from Central America. The President is right about that. We have gang members, drug dealers, criminals, child sex traffickers, and adult sex traffickers. Yet all of the people coming across are not bad people. They are coming because they are scared. I read an analysis the other day of a poll conducted by Vanderbilt University. It was the most expensive, thorough poll that one could do. They didn't call people on the telephones; they talked to people in person. It was a representative sample.

This poll found that between one-third and one-half of the people with whom they talked who lived in Central American countries—the so-called Northern Triangle countries—had been victims of crime within the past year, usually of extortion. That is the problem in these Central American countries—the gangs are running the countries. In many cases, the police and elected leadership are complicit. I mean, imagine how bad things would have to be for you to take your child and your spouse and decide "I am going to leave where I am and walk, with the clothes on my back, 500 to 1,000 miles to another country because that is how bad things are where I am right now." That is the case with many of the people in Central America.

I don't know the answer. I think we should start with a Presidential summit—not representatives of the President's but a Presidential summit of the President of the United States, President of Mexico Lopez Obrador, and the Presidents of the Northern Triangle countries. Let's see what we can do to try to solve this problem.

There is precedent for this. Back in the late 1990s and well into the next decade, we had a terrible problem with drug cartels and cocaine coming into this country from Colombia. We didn't solve that problem overnight. We solved it by working with Colombia to develop what we called then Plan Colombia. We sat down with the President of Colombia and said: We will work with you. We will even provide some of the funding in return for specific commitments—one being to stop growing cocoa leaves, for example. It has taken a decade, but we have not completely solved the problem. Yet, if you visit Colombia today, it is a different country.

Let me say again—and I will end on this note—that I am not anti-immigration, and I don't think most Americans are. We are a nation of immigrants, but illegal immigration undermines legal immigration. Some of my colleagues don't agree with that. They don't make the distinction between legal and illegal immigration. Some of my colleagues, I am convinced—and it is their right, for this is America; believe what you want—believe that illegal immigration is a moral good. I don't. I think illegal immigration is illegal, and I think it hurts our country. We are not going to solve this problem until we

control the flow of people from Central America, until we revise our asylum laws, and until we build a barrier.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. HAWLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to complete my remarks.

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

#### RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

Mr. HAWLEY. Madam President, I rise to discuss a new and growing fundamentalism—a fundamentalism of intolerance and bigotry that is spreading on our college campuses, in our university systems, and in the media. It is a fundamentalism that wraps itself in the language of tolerance but that is, in fact, a cloak for discrimination against people of faith. This new fundamentalism would undermine the most important constitutional guarantees and traditions of our Nation that have allowed us to live in civil peace and civil friendship for over 200 years, and that is the subject of my remarks this afternoon.

The latest example of this new fundamentalism of intolerance comes from Yale University—in particular, from Yale Law School—where we learned last week that Yale Law School had imposed a new policy that would block students who work for certain faith-based organizations from accessing resources that are available to all other students. Specifically, that policy would prohibit students from receiving school resources if they decided to work for an organization that takes religious faith into account when hiring. Unlike Federal law, Yale's policy, as announced, failed to include an exemption for religious organizations even though Federal law recognizes the rights of religious organizations to hire based on their faiths.

What we are talking about here is something very simple. Yale said to a group of students that if those in the group wanted to work for faith-based organizations, they would not be able to access the same funds or the same loan repayment programs that are offered to all other students who work for all other organizations. As to what Yale held out to students as being a neutral and generally available program for folks who chose to work in the public's interest either during the summer or after law school, Yale Law School, last week, said: Oh, no. It is not going to be available if you are a student of faith and choose to go to work for an organization that is faith-based and want to pursue its faith-based mission.

Ironically, this was done in the name of tolerance. Yale said it was trying to

foster a more tolerant environment. In fact, this is the most rank intolerance. It is flatout discrimination. It is discrimination against religious organizations and nonprofit organizations that are pursuing their good work and that are, in many instances, doing so without asking their clients to pay a single cent. It is discrimination on the basis of faith, pure and simple. It is discrimination against students of faith who want to go to public interest organizations that share their faith missions and who want to do good in the world by pursuing those beliefs while helping those who are in need. It is discrimination, at the end of the day and at the root of the matter, that rejects this country's commitment and our First Amendment's commitment to pluralism.

