Mr. Collins is a graduate of Harvard and of Stanford Law School. He has held clerkships on both the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court for Justice Scalia. He served at the Department of Justice as Associate Deputy Attorney General and as Attorney-Advisor in the Office of Legal Counsel. He spent 4 years as an assistant U.S. attorney. He has complemented that experience with more than 20 years of well-regarded work in private practice.

Mr. Collins has developed a reputation for legal excellence. The American Bar Association rates him well qualified for this new post. Our colleagues on the Judiciary Committee reported him favorably here to the floor.

I hope my colleagues will join me as we vote later today to confirm this fine nominee.

Following the Collins nomination, we will consider four more nominations to district courts around our Nation: Howard Nielson of Utah, Stephen Clark of Missouri, Carl Nichols of the District of Columbia, and Kenneth Bell of North Carolina. Each has been tapped by the President to fill important vacancies. Collectively, they represent decades of experience in private practice and decades more in public service, and they come before us with the high esteem of their legal peers.

Take the case of Mr. Nielson, whose nomination we will consider first. Former circuit judge Mike Luttig, for whom he served as law clerk, said: ''Howard Nielson may well be the single most qualified person to serve on the federal bench that I have ever had the privilege to know.''

It would be hard to come up with a more unequivocal endorsement, so I hope each of my colleagues will join me in support of Mr. Nielson, along with each of the nominees who will follow him this week.

I have noticed that a few of my colleagues across the aisle have expressed some displeasure that the Senate has recently been spending some time on nominations. I would remind our friends on the other side that not so long ago, thoroughly qualified district judge nominees were the kinds of nominations that would sail through the Senate floor by voice vote and in big groups.

Since this particular President was inaugurated in 2017, this Democratic minority has largely taken a different view. They have chosen to deploy an unprecedented level of systematic, across-the-board delaying tactics. The effect has been the need for cloture votes and individual consideration for all kinds of uncontroversial nominations, where it hadn't been a tradition in the Senate in the past. So more than 2 years into this consideration, we are left with too many vacancies still unfulfilled and a backlog of qualified nominees who need considering.

Confirming unobjectionable individuals continues to take more of the Senate's time than it should, but this obstruction is not going to deter us. We will be here as long as it takes. We will keep confirming highly qualified nominees to the Federal bench. We will keep putting the President's team in place and giving Americans the government they actually voted for.

DISASTER RELIEF

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on another matter, as I have discussed many times on the floor, powerful natural disasters have devastated communities across America. Many are still in need of aid as they struggle to rebuild.

My colleagues know all too well the destruction that was brought to States across the Southeast, the gulf coast, and Puerto Rico by a bad hurricane season: tens of billions of dollars in damage to buildings and infrastructure and thousands of people left without shelter or access to clean water and electricity.

We remember the record wildfires that swept across our western regions, the tornadoes that tore through the Deep South, and the rampant flooding that sunk entire communities across the Midwest and affected many of my fellow Kentuckians as well.

We have seen the pain caused by nature's worst. Now it is time for Congress to finally—finally—demonstrate our commitment to America's best. It is time to deliver supplemental resources for the rebuilding efforts that, in many cases, have been inching—just inching—along for months. It is well past time to show the relief workers, the volunteers, and the families still picking up the pieces that we have their backs.

In recent days, important progress has been made to deliver on this overdue commitment. Chairman SHELBY, Ranking Member LEAHY, our colleagues on the Appropriations Committee, and their counterparts over in the House are continuing their hard work to reach a bipartisan solution that meets the most pressing needs of all of these affected communities. That includes promising steps toward bipartisan agreement to deliver critical resources to address the ongoing humanitarian crisis at our southern border. The status quo is completely—completely—dysfunctional, so I am glad the agreement seems to be converging on more resources.

I expect to discuss our progress in greater detail as the week unfolds, but it is my sincere hope that in both parties and in both Chambers we will finally—finally—be able to reach a meaningful consensus that can become law and deliver on the priorities of communities that are in need all across our country.

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.

ABORTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, over the last year, women's reproductive rights have come under a new level of assault. From Alabama to Missouri, to Texas, to Georgia, and beyond, over 300 new restrictions have been proposed in 39 States—bans on abortion as early as 6 weeks, so-called heartbeat bills, arbitrary waiting periods, and restrictions on clinics so severe that they force any center that performs an abortion to close down, leaving a few of our States with no more than a single clinic.

Ten such bills have now passed into law. These restrictions fly in the face of public opinion. The vast majority of the American public don't want to see Roe overturned or a woman's right to choose curtailed so severely as to render it meaningless.

I understand why many of my colleagues here in the Senate don't want to associate themselves with these extreme anti-abortion laws. Some of them have even publicly opposed the law passed by Alabama's Republicans, including the House Republican leader and the President. But let's face it. There is a sleight of hand going on here, because while many of my colleagues don't support these policies out loud, they are, at the same time, confirming judges to the Federal bench with horrendous records on women's rights, many of whom hold extreme views on Roe. These judges, in many ways, have just as much power as State legislatures to restrict a woman's right to choose and limit access to contraceptives through the courts.

Just look at some of the judges the Republican Senate has approved in the past 2 years with almost unanimous support on the Republican side. Look at Leonard Steven Grasz, who wrote about the ''moral bankruptcy that's the legacy of Roe v. Wade.''

What about Amy Coney Barrett? She said Roe v. Wade had been ''erroneously decided'' and called the ACA's birth control provisions ''an assault on religious liberty.'' A lot of these judges are not just against abortion. They are against contraception. She is on the bench for life. Amy Coney Barrett, who said that, is on the bench for life and on President Trump's short list for the Supreme Court.

