

First, we have to pass the National Defense Authorization Act, which we are working on this week. All the subcommittees are passing their markups this week. We hope to move on that immediately. I believe that will get passed here without much controversy.

I know that leadership right now is talking about moving in a very intense manner, with a critical sense of urgency, to get this Defense appropriations bill done. I applaud those efforts. I want to support it in any way I can.

I call on everybody in this body to be supportive of making sure that we can have, for the third year in a row—this is not a partisan issue; this is about our men and women in uniform. Given that this month is Military Appreciation Month, what better time to face up to this potential and make sure that we don't have a continuing resolution come September 30 of this year. That is the least we can do for our women and men in uniform. And we can fulfill the responsibility our Founders laid out in the Declaration of Independence when they outlined those six reasons why we were coming together, and the No. 1 reason we had at that time was to provide for the security of the United States of America.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, first, before my colleague from Georgia leaves, I want to thank him for his strong statement on the fact that we have to do defense appropriations.

I know that the Presiding Officer certainly knows all about this, given her Active-Duty service on behalf of our Nation.

As he has pointed out, every service has been affected by this. Speaking for the U.S. Marine Corps, part of the Marine Caucus that we have here, and talking with Bob Neller, who is our retiring Commandant—he has pointed out specifically that they don't have enough to do—I mean, we are proud of the Marine Corps. I always say we do more with less, but this time, you can't do more with less and then less and then less, and that is precisely where we are.

I thank the Senator for making an outstanding statement. I join him in this plea on a bipartisan basis to get these appropriations bills done.

Thank you.

NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Madam President, I rise today, along with many of my colleagues, in recognition of National Mental Health Awareness Month.

We on the Senate Agriculture Committee have worked extensively on mental health issues, fighting for improved mental health services and mental health parity, especially in our rural and smalltown areas. We have made great strides over the years in improving access to mental health services and eliminating the stigma of seeking treatment. However, as we

continue to see violent tragedies around the country resulting from individuals with mental illness, or even solely looking at suicide rates, which continue to increase—let me point out that in Kansas, there were over 500 suicides in 2016 alone. If the figures were available, I am sure that would be increased, especially with the problems we have in farm country, where we are going through a very rough patch—a fifth year of prices below the cost of production. There is a lot of stress out there in farm country. All of this shows me that more can certainly be done to address the deficiencies in our current system.

Kansas has one suicide prevention lifeline crisis center, located in Lawrence, KS. That is to assist people experiencing mental health crises from the entire State. In many of our rural areas, we continue to struggle with providing adequate access to mental health services.

Those facts apply just for those patients who seek out care. Too many times, people struggling with mental health are either unaware that they can seek help, or they are simply unwilling to do so because of the stigma that is often associated with mental illness. That is why we need to take the opportunity not just this month but every day going forward to improve awareness and understanding about mental health.

The same can be said for addiction. On the Agriculture Committee, we are all proud to have played a role in the passage of the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act last year to help address the opioid crisis. However, Kansas is still facing significant challenges with meth addiction. We fought the good fight to eliminate meth labs in many of our States, and now the cartels in Mexico have much more virulence—if I can use that term—with regard to meth.

I am currently working on legislation to help extend the reach of important, often lifesaving treatments for addiction to folks in our rural areas. We can improve mental and behavioral well-being while continuing to reduce the stigma associated with seeking out mental health and addiction treatment.

Additionally, having the privilege of being the chairman of the Agriculture Committee and speaking for my ranking member, Senator STABENOW, as well, you have probably heard me say that we have been in a rough patch in farm country over the past several years. That is certainly true. However, those of us who represent farm country can be more reticent to discuss the toll these troubled times take on farmers, ranchers, growers, and their families, who work tirelessly each day to produce the food and fiber for the United States and a troubled and hungry world.

Farmers, ranchers, and growers face highly demanding working conditions on a good day but more especially dur-

ing a time of lower prices. As I have indicated, it is the fifth year of prices being below the cost of production. So we see mitigation payments coming out of the Department of Agriculture.

Historically, there have been efforts made by Congress to address these concerns, including the programs that took place during the 1980s farm crisis—I was in the House of Representatives at that particular time; those were very tough times—and recognition of this issue in the 2008 farm bill.

As we began the 2018 farm bill process, we looked for opportunities to address this pressing issue, and it led to renewal of the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network. Members on both sides of the aisle in the Capitol recognize the importance of a nationwide Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network. It provides support for all producers, farmers, ranchers, and their families through partnerships with organizations in their local communities. Local communities are stepping up, but in terms of getting that network applied, that is another story.

This network recognizes the State and local organizations that have been addressing behavioral health concerns for farmers and ranchers and authorizes grants to support the programs that assist those who are in crisis, especially during this month when we are addressing this topic.

We have just heard from the distinguished Senator from Georgia about the need to avoid a CR in terms of a national defense, and that is true, but in this particular case, it is authorized, but it is subject to appropriations.

On this particular issue, to prevent suicides and mental health illness from resulting in a tragedy, not only in our cities, not only in other States, but across our rural and smalltown areas, it is exceedingly important that we fund this so that we can get the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network up and running and provide the help they really need.

Thank you.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

CONFIRMATION OF DANIEL COLLINS

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I rise today in opposition to the nomination of Daniel Collins to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Mr. Collins had been nominated to a California seat on the Ninth Circuit over the objections of Senator HARRIS and myself. Neither Senator HARRIS nor I returned blue slips for Mr. Collins, yet the majority moved forward with his nomination, disregarding our concerns.

This vote on Mr. Collins follows on the heels of last week's vote on Kenneth Lee, another Ninth Circuit nominee who lacked blue slips from me and Senator HARRIS.

