

They went into full Joe Biden protection mode, and they didn't even try to hide it.

One Washington Post columnist said: "Even after accepting disinformation from Russian agents, JOHNSON and GRASSLEY couldn't come up with anything new or interesting on Hunter Biden."

Well, we know today the Post should be ashamed that they said that.

POLITICO ran a story with this headline: "GOP Senators' anti-Biden report repackages old claims."

And National Public Radio said about the New York Post Hunter Biden stories: "We don't want to waste our time on stories that are not really stories, and we don't want to waste the listeners' and readers' time on stories that are just pure distractions," end of the NPR quote.

Now, look at what Twitter and Facebook did to Hunter Biden news. Simply said, they interfered in the election and gave the Biden campaign a multimillion-dollar in-kind donation, courtesy of their blatant and unforgivable censorship.

So, my fellow Americans, let us never forget what Twitter and Facebook did during the 2020 elections.

Now, let's fast forward to this very day. Now it is confirmed that Hunter Biden is under criminal investigation, reportedly for his taxes and financial dealings—the very fact pattern that we described in the Johnson-Grassley report.

It shouldn't take Hunter Biden to confirm that he is under criminal investigation before the mainstream press gets permission—from whom, I don't know—to report the news. It is a complete outrage the way the liberal media used its power to cover up facts relating to Hunter Biden and the Biden family and, yet, ran story after story with false information about the Russian investigation into Trump and the credibility of the Steele dossier.

The recent news also shows that our report was not "baseless"—that is the word that shows up all the time—and it didn't "repackage old claims." That is another set of words that showed up quite regularly as people were trying to distract the Johnson and Grassley report.

So quite the opposite—our report was well-founded, ahead of the curve, and right on the money, in more ways than one.

Our report teed up the facts, but the mainstream press never stepped up to the plate.

Some of the Nation's supposedly leading press outlets, with teams of investigative reporters, were scooped by the Congress—the Johnson-Grassley report. Now, of course, they are scrambling to chase the story that they for so long ignored.

Now, it didn't have to be this way. We already did much of the heavy lifting before issuing our report. The report made public information that hadn't ever been known before. For ex-

ample, it showed the following: Hunter Biden and his associates and family members were connected to Chinese nationals and Chinese companies linked with the Communist Party and the People's Liberation Army. This includes the CEFC China Energy Company Limited and that company's subsidiaries.

Records show that a company linked to the Communist regime sent Hunter Biden's law firm millions of dollars.

Other records show that Hunter Biden opened a line of credit with a Chinese national linked to the Communist regime and funded it with approximately \$100,000. Then he, James Biden, and Sara Biden went on an extravagant global spending spree.

Still other records show that Hunter Biden, via his law firm, also sent a million dollars to James Biden's consulting firm, the Lion Hall Group. These transfers began less than 1 week after CEFC sent \$5 million to a company called Hudson West III, a company linked to CEFC and Chinese nationals associated with the Communist regime, which then sent money to Hunter Biden's law firm.

When the bank contacted Sara Biden, who was associated with the firm's bank account, she refused to answer their questions and provide any additional documentation. According to the records that we have on file, the bank submitted the account for closure.

Senator JOHNSON and I recently issued a supplemental to our report that showed Hunter Biden's close business associate Rob Walker received \$6 million from a Chinese company linked to the Communist regime.

There is yet another link in the chain from the Biden family and their associates to the Chinese Government.

The report also showed that State Department officials believed that Hunter Biden's Burisma board membership created the perception of a conflict of interest and was "very awkward for all U.S. officials pushing an anticorruption agenda in Ukraine," end of quote from a State Department official.

Secretary of State Kerry publicly denied knowing of Hunter Biden's role on the Burisma board. We acquired evidence that shows that Kerry did, in fact, know about that role.

In December 2015, instead of following U.S. objectives of confronting oligarchs, Vice President Biden's staff advised him to avoid commenting on Burisma's oligarch and instead say: "I am not going to get into naming names or accusing individuals."

Joe Biden was running an anticorruption agenda in Ukraine, and he pulled his punches while his son was on the board of Burisma.

