

In August, I spoke on the Senate floor regarding the riots and anarchy happening around the country, but I was specifically referring to Portland, OR, and how these events and hateful rhetoric aimed at law enforcement have endangered countless brave men and women who serve in law enforcement and how they have certainly depressed them. They talk about things like peaceful protests. Yet, in that case, they were throwing bricks at officers. They sprayed officers, nearly blinding all three of them. This was actually going on.

I highlight the contrast between the violence happening in Oregon with how we appreciate our officers in my State of Oklahoma—what a contrast. Oklahomans have great respect and admiration for our men and women in blue. We know that law enforcement officers are our neighbors, our friends, and our family. They have a dangerous job, and they go beyond that job. I was talking to some of them the other day, and different ones gave different messages. While they are on duty, defending rights, a lot of them teach young kids how to play baseball. They are really great citizens.

In the speech that I gave in August, I highlighted the attack on Zark and Sergeant Johnson. These attacks are a painful reminder of the sacrifices that law enforcement make every day. “Defunding the police” rhetoric may be politically appealing to some on the left, but we must remember that law enforcement is the first line of defense against threats like what we saw in Tulsa in June.

I had the opportunity to talk to Zark this morning. He told me what was going through his mind while they were being rushed to the hospital. He said he was thinking: “I hope our story reaches the Nation.”

Your story, Zark, has reached the Nation. It has reached the world. Right now, they know what happened.

Zark wanted people to understand what police and law enforcement risk every day—a sacrifice too many take for granted. He wanted people to know the stories of good, honorable police officers. While his tragedy in Tulsa is a reminder of the threats our communities face, it is also a story of hope, of Tulsa’s hope.

Jerad Lindsey, who is the chairman of Tulsa’s Fraternal Order of Police, said it best: “There’s not a lot of times you get to use the word ‘miracle.’” Zark’s recovery definitely fits that bill.

Perhaps, what is most telling and most inspiring is that Zark doesn’t lose sight of what was lost on June 29. On his return to Tulsa on a day that was proclaimed to recognize his heroism, he wore a shirt that honored Sergeant Johnson. It read: “Fallen but not forgotten.” Even this morning, he talked about Sergeant Craig Johnson and how he had wanted him to return to Tulsa with him as he himself did last week.

Now that Zark is back in Tulsa, he is going to keep up his recovery, but he is

also looking forward to enjoying these simple things: his own bed, his dogs, his Whataburger—he has already been there twice—and the love and support of all Tulsans.

While there are many challenges and hardships ahead for Tulsa and the Nation with this tragedy, this is a story of optimism and faith in our community and in our future. Both Zark and Sergeant Johnson are American heroes, and they will always be American heroes. So we say thanks to Zark.

Thanks, Zark. You are great.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE HONORABLE GT BYNUM
PROCLAMATION

Whereas, on June 29, 2020, Officer Aurash Zarkeshan placed himself in harms way to protect and serve the citizens of Tulsa and the men and women of the Tulsa Police Department.

Whereas, Officer Aurash Zarkeshan endured more than three months of rehabilitation and multiple surgeries. His bravery and positive outlook throughout his journey are admirable and have been an inspiration to the city.

Whereas, Officer Aurash Zarkeshan’s strength and perseverance have set an example to the Tulsa Police Department and he has been a beacon of light for law enforcement officers around the country.

Whereas, Officer Aurash Zarkeshan has been declared “Tulsa’s Hope” for his service, courage, and valor under fire.

Whereas, Tulsans are excited on this day to welcome Officer Aurash Zarkeshan home.

Now, therefore, I, Gt Bynum, Mayor of the City of Tulsa, do hereby proclaim October 15th as “Officer Aurash Zarkeshan Day” in the City of Tulsa.

NOMINATION OF AMY CONEY BARRETT

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I have already talked a couple of times about this great nominee whom we have in Amy Coney Barrett, and I am really proud to speak in support of President Trump’s outstanding nomination of Amy Coney Barrett to the U.S. Supreme Court.

To say that Judge Barrett is qualified to serve on the Supreme Court is an understatement. Judge Barrett is the definition of a leader. Her record of accomplishments is second to none. Everybody knows it.

After we had a chance to really evaluate and talk to her and know her and visit with her, we found that she was born in New Orleans. She went on to graduate from Rhodes College in Memphis and also from Notre Dame Law School. She graduated at the top of her class and always has been at the top of her class. That is worth pointing out because, when confirmed, she will be the only Justice on the bench who did not go to Harvard or Yale. Now, that is a good thing. She clerked for one of America’s finest Supreme Court Justices—the late Antonin Scalia. Since 2002, she has taught law at Notre Dame, where she has been selected “Distinguished Professor of the Year” three different times.

