

us from doing something to actually protect them. Instead, they are going along, knees shaking, with President Trump's cruel lawsuit, and that is what every Republican in this Chamber—just about every Republican—has done.

President Trump has himself issued—also totally hypocritical—a laundry list of quotes in support of protections for preexisting conditions. He talks all the time about bringing down prescription drug costs while his administration actively pursues this lawsuit, which would raise the cost of drugs and eliminate protections for preexisting conditions.

How much hypocrisy can America tolerate? It is mind-bending. The hypocrisy is patently obvious. I don't care if you love President Trump. You should be calling him out for this hypocrisy, which will affect the vitality—God's most precious gift to us—the ability to live long and healthy and well. President Trump is trying to take it away, despite what he says to you, Trump supporters.

Senate Democrats will head to the steps of the Capitol to highlight what this lawsuit could mean to average Americans. My Republican friends should take note. The American people are keenly aware of which party is trying to take away their healthcare. Even if it happens through the courts in this Trump-supported lawsuit, they will know that congressional Republicans, by their silence—their meek, supine acquiescence—are complicit in the unraveling of our healthcare system. I believe the American people will hold them accountable at the ballot box if they don't change.

ELECTION SECURITY

Madam President, on election security, tomorrow the Senate will gather for a briefing by senior officials of the defense, law enforcement, and intelligence community on the threats facing our elections in 2020.

Russia has interfered in our elections. Everyone agrees with that. Our administration is doing nothing to stop it from occurring again in 2020, so we need a briefing by law enforcement on how serious the threat is—they have said “serious” in public statements—and what we are doing to stop it.

I am glad that Leader McConnell agreed to my request and has worked with us to schedule a briefing. It should dispel all doubt in this Chamber about the need to take action ahead of next year's Presidential elections.

I would say this: A briefing is important; a briefing is necessary, but it is by no means sufficient. We must then debate and adopt measures to protect our democracy and preserve the sanctity of our elections. Even though Leader McConnell has finally agreed to have this hearing, he has so far been content—once again, a legislative graveyard—to have the Senate do nothing—do nothing—when it comes to one of the greatest threats to our democracy, that a foreign power will reach in and interfere for its own purposes, not to help Americans.

Bipartisan bills exist. We could put them on the floor right now. This is not a partisan issue. Senators Rubio and Van Hollen have the DETER Act. Senators Menendez and Graham have the Russia sanctions bill. But all of these bills have languished, victims of Leader McConnell's legislative graveyard. We have many more options when it comes to election security—legislation from Senators Klobuchar and Warner, Feinstein and Wyden, Blumenthal and many others. It is time we move on these bills. As we continue to negotiate appropriations bills, we should include significant resources for election security. Nothing less than the vitality of and faith in our democracy is at stake.

There are not two sides to this issue. A foreign adversary attacked our democracy. I expect that Special Counsel Mueller's testimony next week will highlight once again that Russia's efforts to interfere in our democracy were sweeping and systematic.

What are we waiting for? What are we waiting for—for them to interfere again and for more Americans, whether they be Republican or Democrat or Independent, left, right, or center, to no longer believe this democracy is legit? For 243 years, since the Declaration of Independence and certainly since the signing of the Constitution a few years later, we have had faith in this democracy, even when the outcome isn't what we want. But that faith is already eroding in good part because foreign powers can interfere in our elections. We cannot—we cannot—let that happen, no matter who you are, what your politics are. But Leader McConnell is standing in the way of what could eat at the roots of our democracy and eventually make this mighty oak, the American experiment, fall. We don't want that to happen.

The briefing tomorrow is a good step, but it is only one step. We need to take more. We need to act, to prepare our democracy for the challenges ahead.

FOX NEWS

Madam President, I felt it was important to point this one out: President Trump amazingly attacked FOX News in the last few days in a series of tweets for coverage he viewed as unfavorable to his administration. This is FOX News, a news outlet that, frankly, is 90 percent or more on the President's side. Their most popular shows seem to just be cheerleaders for President Trump. To me, it is the most biased newscast there is of the major news stations, not that any of them are free of any bias. Yet when President Trump hears a small, dissident tweet, dissident note, from FOX News, and now he attacks it—what kind of thin skin does this man have? What kind of thin skin? But it is worse than his thin skin—when a President can attack a news organization that is overwhelmingly friendly to him, with some of his leading advocates getting prime time space, some of them going to his rallies, it shows he really doesn't believe

in freedom of the press. Dictators—dictators—shut down the press and try to shame the press when they speak truth to power, which is what our President has done in all the years of this Republic.