Based on witness testimony, Burisma's owner allegedly paid a \$7 million bribe to officials serving under Ukraine's prosecutor general to shut the case against him. When he allegedly paid that bribe, Hunter Biden was on the Burisma board.

These examples are just a sampling from the report that Senator JOHNSON and I put out and just the tip of the iceberg with respect to the Biden family's troubled ties to governments adverse to U.S. interests.

These associations, and the millions of dollars that passed between and among Hunter Biden, James Biden, and others, create criminal financial, counterintelligence, and extortion concerns. That is why I have written to the Justice Department about the risk that Hunter and James Biden essentially served as agents of the Communist government for purposes of their registering under the Foreign Agents Registration Act.

After Hunter Biden publicly confirmed he was under criminal investigation, liberal news outlets reported on concerns that his financial associations could create criminal financial and counterintelligence problems—something you heard from the Johnson-Grassley report several weeks ago. That is what we said in September 2020, and we were roundly criticized for it.

And just over the weekend, a new email was made public that reportedly says that Joe Biden and his brother were "office mates" with the very same Chinese nationals whom we wrote about in our report. Those same individuals were the ones with links to the Communist regime and that regime's military.

Based on all the facts known to date, Joe Biden has a lot of explaining to do. I have run many oversight operations and investigations during the course of my career. I am interested in the facts, in the evidence, and in the truth. I learned a lesson a long time ago when I first started my oversight focus; that is, no matter how difficult the media or the other side of the aisle makes it to find the facts, never give up. Keep working hard. The American taxpayers deserve nothing less.

That is the attitude and approach that I have had my entire career, and that is what I will take with me as I continue to look into the Biden family matters and as I move to a leadership position on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF SANDY HOOK SHOOTING

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, 8 years ago this morning, I was in Bridgeport, CT. I had done an event early that morning with the mayor, and I was due to meet my wife and my two children—then 4 years old and 1—on a train platform in Bridgeport to head down to New York City, to spend the rest of that Friday afternoon with my young kids, their first chance to see the Christmas decorations of the city.

I received a phone call while on the train platform telling me that something had happened in Sandy Hook, CT. Sandy Hook is a section of Newtown, CT.

I debated whether or not to still go down to New York, but as the news started to become more clear, I got in the car and headed up to the firehouse just down a short road from Sandy Hook Elementary School, where an emergency response effort was gathering.

It was there that 20 parents found out what had happened inside that school, as the rest of the world was finding out that same gruesome news.

That was 8 years ago today—mark today—that tragic anniversary of the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Since that day, I have gotten to know those families—the mothers and the fathers of the children who were killed, the daughters, the siblings of educators who were killed. There were six educators inside Sandy Hook Elementary School who lost their lives that day—heroes all. There were 20 children. I have also gotten to know the community of Sandy Hook even better than I ever had during my 6 years representing them in the House of Representatives.

Sandy Hook was and is a miraculous place. As much as the world saw evil that day, perpetuated by a young man named Adam Lanza, what happened in the hours and days, weeks and months following, in and around Sandy Hook, told us what really sits inside of us, and that is an indescribable goodness, an ability to meet evil with all sorts of generosity that poured on to Sandy Hook from all over the world in big ways and small ways.

Teddy bears were sent in to Sandy Hook by the thousands in the days and weeks afterward. A fund was set up for the families of the victims. Millions of dollars went into that fund to help pay for the college educations of the brothers and sisters who were left behind. The community wrapped its arms around those families, around the first responders. And while Sandy Hook will never ever be the same ever again, I was able to see firsthand what truly lies inside all of us.

Over the last 8 years, we have tried to make good by the memory of those kids. There is no way to fill that hole, but I have watched as communities have been changed through the generosity that has come out of that tragedy. Almost every family established a unique not-for-profit that is doing all sorts of incredible work, all sort of based in many ways off of the loves of those children.

There are charities that are building playgrounds for kids who love to climb and swing. There are charities that are providing access to animals for young kids in need, in memory of the kids who died that day who loved animals. There are charities that are building social-emotional help, trying to make sure that you never ever get in a situation ever again where a young man like Adam Lanza feels so separated from society, his community, his peers, and re-

ality that someone thinks to do what he did. Just on the charitable side of the equation, there is so much over the last 8 years that has happened that has changed people's lives, that has saved lives, because of what those families and what the community of Newtown has done.