In 2017, after being attacked by the Democrats about her strong faith, she

was confirmed to the Seventh Circuit by this body—and with Democratic votes, I might add. Let me repeat that. She was confirmed on a bipartisan basis only 3 years ago. But, today, liberals are recycling their same stale tactics in an attempt to tarnish another exceptional nominee without having any basis in fact or truth. They are attacking her Catholic faith. Some operatives have even attacked her for adopting children from Haiti. I am not kidding. They are attacking her for that. It should go without saying that Judge Barrett should be commended for this loving, selfless act, not disparaged for it.

I personally know that adoption is one of God’s greatest gifts. I am the proud grandfather of Zegita Marie. I found her during a mission in Ethiopia, and my daughter and son-in-law adopted her as a baby. She is in college now and is one of my greatest blessings.

Yet, like clockwork, the Democrats use bogus propaganda to try to scare the American people into opposing a Republican President’s Supreme Court nominee. Over the years, they have made outrageous claims, like saying these nominees will take away America’s healthcare. They have done it time and again. They did it with Anthony Kennedy. They did it with David Souter. They did it with John Roberts and, recently, with Brett Kavanaugh. Now they are doing it with Judge Barrett. Most Americans can see through this far-left hoax, but it is important to set the record right. Judge Barrett is not and has never advocated in favor of taking away anyone’s healthcare—period.

Liberals have gone after Judge Barrett for her views on abortion. First of all, Judge Barrett has every right to enjoy her religious freedom. I think we all understand that. I am saddened to see the attacks that she has received due to her Catholic faith. Nevertheless, her record shows that she will thoughtfully apply the Constitution to all cases while honoring Supreme Court precedent. At the same time, she has proven that she impartially and faithfully exercises her duties as an appellate judge. There is no reason to believe that she would not continue to do so as a Justice.

Now I want to speak about the precedent for acting on today’s vacancy, which differs from the vacancy of 2016. The Democrats and liberal media have called Senate Republicans hypocrites for opposing the confirmation of President Obama’s Supreme Court nominee in 2016 but supporting the confirmation of the President’s nominee today. What they fail to recognize is that we followed Senate precedent. We followed it in 2016, and we are following it again right now.

In 2016, we had a divided government. What a divided government means is that we have different parties controlling the White House and the confirming body, the U.S. Senate. In 2016, we had that divided government, and

they were controlled by different parties. The Senate Republicans followed the Biden rule then, which is that the Senate does not confirm an election year vacancy in which the White House and the Senate are controlled by different parties. Despite the Democrats' insistence on confirming President Obama's nominee, Senate Republicans followed precedent.

The reality is that, in the modern era, the Senate has not confirmed a Supreme Court nominee under a divided government. It just hasn't happened. The last time the Senate confirmed a nominee under these circumstances was in 1888. Today, we have a united government. The same party that has the Senate has the Presidency. The voters elected President Trump in 2016. The Senate Republicans grew their majority in 2018. In nearly every instance in history in which there has been a Supreme Court vacancy under a united government, we have voted to confirm. In fact, the only time in history that the Senate did not confirm a nominee under a united government was in 1968, wherein there was bipartisan opposition on ethical grounds. They all agreed that the nominee should be withdrawn, and he was withdrawn.

It is simply false to state that Senate Republicans are going against precedent. As a matter of political convenience, the Democrats have flip-flopped from what they said in 2016 and are adamantly opposed to a vote during an election year. It is not surprising that the media has ignored their about-face.

I am proud of the efforts by Leader McConnell and our Republican majority, who have confirmed dozens of President Trump's exemplary judicial nominations. I think the number right now is somewhere around 212, and that may be a record, but those are a lot of nominations.

Senate Republicans and President Trump have followed through on our promise to remake the judiciary with more judges who interpret the law as written, not legislate from the bench. We all know what we are talking about there. With Judge Barrett, we have the opportunity to confirm the President's third Supreme Court nominee to the bench.

Everyone knows Judge Barrett is hard-working, principled, and committed to serving her fellow Americans. In a 2017 letter, a bipartisan group of law professors called her work "rigorous, fair-minded, respectful, and constructive." I couldn't agree more. I know she will serve our highest Court with honor and distinction, and I look forward to voting to confirm the nomination soon. She is, I really think, the most gifted, talented jurist to be found in America today.