So, once again, we see the majority violating Senate norms and traditions by ignoring home-State Senators, including the Judiciary Committee's ranking member, and stacking the courts with ideologues.

This breakdown in Senate traditions is harmful to all of us, Democrats and Republicans. It is also unnecessary.

As I have highlighted before, Democratic Senators have been willing to work with the White House to find consensus picks for the circuit courts, but that willingness has been rebuffed by the Trump administration and disregarded by the majority.

The majority's decision to once again ignore blue slips is short-sighted. After all, what goes around comes around.

Senator HARRIS and I refused to return blue slips on Mr. Collins for several reasons.

I have used a bipartisan instate screening commission to vet potential nominees to California district and Ninth Circuit seats for my entire career. These are highly respected lawyers from throughout the State, and they have reviewed and recommended nominees from Democratic and Republican administrations.

My instate bipartisan commission raised concerns about Mr. Collins's rigidity, temperament, and history of taking positions in litigation for the purposes of overturning precedent and challenging legal boundaries.

The role of a judge is to be an impartial arbiter, not an advocate and not someone with an agenda, particularly an agenda of overturning precedent.

Based on this, I am concerned that Mr. Collins has not demonstrated and does not embody the characteristics that we expect of all Federal judges.

I also believe that Mr. Collins's record on women's reproductive rights, executive power, civil liberties, and criminal justice matters puts him far outside the judicial mainstream.

For example, Mr. Collins was a strong advocate for the Bush administration's use of military commissions to try enemy combatants held at Guantanamo Bay. He even went so far as to argue that the President's authority as Commander-in-Chief allowed him to bypass Congress and create these com-

missions without congressional approval.

Mr. Collins also wrote a law review piece in which he argued that *Miranda v. Arizona*, a longstanding Supreme Court precedent that protects the rights of individuals, should be overturned.

For the last decade, Mr. Collins has also defended numerous chemical and energy companies in lawsuits brought by homeowners, Tribes, and local governments. The plaintiffs in these lawsuits have argued that these companies contributed to climate change and its effects, such as increasing the severity of storms and causing sea levels to rise.

In several of these lawsuits, Mr. Collins argued that climate change is not even real. For example, in a case representing Shell Oil Company, Mr. Collins wrote that "climate change allegedly results from the aggregate effects of greenhouse gas emissions from billions of sources around the world accumulating in the global atmosphere over the course of centuries, and thus it cannot be attributed to . . . energy companies."

In addition, in questions for the record, he refused to acknowledge that climate change is real and that human activity contributes to it.

I understand that Mr. Collins was representing clients in these lawsuits, but he was the one who chose which arguments to make, including arguments that climate change is not real. We cannot have a judge on the Ninth Circuit who denies climate change and its impacts.

At his hearing, Mr. Collins was willing to answer questions from Republicans on his personal views, but not answer similar questions from Democrats.

For instance, when asked how he "feel[s] about the First Step Act," Mr. Collins said: "I think that the First Step Act . . . appeared to me to be a balanced approach to reform some of the sentencing provisions which seemed unduly harsh."

But when asked by Senator BLUMENTHAL whether he believed *Brown v. Board of Education* was correctly decided, Mr. Collins refused to answer.

Nominees should not answer Republican questions and evade Democratic ones, especially when it comes to answering questions about *Brown v. Board of Education*, a monumental case whose correctness cannot and should not be questioned and has been answered by previous Republican nominees, including Chief Justice Roberts.

Taken as a whole, I believe Mr. Collins is far outside the legal mainstream.

Given concerns about his temperament and commitment to upholding precedent and given the positions he has taken on executive power, criminal justice, and other matters that could come before the Ninth Circuit, I cannot support Mr. Collins.

I voted against Mr. Collins, and I urged my colleagues to do the same.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, on May 20, 2019, the Senate voted on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 201, Daniel P. Collins, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit. Due to travel delays, I missed this vote. However, I oppose confirming this nominee, and I would have voted against cloture if I were present.

TRIBUTE TO KEANON LOWE

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, today I want to recognize and honor Parkrose High School coach and security guard Keanon Lowe for his heroism during the school day on May 17, 2019.

When Mr. Lowe spotted an armed student in a classroom in the northeast Portland high school, he bravely tackled the student, wrestled away the gun, and held the student until police arrived. Mr. Lowe may have saved the lives of countless students, teachers, and administrators at Parkrose.

In Mr. Lowe's own words the day after the incident, "When I signed up to be a security guard, football and track and field coach for Parkrose High School, I did so to guide and coach young people whose shoes I had once been in. I had no idea that I would one day have to put my life on the line like I did yesterday for my students."

Mr. Lowe is no stranger to the spotlight. Before becoming the football and track coach at Parkrose, Mr. Lowe was a standout football player in Oregon at Jesuit High School and then the University of Oregon, U of O, "Go Ducks!"

As an U of O alumnus, I witnessed Mr. Lowe's standout play both in Autzen Stadium in Eugene and in the 2015 national championship game against the Ohio State University.

All Ducks fans know Mr. Lowe as a champion on the field, and now all of Oregon and the country, know him as a hero off the field.

Mr. Lowe's heroics saved the day on a Friday morning just before noon. Students, teachers, and administrators at Parkrose, as well as their loved ones, are incredibly grateful that Mr. Lowe prevented what could have been a tragedy in my hometown.

Sadly, far too many schools in my State and across America have not been so fortunate in the past few decades. Gun violence in schools has essentially created a "lockdown generation" of students whose happy memories of high school dances, games, plays, and other activities jostle alongside memories of lockdown drills and, in far too many instances, violent gunmen.

Again, in Mr. Lowe's own words, "I'm blessed to be alive and extremely happy that the students are safe. I'm not sure what's next, I haven't had the time to really think about it. But I am sure I want to be a part of the solution to school gun violence."