There has been policy change as well. We passed the Mental Health Reform Act in the U.S. Senate and in the House, and it was signed into law, one of the last things that President Obama did before he left office.

Of course, we have had an ongoing conversation about the way in which we change our gun laws. Many of us in Connecticut have strong feelings that if Adam Lanza wasn't able to get his hands as easily on a semi-automatic military-style weapon, he may not have ever made the journey to that school that morning. So we continue in our work to try to reset the gun laws of this Nation to try to make sure that no tragedy like that ever happens again simply because of ease of access to a weapon of that power.

About a month after that shooting in Sandy Hook Elementary School, I had the chance to visit a community center in the North End of Hartford. I had just been sworn in as a Senator. The tragedy in Sandy Hook happened after my election to Senate but before I had been sworn in. After I was sworn in to the Senate, I went to a community center in the North End of Hartford where I met with the families of the victims of gun violence from that neighborhood. By the time Sandy Hook had happened in 2012, 20 young men and women had lost their lives to gunfire in Hartford. As for the families that we met that day, their hearts grieved deeper than anyone else for the families in Sandy Hook because they knew what that pain is like. They had lost sons and daughters themselves. But they were also furious that the whole country was waking up to the epidemic of gun violence in this country after Newtown when it had been happening in Hartford and Bridgeport and New Haven and New Orleans and Chicago and Los Angeles and Baltimore for decades without much action and without much attention from the mainstream news media or from those in power.

Many of us had to reconcile the ways in which we had spent our public career in the weeks and months after Sandy Hook. I am embarrassed by the fact that I didn't do more when I was in the House of Representatives, that I didn't do more when I was in the State legislature, to try to address the epidemic of gun violence in this country, wherever it happens. There were many people in this Chamber who stood up in the wake of Sandy Hook and decided that they were going to lead—people like PAT TOOMEY and JOE MANCHIN—in ways that they hadn't led before.

I think we have all had to reassess our priorities. We have all had to think about whether we measured up to this moment that we live in today, where

100 people died from gun violence and a lot of kids who go to school around this country just expect that, at some point in their young lives, they will be met with a mass shooting. So we come here 8 years later, and we try to measure what has happened. Have we made enough change? And we try to recommit ourselves to these ideas moving forward.

I am proud of many of the things we have done. I am proud of all the charitable efforts, and I am proud of the Mental Health Reform Act, and I am proud we have put more money into school safety. I am proud that a lot of private-sector entities have stood up to stop weapons from being carried into public spaces.

But I am also furious. I am also furious that there are easy, popular things that we could be doing to stop the likelihood of another Sandy Hook, to reduce the level of gun violence that happens in our city, and we choose not to take those steps.

Now, universal background checks wouldn't have saved the lives of those kids in Sandy Hook, but those parents came here and lobbied for that legislation in 2013 because they know that, if that legislation was in place, there would be a whole lot of other kids alive throughout this country because the flow of illegal guns would be stunted into our cities and many of our neighborhoods.

Those families in Sandy Hook don't necessarily care how it gets done. They just want to make sure that there are less parents that ever have to go through what they have gone through. And despite the fact that 95 percent of Americans support something like universal background checks, we still haven't done it here—an example of where democracy just doesn't seem to be working.

So we still have lots to do. I am sure I will get the opportunity over the course of 2021 to talk a lot about the path forward on changing our gun laws.

But the final thing that I want to say today, before I yield the floor to Senator BLUMENTHAL, is that for those Americans who haven't had to come face-to-face with a tragedy like that, maybe for those who haven't been around that kind of pain and sorrow, maybe it is a little bit hard to understand perspective. One of the things we have tried to do in the last 8 years is, on this day—the 1-year, the 2-year, the 3-year, the 4-year, and now the 8-year mark—to just ask people on this day to go out and do something nice for a friend, for a relative, for a stranger. Just act in a kind, generous way, and maybe, over the course of the next year, make it a habit to do a little bit more than you would have done otherwise to help people in and around you in the ways that people helped the community of Sandy Hook—the parents, the relatives—in small and big ways in the wake of the tragedy 8 years ago.