My wife and I have been married for 60 years. We have 20 kids and grandkids. They are the ones who are going to be the beneficiaries of the service of Judge Barrett. She is going to be confirmed as an Associate Justice on our High Court in a matter of hours,

and this is going to be a great thing for America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

HONORING DETECTIVE LIEUTENANT KEVIN COLLINS

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, it is such an honor and such a pleasure to be with my fellow Senator from Arkansas, Mr. COTTON, as we rise to honor Pine Bluff Detective Kevin Collins, who died while in the line of duty, on Monday, October 5, as a result of injuries he sustained.

Detective Collins was a passionate person about law enforcement and serving the citizens of Pine Bluff. He served his community not only as an officer of the law but also as a mentor and a leader.

It was reported that he had wanted to be a police officer since he had been 3 years old. In an interview with the Pine Bluff Commercial in 2018, he said: "Ever since I was little, I saw law enforcement as a service and something I could be proud of." He worked his entire life to achieve that dream, and it came true 5 years ago when he was hired by the Pine Bluff Police Department on June 8, 2015.

He was first assigned to the patrol division, and he worked his way up to the violent crimes unit. Detective Collins loved being a police officer, and he enjoyed building relationships with the men and women he worked alongside as well as with the citizens whom he served.

His colleagues appreciated his enthusiasm, his hard work, and dedication, which he demonstrated each and every day both in and out of uniform.

Detective Collins was passionate about making a difference in the lives of others. As a mentor to at-risk boys during the department's 2-week Youth Empowerment Camp, he was a role model for teens—encouraging good behavior and reinforcing the importance of making good decisions.

In his short time with the Pine Bluff Police Department, he had a long list of successes that include taking a large number of guns off the streets and earning the department's Officer of the Year for 2017 for his actions in saving a 95-year-old resident while responding to an apartment fire.

Detective Collins lived a faithful life devoted to Christ as a member of New Life Church Pine Bluff.

Pastor Matt Mosler says Detective Collins had a great heart for service. He took that heart for service and put his faith into action, taking the initiative to make his community better.

We rely on law enforcement officers like Detective Collins to keep communities safe, to keep us safe. His death is a tragic reminder of the risk law enforcement officers face each day when they put on their uniform and leave the comforts of their homes and their loved ones to serve and to protect.

Detective Collins was a true hero. Our hearts break for his family, his

colleagues at the Pine Bluff Police Department, and community members. I pray they will find comfort from the outpouring of support for this beloved brother in blue.

Senator COTTON, I yield to you.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, the men and women of law enforcement in Arkansas could have no greater champion in the U.S. Senate than JOHN BOOZMAN. It is always an honor to join him on the floor, but today is a sad and solemn honor to be here to commemorate the life of Detective Kevin Collins.

Detective Collins of Pine Bluff had known since he was the young age of 3 that he wanted to be a police officer. His step-dad worked for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department. His mom was a teacher. So from an early age, the role models in Kevin's life inspired him to serve others, and serve he did, above and beyond the call of duty.

For a time he worked as an emergency services dispatcher. Then he worked for the Arkansas Department of Corrections. Five years ago, he realized his childhood dream by joining his hometown police department to serve the community he knew and loved.

Detective Collins was part of the violent crimes unit, which means he worked on some of Arkansas' most dangerous cases. He had a special passion for taking illegal guns off the streets and mentoring young people in the community.

His hard work was noticed and rewarded. Just 2 years after joining the force, Detective Collins was named Officer of the Year after rushing into a burning apartment building and rescuing a 95-year-old woman trapped inside.

When he received that award, Detective Collins reflected on his lifelong dream of becoming a police officer, which he described as a "service" and something "I could be proud of."

You could say that Kevin Collins was destined to be a police officer. Tragically, he was also destined to die as one, much too soon.

Earlier this month, Detective Collins was tracking a suspected murderer who was holed up in a hotel. A gun battle broke out. Detective Collins and his fellow officer, Lieutenant Ralph Isaac, were hit during this exchange and rushed to the hospital. Lieutenant Isaac has begun to recover, but, sadly, Detective Collins did not. He went home to be with the Lord at the age of 35, leaving his family, his community, and our State heartbroken over the loss.

Detective Collins' death is a tragedy and a stark warning and reminder of the dangers police officers face every day.

Detective Collins joins 231 of his fellow officers who have died in the line of duty in America just this year, but it would be a mistake only to mark Detective Collins' death. We ought also to learn from his example in life.

Kevin Collins was a guardian of Pine Bluff, whether in his capacity as an officer or off duty as a security guard at his local church.