

His fellow officers remembered him as a man who was drawn to service because of his desire to help, someone who always knew the risks inherent in the job but never let that deter him from doing what needed to be done.

One colleague who spoke at the memorial remembered Corporal Groves as someone who frequently asked, where do you need me to be? He always wanted to be in the spot where he could be most effective, no matter the danger involved.

Even on the morning of March 13, as the weather was taking a turn for the worse, Corporal Groves knew there were drivers on the road who needed his help, and, as many law enforcement officers did that day, he bravely ventured out to offer assistance. This quality makes for a great law enforcement officer but is sadly the quality that we most often take for granted.

We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Dan and to all first responders who are willing to put their lives on the line to assist those in times of need and a debt of gratitude to their families as well.

I know my colleagues in the Senate will join me in offering our thoughts and prayers to the family and friends of Corporal Groves and all those who defend that thin blue line.

As I have done too many times in this Chamber, I remember the words of LTC Dave Grossman, who said: “American law enforcement is the loyal and brave sheep dog, always standing watch for the wolf that lurks in the dark.”

I drive by the spot where Corporal Groves was killed at least two or three times a week, and he will always be in my prayers, along with his family, for his sacrifice.

It is my hope that the thoughts and prayers that we offer to those who wear the blue uniform will bring them comfort as they carry out their solemn duties.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

ATTORNEY GENERAL WILLIAM BARR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, well, if anyone wonders whether Attorney General Barr is a straight shooter, this week, we got our answer.

Yesterday, at the Senate Appropriations Committee, the country saw another disconcerting performance by the Attorney General. In the face of serious questions surrounding the release of the Mueller report, the Attorney General did exactly what President

Trump wanted: He dodged questions, peddled a conspiracy theory, and, like the President, lobbed baseless accusations. It is clear that for Mr. Barr, the title he holds is far less important than the boss he serves.

What he did not say is that Russia attacked our democracy, as all 17 Agencies of our intelligence community have confirmed. What he did not say is that the intelligence community concluded that the Russians infiltrated our democracy to help Donald Trump. What he also didn't say is why he continues to wait on releasing the Mueller report. It took him less than 48 hours to summarize over 300 pages but over 2 weeks, and counting, to release the report itself.

Instead of giving straight answers, Mr. Barr seems to be nothing more than a spokesperson for the President's campaign. He seems more like the President's Press Secretary than the Attorney General. He is even using the President's own tactics: Admit nothing. Deny everything. Make counter-accusations.

Many of us tried to give Mr. Barr a chance, but after this week's performance, it is clear as day he and the President are working off the same playbook and planning to withhold crucial facts from the American people.

What is really important is this: When Attorney General Barr issues his report, his objectivity will be in total doubt. No one will believe, when he redacts large parts of the report, that it was done on the merits; people will believe he redacted parts of the report to help President Trump. How will the American people be able to trust Mr. Barr, and how will the American people be able to believe that his version of the report is the real version when he has been so, so partisan and was willing to peddle FOX News conspiracy theories before the Appropriations Committee yesterday?

When Mr. Barr was first nominated as Attorney General, the question posed to him was, would he be part of the Trump legal team or an independent agent of the law? I think we have our answer, as we watch him echo President Trump's statements and enable President Trump's worst instincts. Whether it is defending the administration's dangerous healthcare lawsuit or perpetuating conspiracy theories, Mr. Barr is acting more like a member of the President's campaign than the independent Attorney General he is supposed to be.

Mr. Barr is letting down thousands—tens of thousands—of hard-working people at the Justice Department. They are doing their job. When someone is given real information that Russia interfered with our elections, of course they are supposed to look into it. That is part of their job. For Mr. Barr to label this as spying, echoing some of the worst conspiracy theorists in the country, he loses all credibility, and that credibility is vital because he will be issuing a report with redactions.

When Mr. Barr issues his report, in terms of what should be redacted and what shouldn't, his objectivity will be in total doubt because of his performance yesterday.

Again, how will the American people be able to trust that the Attorney General has given them the most information he can rather than the least and that he has given them a full view of what happened rather than protecting the President? People are just not going to believe it.