When you are around that kind of loss and pain, when you think about what it is like to lose a child, I think it helps to give some perspective as to what is really important in this world.

We have a habit in this business to treat each other unkindly, and I am guilty of that, just like everyone else in this body is. Especially these days, we tend to fall into this trap too easily in which we assume bad motives of folks who just think differently than us. There are some folks out there today who won't go to businesses that are owned by Republicans or won't associate themselves with folks who might have more progressive views than they have. Politics matter. Don't get me wrong. But there are things that matter more than politics. And when we think about what those families are going through today as they are forced to relive the events of that day at Sandy Hook Elementary School, we should be reminded of how lucky we are to still be on this Earth; for those who haven't endured that kind of loss, how lucky we are to still have our children by our side. And we should remember that kindness, treating people respectfully, understanding what is important in the long run—family, friendships, relationships—that is one of the lessons, I hope, of Sandy Hook.

So this is never a fun day to come down to the floor and mark the anniversary of Sandy Hook, but I want to finish by just saying thank you to the parents and the families for letting Senator BLUMENTHAL and I into their lives.

I have these friendships, these bonds with those families today that I never expected but now may be more meaningful to me than any other relationships that I have. And I do have strong words often for my colleagues about our unwillingness to make change in this body, but it is because, when my public service is done, the measure of whether I succeeded or failed, to me, in many ways is in the hands of those families. Whether they think that I have made a difference to honor the memory of their children is probably what will matter to me more than anything else when I hang up my public service spikes a few years from now—5 years from now, 10 years from now.

I thank them for enduring this pain, for reaching out to those of us in positions of leadership to help guide us, and for finding all sorts of ways to lift up the light and the memory of their children, of their parents, of those that fell 8 years ago today in Sandy Hook.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, let me begin where Senator MURPHY so eloquently finished.

One of the great honors of my life has been to know and cherish the friendship of the wonderful parents and loved ones of those 20 beautiful children and sixth grade educator that perished 8 years ago today. And I have been proud

to work with Senator MURPHY, a true champion of stopping gun violence, in our efforts over these last 8 years.

That day began for them as it has begun for all of us as parents—for me as a parent of four, for Senator MURPHY as a dad of two—making breakfast, dropping off kids, heading to work. Among the beautiful holiday ornaments that decorated Newtown and Sandy Hook on that day—it was a normal day, until it wasn't. It was a normal day until those minutes when life changed irreparably for those parents and loved ones and for us.

Yes, I had championed the cause of gun violence prevention for years before that day. As State attorney general, I began lawsuits; I supported the cause of banning the assault weapons in Connecticut and defending that ban in our State courts. But that day changed us forever.

We went to Sandy Hook, and what we saw was unspeakable grief, pain, and anguish that still haunt me. What I saw that afternoon will stay with me not just as a source of grief and pain but also as a cry for action, as an undeniable mandate for action to honor with action those beautiful lives—to honor them not just with words, speeches, rhetoric, but with real action.

For all of us, random acts of kindness are within our reach. Those acts of kindness to commemorate the gentle beauty and grace and dignity, the love and laughter, the futures that were lost—that is not just an expression of pain and grief; it is a moral imperative.

With grief comes trauma and lifelong scars that never fade. But what I saw in those hours after that brutal, unimaginable massacre was also unspeakable goodness—the first responders who came and saw the carnage that brought tears to their eyes, the fire and police service, the community leaders, the men and women of faith. Father Bob Weiss, now monsignor, brought us together that evening in St. Rose of Lima Church when the grief and pain were raw, as raw as the cold of that winter night, and so many came—in fact, so many that they couldn't fit in the church. They heard it by loud speaker outside, and I said: The world is watching.

In fact, the world watched with awe because Sandy Hook came to show the resilience and courage and strength of those families who have championed this cause of preventing gun violence but also launched foundations and philanthropic efforts in the names and memories of their children to do good and to change lives for the better. They are resilient and strong like Newtown is resilient and strong.