You know, our First Amendment is an extraordinary text. When enacted, it was the first of its kind in the world, and it makes an extraordinary commitment. It says that the people of this country have the right to pursue and to observe their religious beliefs, whatever they may be, so long as they do so in peace with one another. It is, as an old friend of mine once said, the right to be wrong. The First Amendment guarantees that every single American can pursue his or her most fundamentally held, deeply held religious beliefs so long as they don't harm other people. That doesn't mean we all have to agree on what our religious beliefs are. It doesn't mean we have to agree on the outcomes our religious creeds lead us to.

Our First Amendment recognizes the right to be wrong, but this new fundamentalism, this new intolerance and bigotry does not recognize the right to be wrong. In fact, it wants to eliminate the right to be wrong. It wants to say that, no, we all have to agree. We all have to now share Yale's view of what an appropriate religious mission is. We now have to share Yale's view of what students should be doing with their time. We have to share Yale's view of what our deeply held beliefs, religious or otherwise, should be.

This sort of fundamentalism insists on a monochromatic view of the world that we all believe the same thing, that we all act in the same way, that we all behave the way our elites want us to behave. Well, I submit to you that is not the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. That is not our great tradition of pluralism. That is not what has allowed us to live in civil peace and civil friendship for these many years.

The question is, Why do Yale Law School and other institutions pursue policies like this? Well, it is not because of the law. Let's be clear about that. In fact, Federal law and, indeed, our Constitution prohibit precisely this kind of targeting of people of faith for disfavor. Just in 2017, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in a case called *Trinity Lutheran* that policies that target the religious for special disabilities based on their religious status are unconstitu-

tional. Indeed, as I said earlier, Federal law explicitly prohibits the targeting of individuals for their religious faith.

No, Yale Law School is not enacting this policy because the law requires it; they are enacting this policy because they no longer believe in the right to be wrong. They no longer believe that our religious faith is so fundamental, is so significant, and is so meaningful that we ought to be allowed to pursue it peacefully, in harmony with one another.

You know, Yale said of their policy that "the law school cannot prohibit a student from working for an employer who discriminates"—that is their understanding of what religious organizations do when they ask that the members of the organization share the same faith; they call that discrimination—"the law school cannot prohibit a student from working for an employer who discriminates, but that is not a reason why Yale Law School should bear any obligation to fund that work."

Well, Yale Law School can certainly pursue its own beliefs, its own objectives, and its own values, but why should they be doing it with Federal taxpayer money? That is my question.

Yale University receives millions of dollars in Federal taxpayer subsidies every year, which they use to pad their multibillion-dollar endowment. Yale Law School, this seat of privilege, does not have to accept this money from the Federal Government—I submit to you, is not entitled to this money from the Federal Government if they are going to engage in patterns of discrimination targeted at religious students and religious organizations for special disfavor.

So I propose this: If Yale Law School and Yale University want to pursue a policy of discrimination towards religious believers, they may certainly do so, but they may not do it with Federal taxpayer money.

You know, Yale said at the end of last week that they would add an exemption now. They said they would add an exemption for religious organizations and religious believers. We haven't seen that exemption yet. I notice that it took days of pressure and outcry for them to come forward with this. I hope they will add an exemption. I hope they will stop targeting religious students for special disfavor. But what I hope above all is this: I hope that Yale Law School and Yale University will recommit themselves to our proud tradition of pluralism, of diversity, of the right to be wrong, which has been the basis for our civic friendship, for our civic peace, for the extraordinary diversity of thought and belief we so cherish in this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to complete my remarks before the lunch recess.

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

#### SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

Ms. ERNST. Madam President, I rise today to focus on a serious issue that has plagued our society and impacted the lives of so many people across our great Nation: sexual assault.

During my time at Iowa State University, I served as a volunteer counselor at a crisis center that provided shelter and support to survivors of abuse and sexual assault. I heard so many gut-wrenching stories of women and of men fleeing domestic abusers, suffering not just physically but emotionally and spiritually. Taking calls on our hotline from people who had been raped and sexually abused was absolutely heartbreaking.

Abuse is not something you can just simply forget; it stays with you forever. And I know this personally. As a survivor and as a Senator, I feel it is important to be a voice for the thousands of victims across Iowa and so many more across our Nation who have fallen prey to sexual assault, to rape, to harassment, and other forms of abuse. Our country is facing a mental health crisis, and one cannot help but feel that these issues are all too often interwoven into the stories of so many Americans.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. As lawmakers, it is a stark reminder that we must take a long, hard look at how we combat this problem and take real steps to confront sexual assault in our society.

