

Court in the future, which Justice Ginsburg herself opposed and warned would make the Court partisan, because if Democrats decide to add additional members to the U.S. Supreme Court when they are in power, then the pressure will be irresistible for Republicans to add other Justices to the Court, and it would look—and it would be clearly a partisan institution rather than an impartial judge of the law and the facts.

The President has every right to put forth a nomination, and we have an obligation to give him or her due consideration under our advice and consent responsibilities. As always, we will be thorough, and I hope, unlike last time, we can be civil and treat all with respect.

I am prepared to fulfill my responsibilities as a Member of this body and of the Judiciary Committee, and I hope our colleagues on both sides are prepared to do the same thing.

JENNA QUINN LAW

Madam President, there is no question that this has been a difficult year for our country, with division and disagreement taking center stage. That changed for a moment last week when the Senate unanimously passed a bill that I had introduced called the Jenna Quinn Law to protect some of the most vulnerable members of our country.

This bill carries the name of an inspiring young Texan who is one of 42 million adult survivors of child sexual abuse nationwide. As Jenna says, child sexual abuse is a silent epidemic. One in four girls and one in six boys are sexually abused before the age of 18. Those are shocking numbers. Sadly, these victims often stay silent for months, years, some for even a lifetime. As a result, they and countless other victims continue to be subject to abuse.

Interrupting this cycle of sexual abuse is Jenna's mission and one she has devoted her life to pursuing. She was the driving force behind what is now known as Jenna's Law in Texas, which requires training for teachers, caregivers, and other adults who work with children on how to recognize and report child sexual abuse.

The signs of child sexual abuse are unique from other forms of abuse, and correctly identifying these signs is integral to bringing children out of a sexually abusive situation.

After the Texas law passed in 2009, a study found that educators reported child sexual abuse at a rate almost four times greater after training than during their pretraining career—four times greater. It was one of the first child sexual abuse prevention laws in the United States to mandate this kind of training.

Now, more than half of all the States have adopted a form of Jenna's Law, but many States, including my State, which have passed these laws don't provide the funding for the training. Thanks to the legislation that passed the Senate unanimously last week, that is one step closer to occurring.

The Jenna Quinn law will take the successful reforms in Texas and other States and finally back them with some Federal funding for that essential training. It will still allow current grant funds from the Department of Justice, for example, to be used for specialized training for students, teachers, and caregivers to learn how to identify, safely report, and hopefully prevent future child sexual abuse.

This legislation also encourages States with similar laws to implement innovative programs to address and discourage child sexual abuse. It is a critical step to interrupting this cycle that is impacting children across the country and preventing more children from enduring this trauma.

My partner in this bipartisan effort was Senator HASSAN from New Hampshire, and I appreciate her help in moving this bill through the Senate. I hope our colleagues in the House will quickly take it up and pass the Jenna Quinn law so we can get it to the President's desk as soon as possible.

The COVID-19 crisis has underscored the urgency of this legislation. In April of this year, nationwide reports of abuse or neglect dropped by an average of 40 percent compared to the same time last year. Normally, this type of drop in reporting would be great news, but based on everything we know about the stresses and circumstances created by this pandemic, I fear that there is actually an increase in abuse. It just isn't being recognized or reported. We need to make investments now in the health and safety of our children and bring this silent epidemic to an end.

Speaker PELOSI has made clear that the House will stay in session until an agreement is reached on COVID-19 relief so there is no reason for the House not to be able to act on this consensus legislation. I urge the House to take it up and pass it—which has received unanimous support in the Senate—and support America's children at a critical time like this.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE RUTH BADER GINSBURG

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, this weekend the United States of America passed a sad milestone—200,000 recorded deaths from COVID-19.

We are a nation in mourning. In addition to 200,000 family, friends, and neighbors we have now lost to this brutal pandemic, America is also mourning the loss of a historic champion of equality, a woman who spent her entire life, every ounce of her strength and talent she was given, in pursuit of

America's highest ideal: equal justice under the law.

Jewish teaching says that those who die just before the Jewish New Year are those whom God has held back until the last moment because they were most needed on Earth. So it seems fitting that Ruth Bader Ginsburg left this world as the Sun was setting last Friday, marking the start of Rosh Hashanah.