This morning, in a vigil done virtually, led by Connecticut Against Gun Violence, we celebrated the lives not only of those 20 beautiful children and sixth grade educators but everyone in Connecticut over the past year who has died from gun violence because no community is immune from it. It strikes

every neighborhood and area of our State and of our country. So honoring with action is something that we must do in this body.

One of the memories that also haunts me is of the day when we came within a few votes of passing a universal background check bill—almost 55 votes but not enough to reach 60, a majority of the Senate but not enough for cloture. And from that Gallery, literally, came the shout: Shame. Indeed, shame—shame on us in the U.S. Senate for being complicit in the continuing deaths of thousands over these past 8 years, thousands that could have been prevented, and thousands that have our culpability. Shame on us for failing to honor with action and to move forward on universal background checks and emergency orders—emergency risk protection orders. Those two steps keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people who would do harm to themselves through suicide, as well as to others in the shootings that take place on our streets and our neighborhoods.

Connecticut has led the way on those measures and others—Ethan's Law for safe storage, a ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, ghost gun bans, and other measures that essentially make our neighborhoods and lives safer. But even Connecticut, with the strongest gun measures in the country, is no safer than any State with the weakest because guns have no respect for State boundaries. They cross State lines, and the "crime guns" that come into Connecticut are the source of those shootings that kill our people.

So there are simple, straightforward steps that we can take—commonsense measures, including stopping the nearly complete, unprecedented immunity of gun manufacturers from any legal responsibility and making sure that they bear liability for the deaths that they cause.

Our lives have never been the same since Sandy Hook. But in the wake of that tragedy—as well as Parkland, Las Vegas, Charleston, El Paso, Orlando, and Pittsburgh, and countless others, mass shootings, individual deaths—there has grown a movement, and it is a movement led by young people and by people who care about this cause without partisan politics. It is a new generation of leaders. It is a movement born of that grief and pain and anger—the fury of knowing that democracy is not working, the tenacity born of the injustice of those deaths and injuries and trauma. They are fighting to make sure that what happened at Sandy Hook or any of those other places never happens again. It is a new class of heroes, and their time is now.

Their organizations are diverse: Moms Demand Action, Students Demand Action, March for Our Lives, Giffords, Connecticut Against Gun Violence, Newtown Action Alliance, and Sandy Hook Promise. These are just a few of them, and they are a movement, and they are causing a change in the

consciousness of America so that now more than 90 percent of Americans support universal background checks.

A comparable number support emergency risk protection orders known as red flag statutes. Seventeen States now have them and increased substantially after Parkland, and they are not alone. They are joined by survivors from countless communities—too many communities. They are joined by law enforcement officials, first responders, and emergency room nurses and doctors who have the firsthand education about what gun violence does to a human body and a human mind. They are joined also by advocates and activists and community leaders from every community across the country because this epidemic affects everyone. They are the true leaders of this movement, and I am proud to stand with them today as I do every day.

My hope is that a new Congress will break this complicity and that we will move forward, that a new Congress will break the inaction, and then a new President will change the dynamic, not only in this Congress but in the country, and take advantage of the historic opportunity we have.

With a new administration, we have not only this momentous opportunity but also a moral imperative. We have that opportunity to enact strong, commonsense gun violence prevention measures and, in addition, although no substitute for legislative action, strong Executive action to enhance the effectiveness of background checks, to stop the spread of ghost guns, to take other measures that are within the power of the President alone, and to make sure that we explore and use every possible opportunity.

The States will continue acting alone if the Federal Government fails to join them. States like Connecticut and others around the country who want to protect their citizens will continue to be proactive.

We mark this painful anniversary with renewed resolve—resolve to continue to honor, with positive action, those whose lives were lost at Sandy Hook but also to redouble our efforts to educate and enlist our fellow citizens. It is long past time; 8 years is a long time—much too long for this inaction.

Our hearts still ache. Our anger still burns. Our grief and pain are still there. For those families, they will never go away. But make no mistake, this pandemic is no excuse for inaction. If anything, COVID-19 has raised the number of gun purchases and increased the number of guns posing dangers in our neighborhoods. It has heightened the stress and anxiety of people who might use those guns in incidents of domestic violence. It has expanded the jeopardies of suicide and self-destructive behavior.