Let's not forget Justice Kavanaugh, who refused to affirm that Roe was settled law and now sits on the one body with the power to overturn it.

Just last week, Republicans confirmed Wendy Vitter, who said Planned

Parenthood kills 150,000 a year and once pushed the idea that contraceptives cause cancer.

We have more coming down the pipeline. Soon the Senate may consider the nomination of Stephen Clark, who belonged to an organization called Lawyers for Life. He once compared Roe v. Wade to the Dred Scott case.

So Republicans are playing a cynical long game here. They refuse to comment on the anti-abortion bills but are content to install anti-choice judges across the Federal bench who will uphold many of these very same laws. It is hypocritical. It is sort of like that old routine. They are saying: No, no, no, I am not for these laws. Judges, approve them. I am supporting judges who approve them.

It is not fair, it is not right, it is cynical, and the American people are going to get wise to it. We are watching the endgame of a long and concerted campaign by the far right to erode a woman's right to choose through the courts. From the moment that Roe v. Wade was decided in 1973, the most extreme elements of the Republican Party have plotted its demise.

The Federalist Society was founded with the intent of cultivating a generation of judges loyal to conservative causes. Its founder, Leonard Leo, was, above all, an anti-choice advocate—some would say, even further, a fanatic. Now that they have a Republican President and a Republican Senate, the Federalist Society can push judge after judge after judge onto the bench with barely a delay and with barely a discussion, where they will have the power to severely curtail a woman's right to choose.

My Republican friends who profess opposition or indifference to these extreme anti-abortion bills while voting for hard-right, anti-Roe judges are engaging in subterfuge, if not hypocrisy.

CHINA

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, finally, there is a topic I have discussed before—the administration's moves to block access to telecommunications equipment to China's state-controlled and state-backed firms, like Huawei. I firmly back these measures. Our defense, law enforcement, and intelligence officials have publicly testified that Huawei and other Chinese telecom companies pose a national threat to the security of the United States. Their technology could allow China to spy on Americans, steal their data, and otherwise conduct espionage.

Also, there is another point. China has taken advantage of us. There is a huge consensus now in America that that has happened. We didn't have that consensus even 5 years ago, but whether it is business or labor, average American citizens, Democrats, or Republicans, everyone agrees that China takes advantage, and one of the main ways they take advantage is they don't let our companies that have top-line products sell them in China, except under restrictions that make it almost impossible for them to do it. Our major tech companies are excluded from China, but China, at the same time, can sell anything it wants here.

''Reciprocity'' should be our watch word. If Google or Facebook or any of our other companies can't sell in China, their top companies shouldn't sell here until they let us in. That is what has happened with Huawei, in addition to the national security concerns, and it makes sense.

So I say to the Commerce Department: Stay strong.

We are now talking about some 90-day delay. I hope this is not a prelude to what we did with ZTE, when we stood tough at the beginning. It had an effect, and then we backed off.

President Trump, don't back off on Huawei.

Commerce Secretary Ross, don't back off on Huawei.

Secretary of Treasury Mnuchin and Ambassador Lighthizer, stay strong.

This will get the Chinese to play fair; talking won't. Tariffs are one tool; this is another. We need all the tools in our toolbox to get China to play fair.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Daniel P. Collins, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

TARIFFS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, Friday's announcement that the administration had reached an agreement to remove steel and aluminum tariffs on Canada and Mexico was great news for American consumers, producers, and workers. Mexican and Canadian retaliatory tariffs on U.S. products have already been lifted. That is a big deal for American producers, especially for farmers and ranchers, who were hit the hardest by Mexico and Canada's retaliatory tariffs.

Friday's agreement is also important because it removes a significant roadblock to passage of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade agreement. With the aluminum and steel tariff settlement and labor reforms recently adopted by the Mexican Government, two major Democratic objections to passage of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada agreement have been addressed. Now it is time for the House Democratic leadership to indicate its willingness to take up the agreement in the near future.

The U.S.-Mexico-Canada agreement would boost almost every sector of the American economy, from automotive manufacturing, to digital services, to dairy farming. It would create 176,000 new jobs and increase wages for workers. It is time to take up this agreement. As I said, the U.S.-Mexico-Canada free-trade agreement would be a boon for U.S. producers and U.S. workers.

This is the kind of stuff we should be spending our time on in Washington—measures that grow our economy, increase opportunity, and improve life for the American people. That is what Republicans have been working on. Our policies have helped produce the lowest unemployment rate in 50 years and more jobs and higher wages for workers.

Unfortunately, my colleagues across the aisle seem more interested in relitigating the 2016 election and accelerating their party's rapid move toward the radical fringe left.

While I realize the Democrats are disappointed with the results of the 2016 Presidential election, it is time for them to accept the fact that they lost. It has been more than 2 years now, and Democrats are still more focused on opposing this President than on getting things done for the American people.

When Democrats do get around to talking about legislation, too often, it is proposals from the radical fringe left, which is rapidly swallowing up the Democratic mainstream. Take the Green New Deal, the Democrats' plan for a government takeover of a large section of the economy in the name of clean energy. The estimated price tag for this government takeover is between $51 trillion and $93 trillion over 10 years. To put that number in perspective, $93 trillion is more money than the U.S. Government has spent in its entire history, and $93 trillion is more money than the 2017 gross domestic product of the entire world.

How do Democrats plan to pay for this? Well, they don't actually have a plan. Their usual ''tax the rich'' solution won't work since taxing every wealthy American at a 100-percent rate wouldn't come anywhere close to paying for the Green New Deal. Should the Green New Deal ever come to pass, working Americans would face massive tax hikes for the privilege of having government dictate the design of their house and the type of their car.

Then, of course, there is the Democrats' plan for a government takeover of the Nation's healthcare. Under so-