

Some of my Republican colleagues have cited past instances when an attorney living and practicing in one State has been nominated and confirmed to a seat in another State. This is highly unusual.

Republicans have been able to provide examples of this occurring only 4 times in the past 20 years, and in each case, it was with the support of the home State Senators. This support is simply not here in this case; this is not the case with this nominee.

California is a diverse and complex State. We have over 40 million people. It is the fifth largest economy in the world. It makes up 14 percent of the U.S. economy. There are 53 Fortune 500 companies that are based in our State. We have the largest ag industry in the country. We produce more manufacturing revenue than any other State. And California technology companies produce 53 percent of all tech revenues in the United States.

This vast and diverse nature of California's people and economy means the Ninth Circuit regularly considers challenging and complex issues of fact and law. These cases require not only the sharpest legal minds but lawyers and judges who know and understand the complexities facing the State of California.

We have an imported judge now coming to the Ninth Circuit. One of our most critical tasks as Senators is to ensure that lifetime appointments to the Federal courts are well qualified and well suited to the seats to which they have been nominated.

Home State Senators are a crucial part of this evaluation process. The Presiding Officer knows this very well. I am so disappointed that the majority has disregarded this.

This disregard of blue slips represents another breakdown of Senate traditions. It is really very disturbing. One thing I have learned over 20 years here is that what goes around comes around. By doing this, it is a major violation of a precedent that this Senate has followed, I believe, to its absolute.

I will vote against Mr. Bress's confirmation, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Thank you very much.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

REMEMBERING JIM TARICANI

Mr. REED. Madam President, I rise today to salute a hometown hero, a dedicated journalist, and a trusted newsmen, Jim Taricani, who sadly passed away last month after decades of contributions to Rhode Island and the field of journalism throughout this country.

This is just an example of the tributes that he won by a very, very enthusiastic population of Rhode Island. This is the front page of the Providence Journal on the day of his funeral service.

He was a gentleman. He was a man of integrity, a man of fairness—the quali-

ties that define a great journalist. In fact, the words "great journalist" and "Jim Taricani" are synonymous.

He leaves behind an extraordinary legacy. He was an award-winning investigative journalist who earned multiple Emmys and the coveted Edward R. Murrow Award, and he was a true champion of the First Amendment.

Jim grew up in Connecticut and served the U.S. Air Force, where he was stationed in Europe as a military police officer. But he made his mark when he moved to Rhode Island and embarked on a career in broadcast journalism, first in radio, and then over a 30-year career at WJAR that spanned from the late 1970s through 2014.

Jim began his stint for NBC 10—WJAR—as a general assignment reporter but gained notoriety for covering big stories and uncovering the truth. He went on to found the station's investigative team in 1979.

He earned a reputation for taking on tough stories about organized crime and political corruption. In reporting on these difficult topics, Jim's own integrity, selflessness, and fairness shone through every day and every moment.

Indeed, Jim didn't just talk about principles; he lived them. In February 2001, Jim obtained an FBI surveillance video from a confidential source. It showed a public employee accepting a bribe in the famed Operation Plunder Dome case, which transfixed Rhode Island and Providence, its capital, for many, many months. It marked a significant moment when people could see and hear what corruption looked like. Rather than following a court order to reveal the source of the tape, Jim stood up for the First Amendment, and he was sentenced to 6 months of home confinement.

Several of Jim's friends and colleagues wrote letters to the judge on Jim's behalf, including Christiane Amanpour, who interned for Jim in the early 1980s, when she was a student at URI.

She noted that Jim Taricani taught her "that journalism when done right is a noble profession, that America's unique commitment to freedom of the press is vital to a functioning democracy, [and] that holding public officials to account is the imperative of a corruption-free society."

Indeed, that is what Jim set out to do through his reporting.

He became a strong advocate for other journalists, testifying before Congress about freedom of the press and the challenges journalists face in trying to keep the public informed about their government. His help, his actions, and his activity spurred action. The Senate Judiciary Committee advanced Senator SCHUMER's bipartisan media shield bill. But the work to protect journalists, and to ensure that they can responsibly do their job and inform the public, continues. We must find a bipartisan way forward that balances freedom of the press and public safety.