Just last week, with my colleagues Senator GRASSLEY, Senator GILLIBRAND, and others, we reintroduced a bipartisan bill to combat sexual assault on our college and university campuses. Our bipartisan measure will make campuses in Iowa safer and ensure victims are fairly heard by changing the way our universities handle sexual assault cases.

But it is not just these young men and women at these institutions who have been victimized. Like so many of you, I was horrified—absolutely horrified—to hear of the crimes committed by Larry Nassar, the USA Gymnastics doctor who abused hundreds of young athletes. The actions of Nassar and the individuals and institutions that facilitated and then protected his behavior are inexcusable.

The cases were also symptomatic of broader problems our society faces on sexual assault, rape, harassment, and abuse, leaving women and men, young and old, vulnerable. These types of failures are the reasons I have worked with my colleagues in Congress on reforms to ensure sexual misconduct is reported, responded to, taken seriously, and ideally prevented. For instance, we introduced a bill to require the governing bodies of U.S. amateur athletic organizations to immediately report sex abuse allegations to local or Federal law enforcement or a child welfare agency.

But the work doesn't end with our educational and athletic institutions; we must challenge people to do better



to protect people from these horrendous actions. In the case of the military, the Department of Defense should take a stronger posture in terms of preventing sexual assault within its ranks. I say this as a former company commander and a retired lieutenant colonel. While there have been concrete steps taken to improve the safety of our servicemembers, there is more that we can and should do to protect our men and women in uniform and change the overall culture.

The message I hear all too often is that victims in our armed services have a fear of retaliation. Folks, this is absolutely unacceptable. Those who report sexual assault should not fear coming forward, and those who retaliate against individuals should be punished to the full extent of the law. I helped author a bill to make retaliation its own unique offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and fortunately for our servicemembers, this bill is now law.

It is my hope that Congress can continue to work on legislation that addresses these issues.

While my personal story certainly does play a role in my passion for change, so also do the stories and faces of men and women back home in Iowa, every single one of them, with that face, with that name, with that heart, and with that soul. It is their stories that push me to want to make real and lasting change. Whether it is working with Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN, ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act or fighting to reduce the abuse of females in custody through legislation with Senators BOOKER and BLUMENTHAL, combating sexual assault should be bipartisan and something we all can agree on.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues toward ending sexual assault once and for all. This issue will continue to plague us until we come together and take concrete steps to address it. We all can and must do better.

This month, as we raise awareness of sexual assault, I hope to see this body taking real and lasting action.

I yield the floor.

#### RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:43 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m., and was reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. CAPITO).

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Domenico nomination?

Mr. INHOFE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 57, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 66 Ex.]

#### YEAS—57

Alexander	Fischer	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Bennet	Graham	Portman
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hawley	Roberts
Boozman	Hoeven	Romney
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Burr	Inhofe	Rubio
Capito	Isakson	Sasse
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Jones	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sinema
Cramer	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Manchin	Thune
Cruz	McConnell	Tillis
Daines	McSally	Toomey
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young

#### NAYS—42

Baldwin	Hassan	Rosen
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Sanders
Brown	Hirono	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Smith
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Coons	Markey	Tester
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Udall
Duckworth	Merkley	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murphy	Warner
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Peters	Whitehouse
Harris	Reed	Wyden

#### NOT VOTING—1

Booker

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Patrick R. Wyrick, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma.

Mitch McConnell, Johnny Isakson, Roger F. Wicker, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, Pat Roberts, Roy Blunt, Deb Fischer, David Perdue, Todd Young, John Thune, Mike Rounds, Steve Daines, John Hoeven, Thom Tillis.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Patrick R. Wyrick, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 53, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 67 Ex.]

#### YEAS—53

Alexander	Fischer	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blackburn	Graham	Risch
Blunt	Grassley	Roberts
Boozman	Hawley	Romney
Braun	Hoeven	Rounds
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Isakson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Tillis
Cruz	McSally	Toomey
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Enzi	Murkowski	Young
Ernst	Paul	

#### NAYS—46

Baldwin	Heinrich	Sanders
Bennet	Hirono	Schatz
Blumenthal	Jones	Schumer
Brown	Kaine	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Sinema
Cardin	Klobuchar	Smith
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Manchin	Tester
Coons	Markey	Udall
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Feinstein	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Harris	Reed	
Hassan	Rosen	

#### NOT VOTING—1

Booker

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 53, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Patrick R. Wyrick, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

#### MAIDEN SPEECH

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, it is an honor to speak on the