The bottom line is that yesterday's performance calls into complete question the objectivity and even the judgment of the Attorney General. He does not seem to be an independent actor pursuing the rule of law. Rather, he seems to be somebody simply ready to help the President no matter what the price.

H.R. 268

Mr. President, on another matter, disaster relief, it is an absolute travesty that this Chamber is recessing without a compromise on much needed funding for disaster relief.

From the start, Democrats have supported an “all of the above” approach to helping every part of America that is struggling from natural disasters. We need to help everyone hurt last year and everyone hurt this year—everyone hurt in Puerto Rico, everyone hurt in the Midwest, everyone hurt in Florida, and everyone hurt in Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia. In the American tradition, everyone comes together when we have disasters, and we help everyone.

Our Republican friends seem to have a different view. They want disaster relief that explicitly denies Puerto Rico the help it needs, even though they are American citizens like everybody else. They heard President Trump's temper tantrum at their lunch a few Tuesdays back, and they have obeyed. This is un-American. We should not be picking and choosing who gets disaster relief.

When Americans suffer, we all step in. We all help. President Trump does not believe that, but where are our Senators who are standing up for this principle? The compassion of the American people is much greater than President Trump's small-minded contempt for the people of Puerto Rico. The Senate, particularly Senators from the disaster States who need that money, ought to have the courage to resist it instead of making up stories and pointing fingers of blame.

Republicans have refused to present a serious solution that can pass the House and the Senate. We all know that if Puerto Rico is not treated equally, it will not be seen on the floor of the House. We all know that the Governor of Puerto Rico has said that the solution Republicans are supporting is not adequate for Puerto Rico. We all know that.

It is a tragedy that the Republican leadership in this Chamber has refused to help American citizens before going into recess. They own the mess they

are creating across America, and with each passing day, the American people see it.

TAX REFORM

Mr. President, tax day is coming up, and we have seen another travesty of the Republican Senate.

When the Republicans pushed their tax scam, it was sold as a “middle-class miracle.” They promised it would prioritize middle-class families. President Trump and others promised Americans would get a \$4,000 raise every year. That is what President Trump promised about his tax cuts. He said that his tax cuts for the very wealthy and the big corporations would benefit every American to the tune of \$4,000 a year. Unsurprisingly, this Republican tax scam has now defaulted on its promise to lift up average American families.

For too many Americans expecting a tax refund, they have gotten nothing or worse. After this tax season, the jig is up.

In fairness, there is one part of America that has made a killing—the very wealthy. Indeed, 83 percent of the benefits in the Republican tax bill will eventually go to the top 1 percent of earners, and the American people know it. A recent poll shows more than 60 percent of Americans believe the wealthy and corporations—big corporations—have been helped by the tax law. They are right.

Unfortunately, corporations aren’t using their windfalls as our Republican friends promised. They are not boosting worker pay, by and large, or increasing benefits or creating jobs. According to a recent survey, 84 percent of companies say they have not changed their plans because of the tax law.

What are they doing with the money they got? They are spending billions in windfall on record corporate stock buybacks, not benefiting their workers, not benefiting their community but benefiting the CEOs of the corporations, because the shares generally go up, and benefiting the top 10 percent of America who own 85 percent of all the stocks.

Unfortunately, this story doesn’t end in making the rich richer. American workers are suffering while those same corporate executives and the very wealthy shareholders cash in.

Take the case of CSX, a freight rail company spending billions of dollars on stock buybacks after benefiting from the tax law. Just last week, we heard CSX announce that they are laying off 100 workers in Kentucky, Leader McConnell’s own backyard—not a \$4,000 raise but a pink slip. You would think with all of these tax benefits that workers would benefit. It doesn’t seem to be happening. That story that happened in Kentucky can be repeated throughout the country.

It is hard to look at these examples with a straight face and say that the middle class factored at all into the Republican tax bill. It was a trick—no trickle down, just a trick.

As Americans finish their filings this year, they will know exactly who to blame if they see their taxes go up. They will know who to blame if they don’t get a refund or if they owe the IRS.