Jim was also a tremendous advocate for the American Heart Association. A survivor of cardiovascular disease and multiple heart attacks, Jim documented his own process of undergoing a heart transplant, from uncertainty to recovery. Here is how the Providence Journal's television critic described it:

Listed—the title refers to the word from doctors that every heart transplant candidate longs to hear—is the most powerful human interest story I have ever seen on local television. It is courageous first-person journalism, a story that you may never forget.

Taricani, who kept a diary throughout his hospital stay, wanted to have his experience videotaped in order to produce a donor awareness video for the American Heart Association. It was never his intention to broadcast the account, but when the news director, Dan Salamone, suggested it would reach a broader audience if televised, Taricani agreed.

That was Jim. He was not looking to be the story but was willing to share his story if it could help others. Thoughtful, tenacious, and tough—that was Jim Taricani. By the way, 32 days after receiving his new heart, Jim was back at work, which tells you everything you need to know about how passionate he was about journalism and how much he loved his job.

Undoubtedly, the love of his life was his wife, Laurie White, who is a force in her own right and has taken up Jim's cause of freedom of the press and encouraging the next generation of aspiring young journalists to go out and make a difference. She has endowed a lecture series on First Amendment rights at the University of Rhode Island in Jim's honor, which is a fitting tribute.

She said:

Journalists bring sunlight to the stories that otherwise may stay hidden in the shadows. It is my hope that this lecture series will continue his legacy of inspiring the next generation of ethical and responsible journalists.

I expect the series will help increase public understanding of the importance of a free press and the First Amendment for decades to come.

As a journalist and as a person, nothing stopped Jim from following the facts, uncovering the truth, sharing important stories, and enlightening his audience. We are all, in Rhode Island and across the country, deeply saddened by the loss of Jim Taricani, but his example and legacy endure. That legacy will sustain us and inspire us to continue working together to build a just and decent country, and for that we are all grateful to Jim.

Madam President, I yield the floor to my distinguished colleague from Rhode Island, Senator WHITEHOUSE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, it is a great honor to join my senior colleague, Senator REED, on the Senate floor to remember someone we both knew very well, Jim Taricani, a

legendary investigative reporter, whom not only we knew well but so many Rhode Islanders knew well.

There was a rule in Rhode Island: When Jim called, you answered. He was also tough. He was always fair. He was the founder of WJAR's I-Team, a storied investigative unit for the NBC affiliate in Rhode Island.

Jim started working as a reporter in the 1970s, when the New England mafia was still active on the streets of Providence. He became known for segments exposing organized crime and for sniffing out public corruption, and, at times, a bit of a combination of both. Jim's news sense and his doggedness were legendary.

Jim was a Rhode Island icon. In a small State, with more than its share of stories to tell and plenty of larger-than-life characters, investigative journalists have always had a particular prominence. For more than three decades, Jim was among the best of them all.

He was brave. When a Federal judge ordered Jim to divulge who had provided him with a tape of a bribe being accepted at Providence City Hall, he opted for a prison sentence rather than give up his source. The courage of Jim Taricani made national headlines. He ended up serving 4 months of home confinement and testified before Congress in 2007 in support of a Federal shield law to protect the freedom of the press.

Rhode Islanders felt a personal connection to Jim for another reason. Jim needed a new heart in the 1990s. After having suffered two heart attacks in his thirties, he shared this health saga on the air, allowing WJAR cameras to follow along as he underwent a heart transplant and navigated his recovery.

From living rooms and kitchen tables across Rhode Island, Rhode Islanders rooted for Jim. As his health improved, he ultimately returned to the newsroom. The transplant would give him 23 more years, which he called his bonus.

