

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 crystalized 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

really made a difference for our State and for the country as a whole.

When it comes to his distinguished career in the Senate, Fritz Hollings was at the top of anybody's list. He served for 38 years.

He was a tireless advocate for the hungry—for hunger. He was trying to combat hunger and poverty before it was cool. He traveled all over this world to try to spread the good news about America.

After Senate life, he established the Hollings Center for International Dialogue to create exchanges in dialogue between the United States and mostly Muslim populations. He was ahead of his time there. For us to win this war on terror, we have to side with people in the faith who reject radical Islam, which the overwhelming majority of people reject, and Fritz understood that.

He was a great husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He was my friend.

He had the eighth longest tour of duty in the U.S. Senate in the history of the body. Yesterday, with Senator SCOTT's help, we passed a resolution unanimously—every Senator signed on—honoring the service of Senator Hollings.

There are so many friends of his in this body. The staff and former Senators all will tell you that Fritz was a force of nature. He had strong opinions. He would share them with you whether you asked him or not. He knew what he was talking about. He was prepared. He was a fighter for his causes. He was willing to die for his country. Now he has passed, and the legacy for the people of South Carolina will be enduring.

Our beaches and our oceans and our mountains and our rivers are better off for his service. Our educational system stands out on the technical school side because of his vision. He shepherded us through very turbulent times during the civil rights movement, where other States were literally on fire. South Carolina had problems, but they paled in comparison to most because of Senator Hollings' leadership.

He was a lawyer. He loved the law. He was my friend. Senator SCOTT is from Charleston, and both of us have a tough act to follow when it comes to being Senators in South Carolina. Senator Hollings' way was to fight for your causes, work across the aisle, know what you are talking about before you speak, and try to do it with good humor. What more can you say? From the time he was a young man in Charleston until he passed away on April 6, he was always fighting for his causes. He loved his State. He delivered for the people of South Carolina.

When it comes to the Senate, he was a legend. His presence was felt up here. His legacy is enduring. He fought the good fight. He was a faithful servant, and now he will enjoy an eternal rest. To his family, I know you are grieving, but you have much to be proud of. To the people of South Carolina, it is not

about being a Republican or a Democrat in terms of service; it is about how much you love your State. No Republican and no Democrat ever loved South Carolina more than Fritz Hollings, and no Senator has ever made more of a difference than Senator Hollings.

So Senator SCOTT and I will do our best to keep up this good man's legacy. We will have different policy choices, and we will go down a different political path, but we will be ever mindful of the way we do our job. The way we do our job matters as much as what you do. Let it be said that when it came to doing his job, Fritz Hollings did it professionally, effectively, and with love and passion.

I now yield to Senator SCOTT of South Carolina.

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Mr. President, I thank Senator GRAHAM for yielding to me. Without any question, I think Senator GRAHAM did such a great job of distilling the life and some of the accomplishments of Senator Hollings. Without any question, I cannot imagine Mr. GRAHAM spending 36 years or so as a junior Senator from the great State of South Carolina because of the long tenure of the senior Senator, Strom Thurmond, whose seat you have. I have the privilege of being in the seat of Senator Hollings, who, of course, is from Charleston, as I am from Charleston. I think of the commonalities we all share as South Carolinians, and certainly ones who are not—all of us from South Carolina understand how hard it is to understand those folks who speak in the old Charleston brogue, the language of Senator Hollings and folks like our cousin, Arthur Ravenel, who shares the same inflection in his voice. Senator GRAHAM brought back some very fond memories with his thoughts.

To the family, the Hollings family, we certainly extend our condolences. I had the chance to speak with Michael, his son, just the other day, and the family is doing well. The family is encouraged by the outpouring of love and support from so many folks from the Senate and throughout the country because Senator Hollings was not only a South Carolina Senator, he was America's Senator. He spent a lot of time doing a lot of things that made a significant difference.

I do want to put a little meat on the bones. As Senator GRAHAM has covered so much of what I would have said, I will not say it twice. I will, perhaps, drill into a few of the times of service Senator Hollings had.

As we think through the 1960s and as we read through the 1960s, we read through a time of volatility, a time where our Nation is clashing with one another, where the races were so divided. In the Deep South, we perhaps led in that direction of conflict. We have a provocative history on race in South Carolina. Without any question, Senator Hollings did what so many others did not do, which is, he led for a peaceful integration of what is today

one of America's great public universities, Clemson University. I say that as a South Carolina fan, without any question, but it is no doubt that Harvey Gantt, being the first African American in Clemson to graduate from Clemson, was a monumental shift in southern education, one we can all celebrate today.

I went to church with Harvey Gantt's family for 20-plus years at Morris Street Baptist Church in Charleston, SC, and I will say that, perhaps as a part of the springboard of controversy and challenge and conflict, it led to a level of greatness in Harvey Gantt's life as he took arrows that most of us are unfamiliar with. Senator Hollings—then-Governor Hollings—took arrows that some would be unfamiliar with in making the decision to ask for and to encourage and support a peaceful transition in a State at the time broiled in controversy. Harvey Gantt went on, of course, to be the first African-American mayor of the city of Charlotte, NC.

In thinking about Senator GRAHAM's comments as it relates to the technical college system in South Carolina, how Senator Hollings birthed that for our State, that may sound like a good accomplishment, but for a State that faced extinction from an economic standpoint, when industries were leaving our State, the technical college system became the springboard, once again, for the great city of South Carolina to see a rebirth of our economic systems. What we have today is a manufacturing haven whose foundation is the technical college system. When we think about companies like BMW, Boeing, Volvo, Mercedes, Bosch, Michelin, Bridgestone, all these companies became a part of the corporate family in South Carolina because we had a healthy, thriving technical college system born because of the leadership of Senator Hollings.

Senator Hollings not only succeeded in public life, but he also succeeded in his private life. I will tell you that I cannot imagine the reunion between Senator Hollings and his wife, Peatsy, of over 40 years. I can't imagine the celebration that is happening in Heaven as those two are being reunited and spending time talking about what has occurred over their lifetimes and the things they had to see.

There is an amazing Greek proverb that I want to end with, as it relates to Senator Hollings, that says that a society grows when old men plant trees whose shade they know they will never sit under.

Senator GRAHAM and I, the youngsters, comparatively speaking to Senator Hollings and Senator Thurmond—we are sitting under the shade of that tree. Our Nation benefits from people who have the wisdom to look forward, beyond their lifetime, and create a country where we all benefit.

#### TAX REFORM

Mr. President, before I yield the floor, I do want to spend a few minutes