Years before, Ruth Bader Ginsburg made history as only the second woman ever to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. Even at that time, she had already earned an enduring place in American history. She has been called the Thurgood Marshall of the gender equality movement. As a lawyer and law professor, she was the mastermind in the 1970s behind a legal strategy that finally began to dismantle an American legal system that treated women in many ways as second-class citizens. Law Professor David Cole called her strategy “radical incrementalism.”

It is hard today for many Americans to imagine how deeply entrenched and how commonly accepted gender discrimination was in American law—and American society—before Ruth Bader Ginsburg began her legal crusade to make real for women the words carved above the doors of the U.S. Supreme Court: “Equal Justice Under Law.” The legal challenges she brought changed the way the world is for women and for all Americans.

Before she began her legal crusade, women were treated, by law, differently than men. Hundreds of State and Federal laws and programs restricted what women could do. Many jobs were legally closed to women. Many basic economic, social, and legal rights that we now take for granted were legally denied to women for no reason other than gender.

Before the legal victories achieved by Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a woman often could not—on her own—buy a car, open a checking account, get a credit card, sign a lease, obtain a mortgage, buy real estate, open a business, or obtain a business loan. She needed a man to co-sign.

Before Ruth Bader Ginsburg, women could be—and were—barred from public institutions and excluded from whole professions. They could be demoted or fired if they became pregnant. In fact, Ruth Bader Ginsburg herself was forced to accept a lower paying job at the Social Security Administration when she became pregnant, at the age of 21, with her first child.

Her legal strategy was cautious and strategic. Knowing that she needed to persuade mostly male judges—including an all-male Supreme Court—she chose cases that illustrated how gender discrimination can also harm men. She took up the case of a young widower whose wife died in childbirth. The man wanted to stay home to raise his son but was denied Social Security survivor benefits because such benefits by law could only go to widows.

Decades later, when that little boy grew up, Justice Ginsberg officiated at his wedding at the Supreme Court Building.

Her goal was simple but compelling: to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's promise of equal protection under the law covers women as well as men. As I said, it was not only women who benefited from her life's work. If you are a man who has been covered by your wife's medical benefits, thank Ruth Bader Ginsburg. If you are a man who has been able to claim Social Security survivor benefits or name a woman as executor of your estate, thank Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

We have not erased all gender-based inequality, as Ruth Bader Ginsburg knew well. And some of the legal victories for equal justice are now threatened. Some have been diminished outright. She also knew that. Her concerns about these threats to hard-won rights was the basis for some of the most famous, fiery dissents—and why this often quiet, soft-spoken woman took the unusual step many times of reading her dissents from the bench. She wanted us to understand what was at stake so that we could join her in the fight.

That is what she did in 2007, in the case of *Lilly Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire*. The Supreme Court ruled 5 to 4 that a woman who was paid less than her male coworkers for years, doing exactly the same work, could not sue her former employer for wage discrimination.

The woman only learned about the pay gap after she retired, but a conservative majority on the Court ruled that she had lost her chance at justice by failing to sue within 6 months of her first unequal paycheck. In her dissent, Justice Ginsburg challenged Congress to correct this injustice, and we did. The very first law signed by President Barack Obama was the *Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009*. A framed copy of that signed law hung in Justice Ginsburg's Supreme Court chambers as a gift from President Obama. He signed it with the following inscription: "Thanks for helping create a more equal and just society."

In her dissent in the 2013 *Shelby County v. Holder*, which gutted the heart of the Voting Rights Act, Justice Ginsburg pointed out the awful irony of the majority decision. She wrote that throwing out the need for jurisdictions with histories of voter suppression to clear changes in their voting laws before elections because the laws had already worked was "like throwing away your umbrella in a rainstorm because you are not getting wet."

She was right. Our democracy would be stronger today had just one more Justice on the Supreme Court agreed with her. It is up to Congress now to heed her warning by passing the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act which languishes on the desk of Senator McConnell.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a champion of workers' rights, of disability rights,

LGBTQ rights, and environmental justice. And she was a woman who believed deeply that part of America's greatness is the welcome and safety and opportunity that America has offered to immigrants and refugees for most of our history.