Jim passed away last month at the age of 69. With the free press under more strain than almost any other point in our Nation's history, Jim's funeral became a really important moment. The photo Senator REED just showed on the front page of the Providence Journal the next day was a sight to behold. More than 50 journalists showed up to serve as Jim Taricani's honor guard. The honor guard had dozens of reporters from across Rhode Island—not just from WJAR but from all of its competitors too. Journalists came from other parts of the country who had crossed paths with Jim at channel 10 during time they spent in Rhode Island. They had come back to see off a friend, a hero, and a staunch defender of the First Amendment.

I join Senator REED today in thinking of Jim's beloved wife, Laurie White, and the many friends of theirs who mourn Jim's passing. He will be missed.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. YOUNG pertaining to the introduction of S. 2063 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. YOUNG. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I am going to be joined on the floor over the next 45 minutes or so by a number of my colleagues to talk about an exceptional court case that is being heard today in New Orleans, LA.

This is a court case the Trump administration, along with a number of Republican attorneys general, has brought to obliterate the Affordable Care Act, all of it, overnight. The case, if successful, would result in a humanitarian catastrophe in this country.

Why do I say that? Because the plaintiffs in the case, backed by the Trump administration, are arguing that the court should throw out the entire Affordable Care Act, with nothing to replace it, despite the fact that for almost a decade now, I have listened to this President and my Republican colleagues in the Congress object to the Affordable Care Act on the premise that they will have something better to replace it with—in President Trump's words, a replacement that will insure more people, at lower cost, with all the protections the Affordable Care Act has. That plan has not materialized yet because it doesn't exist. It has never existed. It will never exist.

The choice today is between the Affordable Care Act, which insures over 20 million Americans, which guarantees that people with preexisting conditions cannot be discriminated against, and nothing—no protections, no expansion of Medicaid, no subsidies—for individuals to buy private insurance.

Right now, with the support of Republicans in Congress, the Trump administration today is making the argument that the entire Affordable Care Act should be struck down, with nothing—nothing at all—to replace it.

This is my friend John from Middletown, CT. I had breakfast with John last week. That is a picture of John in

his younger years. John was 12 years old when he started to have flulike symptoms but was diagnosed—coincidentally, on the day of the tragedy in Sandy Hook, CT—with a rare form of soft-tissue cancer in the back of his throat.

The treatment process for John was, in his words, horrendous, bringing him to as little as 70 pounds for a period of time, rendering him unable to speak, eat, or drink. He was out of school and in and out of the hospital for almost 2 years.

Six years later, he can only open his jaw a small fraction of the normal range of motion; he can only chew foods out of one side of his mouth; and he has very limited healing ability for any jaw injury.

These issues will never go away for John. He has become an advocate for the Affordable Care Act because he knows—he knows that if the Trump administration's lawsuit is successful, his life as he knows it is over because, once again, insurance companies would deny him treatment. No insurance company would provide John Carlson with insurance, knowing his history of cancer, if they were allowed to make decisions for themselves on who gets coverage and who doesn't. The only reason John gets coverage is that we have said, through the Affordable Care Act, we are not going to hold you responsible for your childhood cancer. We are going to make sure you get insurance no matter what.

These are the stakes right now. These are the stakes for millions of Americans like John whose lives will be upended if this heartless, thoughtless, cruel lawsuit proceeds. We should be talking about how to make the healthcare system better. We should be talking about ways to lower costs. We shouldn't be talking about going backward with no safety net.

What if this lawsuit is successful? I haven't heard a single Republican in the Senate talk about what they would do. I haven't heard the President talk about what his plan is if his lawsuit is successful.

What happens to John? What are you going to do to make sure he still gets the treatment he needs? The answer is, you don't know. The answer is, you are jumping without a net, and you are playing with the lives of millions of Americans.

John is a remarkable young man also because his eyes were opened when he was in the hospital. I want to read you his words. He said this to me a couple of weeks ago, and I asked him to write it down because it is really remarkable the capacity of young people to see beyond their own suffering. He said:

I wanted to take this opportunity today to tell one more story about an experience I had in the hospital during my cancer treatment. This is a story about a young boy who received cancer treatment the same time as me. During my daily physical therapy walks around the childhood cancer floor, I started to notice a pattern. There was always one room—directly across from the nurses station—with the same patient inside. A small