

election in 2016. That should also be our standard in 2020, 6 weeks before the election. There should be no confirmation before inauguration.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JUSTICE RUTH BADER GINSBURG

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, on this past Friday evening, on Rosh Hashanah, our Nation lost a giant of our Supreme Court. We lost a trailblazer for women's equality, a woman who, though diminutive in size, was a giant and a force for justice.

For my daughter and for all Americans, I am so grateful for the work and the service and the life of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Having passed on Rosh Hashanah, the tradition of the Jewish people teaches that she is especially blessed, particularly righteous.

It is heartbreaking that her dying wish, dictated to her granddaughter, was that the voters should choose the next President, and that next President her successor, and, already, there are some who are racing to undo that wish.

This was her wish because she understood the consequences of this decision for the Senate, for the American people, and for the Supreme Court, to which she dedicated 27 years of service.

If we push through a nominee now, just 43 days before an election, as half of our States are already voting, the very legitimacy of the Supreme Court may be undermined by further politicization in an already divided country.

My friends, my colleagues in the other party, used the argument in blocking the nomination of Merrick Garland in 2016 that we must give the American people a voice for the selection of the next Justice. That argument was advanced 10 months before the next election. Here, today, on this floor, the exact argument is being advanced just 43 days before an election in which half of our States are already voting.

As a colleague from Alaska recently said, the precedent set by the majority in 2016 is the precedent by which they should live now. Fair is fair. I cannot agree more.

On the ballot, on the agenda, on the docket of the Supreme Court is healthcare. This decision will have an impact on all Americans of all stripes and backgrounds. One week after the election, a case will be argued in front of the Supreme Court, *Texas v. United States*, which seeks to remove all that is left of the Affordable Care Act's protections—protections against pre-

existing condition discrimination for 100 million Americans and health insurance itself for 20 million, in the middle of a pandemic in which 6 million Americans have been infected and have new preexisting conditions, and, in some ways most gallingly, that provision of the Affordable Care Act which prohibits gender discrimination by insurance companies.

All of this is at stake, as are protections going forward after this election for clean air and clean water, for equal pay for equal work, and the right to organize. It is all on the ballot and will be on the docket.

Let me close by calling on my colleagues to do what is fair and what I believe is right: to respect their own precedent and let the American people have a voice in just 43 days and then proceed, after the election, to honor Justice Ginsburg's dying wish; to focus on delivering relief to the American people in a package to address this pandemic in our next few weeks, rather than diving deeper into division.

It is my fervent prayer that we can yet find a way together to listen to the voice of the people and the voice of this most storied Justice.

TRIBUTE TO ERICA KNieVEL SONGER

Mr. President, I have one other purpose in coming to the floor today, and that is to recognize my colleague, my friend Erica Knievel Songer, my chief counsel—whom I now embarrass—who is departing this week.

Erica is an immensely talented lawyer and has been an invaluable member of my team for over 4 years, a summa graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, a Phi Beta Kappa member, a cum laude graduate of Harvard Law School, a deputy editor of the *Journal of Law and Gender*, and a clerk on the Sixth Circuit for Judge Cornelia Kennedy.

After all that, she went to one of Washington's most prestigious law firms and, after 9 years of diligent litigation and work, earned her way into being a partner but, during all this time, dedicated her time to pro bono work, to advocating for those seeking justice.

She could have had a much more lucrative career than the last 4 years here in the Senate, and her trajectory was not a typical one for a chief counsel on a Judiciary Committee. She was willing to make the sacrifice, and I was grateful for the chance to serve with her.

Her dedication to upholding and defending democratic principles is unwavering, and every day she has put the interests of the American people and Delawareans first. No one has worked harder in her 4 years on my team than she.

Her commitment to our shared values has helped guide me and my team through some of the most difficult and challenging moments of these years. She has capably led my entire legal team and helped us navigate through some truly historic fights.