We have no excuse for inaction because of the pandemic. We have every reason to feel a greater sense of urgency now, in the midst of this pan-

demic, to stop the epidemic of gun violence.

Let us draw from the strength and fortitude of these brave families and loved ones—not only in Sandy Hook but survivors and loved ones everywhere—and say, finally, boldly, unapologetically, that enough is enough. Enough is enough.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

COLLEGIATE ATHLETE AND COMPENSATION RIGHTS ACT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, those of you who have taken time out to watch college sports this fall—and I know there are many in this Chamber who have, and they know that the games this year have looked very different when you compare them to previous years' games. A lot has changed for these young players, but they are no less popular with their fans and no less important to the success and prominence of the academic institutions they represent.

For a while now, I have been joined by other members of the Commerce Committee as we have tried to resolve the tension that exists between the NCAA and college sports stars over a student athlete's right to earn compensation for the use of their name, image, or likeness. This is called the NIL issue.

Last week, Senator WICKER, who is chairman of the Commerce Committee, introduced the Collegiate Athlete and Compensation Rights Act, which would finally create a uniform national framework to allow student athletes to receive that compensation without the risk of losing their amateur status and without falling into traps set by dishonest outside parties looking to exploit their fame.

Normally, we don't make too much hay over a bill introduction, but just getting everyone to the table is a first step that student athletes have wanted to see happen for a while. And I thank Chairman WICKER and Senator MORAN for backing this legislation.

I do want to point out that the reason the Senate has stepped in is because the NCAA just never could get around to addressing this issue. They kept kicking the can down the road. They kept sending it to one committee and to another committee, and the NCAA has shown very little determination to solve this issue for these young athletes. Because the leadership at the NCAA has proven unable and has shown an inability to address this, we have stepped up to address this issue. Our student athletes deserve more respect than they have been shown by the NCAA.

(Mr. BOOZMAN assumed the Chair.)

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

Now, Mr. President, on another topic, 2020 has been a very difficult year, but there have been a few rays of sunshine this year in spite of the quarantines and the social distancing.

We were still able to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amend-

ment and the suffragists who fought so diligently and consistently for 72 years for passage of the 19th Amendment. Much of this celebration of activism and equal rights focused on Nashville, TN, where the suffragists gathered in the summer of 1920. At the center of that battle for the votes sat the Hermitage Hotel, which served as the headquarters and played host to some of the most important negotiations surrounding the Tennessee Legislature's final vote on the amendment.

This year, the National Park Service honored the Hermitage Hotel and the suffragists who fought those battles by designating the site as a national historic landmark. As a female lawmaker, this designation was especially important to me. This Congress, I had the pleasure of serving here in the Senate alongside a fantastic group of women who were living proof of how far we have come since August 18, 1920.

Unfortunately, this year we were also reminded of how far we yet have to go.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, even before President Trump officially nominated Judge Amy Coney Barrett to fill Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's seat on the Supreme Court, liberals in the media and many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle unfortunately—well, they took it upon themselves to be the first to question Judge Barrett's fitness. But rather than attacking her record, they launched some truly insulting attacks on her religion, her family, her relationship with her husband, and her choice to balance a stunning career with a large, blended family.

You can count on the left to choose intellectual isolation, and you can count on them to look at a woman on the political right and say: If you are pro-family, pro-religion, pro-business, pro-military, pro-life, we do not want to hear from you.

Those attacks may have made the American people cringe, but they certainly didn't turn public opinion against Judge Barrett's confirmation. That campaign failed miserably. If anything, it provided a much needed reminder that, just like the fight for suffrage in the 1920s, the modern woman's fight for equality in 2020 is about more than succeeding in a single job or engaging in a single civic action; it is about exercising our right to participate in democracy and engage in the public square without having to throw ourselves at the mercy of the left's moving goalpost that they use to arbitrarily define what is and is not an acceptable way of life.

Justice Barrett is now the third Justice President Trump has placed on the Supreme Court. She is in good company because she is part of a class of 229 Federal judges confirmed so far under President Trump, 144 of them during this Congress. And I expect that we will see a few more join the ranks before we adjourn for Christmas, including two Tennesseans who are on this list.