The tax bill is already a stunningly unpopular piece of legislation. I don’t recall a single Republican campaigning on it. It shows they weren’t proud of it. After this tax season, the Republican tax bill will be even further crystallized in the minds of everyday Americans as a scam that left them out to dry while soaking the ultrawealthy with even more wealth.

NOMINATION OF DAVID BERNHARDT

Mr. President, on Mr. Bernhardt, yesterday, I sat down with David Bernhardt, President Trump’s choice for Secretary of the Interior, and I pressed him on some things that we should all know before we vote on his confirmation.

I asked Mr. Bernhardt: Do you agree that climate change is real, caused by humans, and that we must act? I asked Mr. Bernhardt if he will commit to not opening up the waters off our coasts to harmful drilling, even off the coasts of States opposed to such drilling, and what he will do about his well-documented web of conflicting interests. I got no answers to these questions.

I remind all of my colleagues on the Atlantic coast that, again, I asked him to at least commit that he will not do drilling off the shores of States that didn’t want drilling off their shores. He would not commit to that, and there is word that there is a plan in the Interior Department to allow that to happen.

This is the same administration that promised to clean the swamp and rid Washington of corruption. Yet it is a twisted parody to think that President Trump wants an oil and gas lobbyist to lead the Department of the Interior. What a contradiction. What a betrayal.

It doesn’t stop there. Bernhardt reportedly participated in efforts to launch a White House climate denial panel, the sole purpose of which was to rebuke accepted science. We cannot allow the work of our Federal Agencies to fall into the hands of people like this.

It is hard to imagine someone whose background is so at odds with the Department’s mission as Bernhardt’s. In good conscience, I cannot vote in favor of his confirmation. For the same reasons, I urge all of my fellow Senators, particularly those along the coasts, to vote against this nomination to protect their shoreline and their beaches.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

REMEMBERING FRITZ HOLLINGS

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak on behalf of Senator Hollings’ passing, along with my colleague Senator Scott from South Carolina.

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

Mr. GRAHAM. Thank you.

Mr. President, Senator SCOTT and I have come to the floor today to recognize a legend in South Carolina and this body, Senator Fritz Hollings, who passed away on April 6 in Isle of Palms, SC. He was 97. He loved Isle of Palms. That was his place to be.

He was born in Charleston, SC, in 1922. He graduated from the Citadel in 1942. He attended the University of South Carolina School of Law. He served as an artillery officer in World War II, earned a Bronze Star, and finished with the rank of captain.

He was in the State house of representatives from 1949 to 1954. He became our Governor in 1958 at age 36. He shepherded South Carolina through the turbulent times of the civil rights movement. He urged the legislature to follow the law after *Brown v. Board of Education*.

He established the best technical college system in the country. We say that with great pride. It was Fritz Hollings who was the father of the South Carolina technical college system, which has resulted in thousands of jobs being created and educational opportunity for millions in our State.

When he was a Senator, they called him the Senator from central casting. He looked the part, he acted the part, and he sounded the part. He was the junior Senator for 36 years, I think, in South Carolina, with Senator Thurmond being the senior Senator. When Senator Thurmond retired, I was honored to be able to take his place, and Fritz was my senior Senator for 2 years.

I just want to thank him and recognize what he did for me to become established in the Senate. He was kind. He was gracious. We did not agree on policy, but he could not have been a better friend.

I spent half of my time trying to interpret what he was saying on the floor. I caught about every third word. He has this Charleston accent that even I couldn’t understand at times.

Nobody enjoyed their job more than Senator Hollings. Nobody was ever better at it. When it came to South Carolina, Senator Hollings was able to move mountains. He was the chairman of the Commerce Committee and the Budget Committee.

He was one of the great environmentalists of our time. The ACE Basin in South Carolina is a beautiful place along the coast where three major rivers come together. It was Senator Hollings who established that, now and forever to be preserved. He helped establish NOAA, which has done so much for our oceans.

He was part of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Balanced Budget Act. He was always trying to keep our fiscal house in order.

He was a champion of the military. Being a World War II veteran himself, he always looked out for those in uniform. Senator Thurmond and Hollings were giants of their time, and they