When President Trump can even attack FOX News because once in a blue moon it says something he doesn't like, that shows he doesn't really deserve to be President because a President must protect our liberties whether or not he is under fire.

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

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

REMEMBERING RIVER NIMMO

Mr. Cotton. Madam President, I want to call your attention to a story that is tragic but also heartwarming and uplifting.

Honorary Colonel River “Oakley” Nimmo of Camden, AR, passed away last month at the age of 5 after a protracted struggle with his enemy, a rare form of cancer called neuroblastoma. Oakley's family remembers him as a “sweet, brave boy” who liked to play with power wheels and toy guns, but all those who knew him or who have learned about him will remember Oakley for an act of service that perhaps only a child could perform.

Oakley wanted to be an Army man when he grew up. Even in the advanced stages of his fight with cancer, you would find him at the hospital wearing camouflage fatigues and a helmet, with his trusty rifle by his side and a smile on his face.

Oakley fought his cancer valiantly, going above and beyond the call of duty. He was strengthened along the way by his Arkansas neighbors, who held yard sales and sold bracelets to help the Nimmo family pay for his care. He was also supported by 20,000 prayer warriors on a Facebook page entitled “Prayers for Oakley Nimmo.” But ultimately it was God's will that Oakley should return home to him. He passed away on the 20th of June.

In light of Oakley's heroic struggle, as well as his dream of becoming an Army man, Oakley was named an honorary colonel in the Arkansas National Guard. In the days leading up to his funeral, his family made a simple request: that veterans and servicemembers show up at the funeral in their uniform to give Oakley the proper sendoff. Word got around, and dozens came. Some traveled from nearby towns. Most had never even met this little boy, but it didn't matter—he was a soldier like one of them. Soldiers from the Arkansas National Guard provided funeral honors for Oakley. They presented Oakley's mother, Shelby, with the flag and a special ID tag with

his name on it. Like a true soldier, Oakley was sent off from this world to the moving tune of “Taps” played by a military bugler.

Colonel Nimmo’s tour of duty on this Earth was brief, but he did teach an important lesson to all of us. At times, some voices may express doubts about our military, but Oakley reminded us—as perhaps only a child could—that being an Army man, a brave protector of our Nation, is one of the highest honors to which an American can be called.

The veterans and the servicemembers who attended Oakley’s funeral were there to honor him, but, in fact, it was a double honor because through his life and dreams, little Oakley honored them in return.

Oakley looked up to our troops in life. Now he looks down on them from above, where he will remain in God’s presence and our memory as a brave fighter against cancer, an inspiration, and indeed, for all time, an Army man.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HEALTHCARE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday our friend from New York, the minority leader, spoke on the Senate floor about the latest challenge to ObamaCare—the Affordable Care Act—which is being considered by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals this week. Also, if you can believe the press, he is also going to have a press conference with the Speaker and other notable Democrats to talk about the danger of a court decision on the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act. As one might imagine, he painted a pretty grim picture of what would happen if the court were to strike down the Affordable Care Act, affirming the judgment of the trial court. Of course, he tried to place the blame squarely on those of us on this side of the aisle. It is strange to me because blaming Republicans in Congress for a yet-to-be-decided court case doesn’t make a lot of sense, but it is pretty consistent with the message we have heard from our Democratic friends.

If the minority leader is going to pick a bone with anyone, then I guess his complaint is really about the Constitution itself. Court cases are decided on a case-by-case basis based on what the law is, and, of course, the Constitution is the fundamental law of the United States. So if a court ultimately holds an act of Congress to be unconstitutional, it is because the Constitution prohibits it. And a consensus among all Americans is that the Constitution shall be inviolable, dating

back to the early 19th century. The Supreme Court has made clear that is ultimately their job—not to decide what the policy should be but whether the policy enacted by Congress is consistent with the requirements of the Constitution.