It was just 3 days after she joined my team that we were in the Rose Garden for President Obama's nomination of Judge Merrick Garland, and she led my team and my work on the confirmation hearings of now-Justice Gorsuch and Justice Kavanaugh. She led us through the Mueller investigation and through the impeachment trial.

She has been integral to legislative efforts, including the Special Counsel Integrity Act, a bipartisan effort to support the integrity of independent investigations and to protect the Mueller investigation; the Driving for Opportunity Act, a bipartisan bill to create incentives to stop debt-based driver's license suspension and extend criminal justice reform; and a project for which we both have a particular passion, the NO BAN Act, which would repeal President Trump's Executive order blocking travel from majority-Muslim countries and prevent another baseless, discriminatory travel ban.

She has contributed so much more than this. She has been a teacher and mentor to so many in my office and, particularly, to young women, who look to her as a role model and a source of wisdom and strength. Personally, she and her husband Mike, both dedicated attorneys and passionate public servants, are constant reminders of why we are here and for whom we fight.

As we reflect today and in the week ahead on the legacy of Justice Ginsburg, whose life was committed to the fight for equality and justice, I see that same fight in Erica Songer. Justice Ginsburg blazed a trail and changed the world for incredibly talented and capable women like Erica so that she could lead the life she has.

Erica is a true patriot, a great colleague, and a wonderful friend who has put country over self, and I have been blessed to have the benefit of her counsel and her friendship these 4 years. I am proud she will go on to continue to fight for our shared values. I wish her luck. I will miss her dearly, and I pray this is not the last time we will serve together.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Edward Hulvey Meyers, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years.

Mitch McConnell, Roy Blunt, Mike Rounds, Todd Young, Pat Roberts, Cindy Hyde-Smith, John Thune, Kevin Cramer, Thom Tillis, Michael B. Enzi, James Lankford, John Barrasso, Joni Ernst, Lamar Alexander, Rob Portman, Tim Scott, Steve Daines.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Edward Hulvey Meyers, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators were necessarily absent: the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA), and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 65, nays 25, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 184 Ex.]

#### YEAS—65

Alexander	Ernst	Perdue
Barrasso	Fischer	Peters
Blackburn	Gardner	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hassan	Roberts
Braun	Hawley	Romney
Burr	Hoeven	Rosen
Cardin	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Carper	Inhofe	Rubio
Casey	Jones	Sasse
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Collins	King	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Shaheen
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Shelby
Cotton	Lee	Tester
Cramer	Loeffler	Thune
Crapo	Manchin	Toomey
Cruz	McConnell	Udall
Daines	McSally	Warner
Duckworth	Murkowski	Wicker
Durbin	Murphy	Young
Enzi	Paul	

#### NAYS—25

Baldwin	Heinrich	Schatz
Bennet	Hirono	Schumer
Blumenthal	Kaine	Smith
Booker	Klobuchar	Van Hollen
Brown	Markey	Warren
Cantwell	Menendez	Whitehouse
Coons	Merkley	Wyden
Feinstein	Murray	
Gillibrand	Reed	

#### NOT VOTING—10

Capito	Moran	Sullivan
Graham	Sanders	Tillis
Harris	Sinema	
Johnson	Stabenow	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 65, the nays are 25.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Louisiana.

#### HURRICANE LAURA

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, a few weeks ago, on August 27, Louisiana and southeastern Texas were hit by Hurricane Laura.

I say "Louisiana" because if you look at some of the press reports, they say "Southwest Louisiana," but the impact of Hurricane Laura in Louisiana was much greater.

The storm came onshore in Southwest Louisiana in Cameron Parish. It headed north, then moved northeast, and finished in the northeastern part of our State.

I have seen the damage from the air and on the ground. I have never seen a hurricane do this kind of damage in any State, much less Louisiana.

The path of destruction is about 60 miles wide, starting in Southwest Louisiana, running north, bending to the northeast, and it is about 200 miles long. We took it full in the face.