Like me, Justice Ginsburg was a child of an immigrant who came to this country partly to flee religious persecution. My mother and her family left Russian-occupied Lithuania partly to escape anti-Catholic persecution.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg's father left Odessa, Russia, for New York when he was 13 to escape anti-Jewish pogroms. Her mother was born in New York 4 months after her family moved from Austria—extended family members later died in the Holocaust.

Justice Ginsburg's mother was like my mother in another way: They were both very intelligent women who were denied their full education because money was tight and because they lived during a time when expectations about what women could achieve were so low.

Like my mother, Celia Ginsburg used to take her child to the public library where she would check out as many books as she could read. She saved her pennies so that her daughter could one day get the college education she was never able to get herself. Celia Ginsburg dreamed that her bright, young daughter might grow up, if she were lucky and worked very hard, to become a high school teacher. Instead, Ruth Bader Ginsburg grew up and changed history. She changed America for the better. America is fundamentally different and fairer as a nation because of the vision and work of Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

I recalled over the weekend, and repeated it to my wife, this amazing statistic; that Ruth Bader Ginsburg battled cancer five times over nearly 20 years and then, of course, lived through the death 10 years ago of her beloved husband Marty, but she almost never missed a day on the bench. She worked through chemo sickness, broken ribs, and terrible pain, but, nevertheless, she persisted.

I want to read you something she said many times. I really liked this.

What is the difference between a bookkeeper in New York's garment district and a Supreme Court Justice? One generation—my own life bears witness. The difference between the opportunities available to my mother and those afforded me."

Ruth Bader Ginsburg did not simply take opportunities afforded to women. More than perhaps any American in history, she helped create those opportunities.

Loretta and I offer our deepest condolences to her friends and to her family, especially her daughter Jane and her son James, who now calls Chicago home, and her grandchildren and her great-granddaughter.

May her memory be a blessing and may her life be a guiding light for all of us.

SUPREME COURT NOMINATIONS

Madam President, Americans across the Nation were shocked and devastated when they heard the news of Justice Ginsburg's passing. It was a moment we will not forget. The gravity of that announcement hit hard not just because of the loss of a national icon but also because of the sense of foreboding of what would happen next, right here in this Chamber, in the U.S. Senate.

The year 2020 has already brought us so much pain and anguish. The pandemic has killed 200,000 Americans, sickened over 6 million; devastating job losses and economic damage; a long overdue national reckoning over racial injustice; deadly wildfires and natural disasters destroying communities; and a President, sadly, who seeks to divide and inflame instead of uniting America and bringing us together in common purpose.

Justice Ginsburg saw the tension that her absence from the Court would cause. Shortly before she passed away, Justice Ginsburg said: "My most fervent wish is that I will not be replaced until a new President is installed."

Unfortunately, Justice Ginsburg's last request is falling on deaf ears in the Senate Chamber. Shortly after the news of her death, Senator McConnell announced that he would hold the Supreme Court vote this year. Here is what Senator McConnell, then leader of the Senate, said:

The American people should have a voice in the selection of their next Supreme Court justice. Therefore, this vacancy should not be filled until we have a new president.

These are the words of Senator MITCH McConnell. That statement is very clear and unambiguous. Senator McConnell made it 269 days before the Presidential election, the so-called McConnell rule. This was a firm precedent establishing that Senate Republicans would not consider a Supreme Court nominee in an election year.

President Barack Obama sent the name of Judge Merrick Garland from the DC Circuit to the Senate for a hearing and a vote. The treatment he received from the Senate was disgraceful. Senator McConnell announced he would not even give him the time of day, nor meet with him in his office, and he admonished those Republican Senators who did. Merrick Garland was being shunned by Senator McConnell because of his rule, the McConnell rule: No "vacancy should be filled until we have a new president."

In his determination to show that this principle would prevail, he shunned Merrick Garland. Well, it turns out that this rule of law, this McConnell rule that guided the Senate 4 years ago, was not as sacrosanct as one might think. A nation guided by a rule of law cannot have one set of rules under Democratic Presidents and another set under Republican Presidents. That is just what Senator McConnell called for on Friday.

Shortly after the news—a short time after the news of Justice Ginsburg's