So I find it pretty bizarre that in about an hour, the Democratic leader will join Speaker PELOSI for a news conference to talk about coverage for preexisting conditions, and I have no doubt that once again they will try to blame Republicans as the bad guys and somehow perpetuate this myth that Republicans are opposed to covering people for preexisting conditions in their health insurance policies. They know that is false. They know that is a bald-faced misrepresentation of what our policy choices are in this body and in Congress as a whole. There is one thing that I think there is a consensus on in Congress with respect to healthcare, and that is that preexisting conditions should be covered. In fact, there are pieces of legislation that I have cosponsored in the Senate that do that expressly. The illogical fallacy of their argument is that the only way one can do that is through the Affordable Care Act.

As we know, the Affordable Care Act has been a Trojan horse for a whole lot of other policies that, frankly, are not particularly popular because they have resulted in high deductibles and high premiums and have made it harder and harder for people to afford coverage. It has also precluded individuals from picking the kind of coverage that best suits their family’s needs at a price they can afford.

I think it is important for the American people to understand what we all understand—including the Democratic leader and the Speaker—which is that what they are saying about preexisting conditions is false. They know it, we know it, and it can be demonstrated. Yet they persist in saying it because they believe that people are either uninformed, naive, or so partisan that they will not be guided by the facts but, rather, by the partisan rhetoric.

Here is the other strange thing in all of this. Most progressive Democrats—we used to call them liberals; now they call themselves progressives—have embraced Medicare for All as a solution to our Nation’s healthcare challenges. As the Presiding Officer knows, Medicare for All would be a recipe for bankrupt Medicare, which has traditionally, legally, and historically been a benefit earned and contributed to by seniors in order to cover their healthcare when they are 65 or older. So dumping 180 million or so additional people into Medicare who have private health insurance is really a recipe for bankrupting it, thus undermining the benefit that seniors thought they were buying into during their entire lives.

Here is the other irony I find. When he was trying to sell the Affordable Care Act, we heard that President Obama said, if you like your existing

healthcare policy, you can keep it. That is what he said. It didn’t end up being the case, but that is what he said. Yet now our Democratic colleagues have become so radicalized on healthcare that they are essentially saying, if you have private health insurance you like, you can’t keep it. You can’t keep it.

This is a very strange place to work sometimes because people say things they know are not true, but they hope they can capitalize on people’s ignorance or on their partisanship. Yet, as many have said before, facts are stubborn things, and those are the facts; that there are other ways to cover preexisting conditions other than with the Affordable Care Act. For a party that has embraced this idea of Medicare for All and that wants to destroy privately held health insurance, it seems pretty rich for them to then blame this side of the aisle for wanting to destroy private health insurance that covers preexisting conditions.

A January Gallup poll found that 7 in 10 Americans have a negative view of our healthcare system and have described it as being in a state of crisis or as having major problems, which is to say that ObamaCare is not working as well as the advocates thought. As we know and as I have said, it is not the only way to protect patients who have preexisting conditions.

Earlier this year, I cosponsored a bill that was introduced by our friend from North Carolina, Senator TILLIS, called the PROTECT Act, which would ensure that no American would ever be denied health coverage because of one’s having a preexisting condition. Now, the Democratic leader and the Speaker know that. Yet, presumably, today, at 12:30, when they hold their press conferences, they will say all Republicans are opposed to covering preexisting conditions because of this court case in the Fifth Circuit that has yet to be decided. They are just gleeful that this will provide, they think, some way for them to argue what they know is not true—that the Republicans are opposed to covering people’s preexisting conditions.

I believe health coverage for these patients shouldn’t hang in the balance of a court decision because, ultimately, it is our decision. If we pass the PROTECT Act, it would finally codify what I hope every Member of this body would agree on—that Americans deserve access to healthcare coverage. The PROTECT Act is just one example of the countless healthcare bills that are working their way through the Senate right now.

In addition, in the Senate Finance Committee, we are considering a package of bills to reduce prescription drug prices, just as we have in the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee and in the Judiciary Committee. The HELP Committee overwhelmingly passed a bipartisan bill to reduce healthcare costs, to increase transparency, and to eliminate surprise