When you see devastation like this, when you go through something like this, you start to understand that we human beings are a vain lot. We think we can control nature, but nature controls us.

Our entire electrical system went down. Our water system went down. Our internet went down. Our cable TV went down. It was a category 4 storm with winds of up to 150 miles an hour.

This storm was unusual in that winds were sustained and did not dissipate as it got further inland. We took it full in the face.

Now, it doesn't do any good to complain. Louisianans are resilient people. We live by the old Japanese proverb: "Fall down seven times, stand up eight." We are standing back up.

About 60 percent of our electrical power has been restored. We now have water back. In some cases, there are still some boil orders because the water is not clean. But we are deficient in one area, and that is cable TV and internet, with an emphasis on internet.

I want you to understand I am not talking here about a mere inconvenience. I am not talking about people missing their favorite television shows. I am talking about kids' education; I am talking about the ability to deliver healthcare; and I am talking about the ability to conduct commerce. None of those things can be done in today's world without the internet. The internet, particularly in Southwest Louisiana, is provided by a company called Suddenlink.

(Ms. MURKOWSKI assumed the Chair.)

Suddenlink is owned—it was purchased by a company called Altice USA. Its CEO is a gentleman whom I have not had the pleasure of meeting, Mr. Dexter Goei, and I am here today to plead with Suddenlink to please get our internet restored. Suddenlink has done such an abysmal job that Suddenlink needs to change its name to Neverlink.

Suddenlink provides internet service to 150,000 Louisianans. I haven't studied their financials, but let's say at \$150 a month, if you include the cable television part, Louisianans pay Suddenlink—soon to be named Neverlink if they don't do a better job—about \$23 million a month.

Now, all of our public utilities have been working very hard.

Entergy has worked hard. AT&T has worked hard. CenterPoint Energy has worked hard to get our utilities restored so that we can start recovering.

Suddenlink has not worked hard. At one point, we had 29,000 people on the ground helping us to restore our water system, helping us to restore our electric power, helping us to cut trees, helping us to get tarps on roofs. We had at most 300 representatives from Suddenlink—300 representatives to handle restoring internet for 150,000 Louisianans.

Suddenlink should be ashamed of itself. We have restored about 60 percent of our electrical power. We have restored about 16 percent of our internet.

Once again, I am not talking about someone missing their favorite television program. As the Presiding Officer knows, because you have the same situation in Alaska, all of our public schools are not open, all of our private schools are not open because of the virus. Many of our kids are having to learn remotely, and they can't do it without the internet. They can't.

The Presiding Officer is also aware of how the internet is integral to the ability to deliver healthcare. I don't know a single business today that can operate without the internet. Many of our businesses, including our small businesses, because they can't have customers coming into their shops, are doing a lot of their commerce over the internet. There is just one problem in Louisiana. Because of Suddenlink dragging its feet, we don't have internet, and we can't recover without it.

I don't mean to be overly critical, but this has just gotten out of hand. Every one of our public utilities has done a yeoman's work—has done an extraordinary job—except the one—except the one. If Mr. Dexter Goei is listening tonight—and again, I don't mean to be overly critical. I plan to visit with him in the next couple of days. I think he has finally agreed to come visit Louisiana.

We have three requests. First of all, we need workers on the ground. You can't restore the internet service without people working to restore the internet service, and let me say it again. Entergy, just to pick one of our utility companies, has over 10,000 workers restoring the power. Suddenlink, which provides internet for 150,000 people, has a grand total of 300 people. It can't be done. We are currently not a priority, even though 150,000 of my people write a monthly check to Suddenlink.

No. 1, Suddenlink, respectfully, put some people on the ground to get our internet restored.

No. 2, we need a local office for Suddenlink. They don't even have one. Maybe it is because they don't have internet, but many people lost their homes. At a minimum, they lost their roofs. They don't have cable boxes.