

Now that she is no longer drafting annual appropriations bills, we hope that Jean will have more quality time to spend with Pat, with her husband Pete, and with her many family members and friends and maybe even a little more time for hockey and gardening. Although if she is going to support hockey, she really needs to support the Bruins, so we are not sure how much time we want to give her for that.

But it gives me great joy to publicly thank Jean for her extraordinary work for this committee. Congratulations, Jean. Thank you for your decades of service to our country and your commitment to the U.S. Senate. Neither your expertise nor your good humor will soon be replaced, but your work will not be forgotten anytime soon.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HAGERTY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF GREGORY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, today I have the honor to rise in support of Greg Williams to serve as a judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of Delaware, one of the busiest and, we believe, most important district courts in our Nation.

Before delving into what makes Delaware's district court such an essential part of the American economy and what makes Greg Williams an exceptional nominee to serve, in the words of the American Bar Association, they deem him "well qualified" to be a Federal judge.

I want to share some background and the process that we use in Delaware for making recommendations to the Federal bench to the President.

A few years ago my friend—and I call him my wingman—Senator CHRIS COONS and I had the opportunity to make recommendations to the White House for two vacancies on this same court. There was, at the time, a President of a different party, and the majority here was on the other side, not on this side at that time.

Our process was simple then and was straightforward and borrowed heavily from the process that I used while serving as Governor of Delaware for 8 years. Throughout those 8 years when I was privileged to serve as Governor, we relied on a judicial nominating commission and charged them with a simple task. Basically, this was it: find the most qualified individuals, regardless of political party, make recommendations to the Governor for appointments to Delaware's many important State courts, including our State supreme court and the court of chancery.

We used a similar process for Federal district court vacancies. The process served Delaware well during those 8 years, and I believe that the process Senator COONS and I have used now serves our Nation well, too, regardless of which political party controls the White House or the Senate. It has yielded yet another extraordinary nominee. That nominee is Greg Williams, a partner at Fox Rothschild. Former president of the Delaware State Bar Association and President Biden's nominee to serve as the next judge on the U.S. District Court for Delaware.

But Greg is more than a lawyer, much more. He is a father, a husband, a son, and a brother. In fact, he is the youngest brother in his family of five, with four older sisters, and I know they help to keep him on the straight and narrow much like my older sister did with me.

Greg has been married to his high school sweetheart, Terina, for 27 years. Together, they have raised two children in Delaware that any one of us would be proud to call our own.

A Villanova Law School graduate, Greg has worked at one of top law firms in the Nation, Fox Rothschild, for the past 28 years.

Through hard work and commitment to excellence, in 2003, Greg became the first African-American attorney to have been hired as an associate and then be named as a partner at Fox Rothschild. Greg learned those values—hard work and commitment to excellence—in part as a member of the U.S. Army Reserves, where he served from 1986 to 1994—part of those years when I was his commander in chief as Governor of the State of Delaware.

After law school, Greg embarked on a successful legal career that has earned him the respect and admiration of Delaware's highly regarded legal community.

Greg has particular expertise in intellectual property and business litigation, which make him particularly well-suited for the Delaware District Court.

More than his professional qualifications, though, Greg is the personification of the Golden Rule, which calls on us to treat one another the way we want to be treated. And, as a result, he is also the personification of judicial temperament in that courtroom—and any courtroom, for that matter.

Like Senator COONS and me and many of our colleagues, Greg is a person of deep faith. He understands personally the words "Golden Rule" and what they mean. And if confirmed, I believe he will use that rule to guide him on the bench.

Let me close by saying this: We have all probably heard a saying that is oftentimes used in relationship to an undersized boxer—someone who punches above their weight.

The Delaware District Court is one of the busiest courts in our country. It handles an array of cases related to in-

tellectual property law, patent law, bankruptcy law, and other specialized business cases that are critical to the functioning of our national economy.

Like our small State, this court punches above its weight, and our nominee Greg Williams not only has the credentials and the temperament, but the strong work ethic that are necessary for this court to continue to function as one of the most important district courts in our land.

I consider it a privilege to give him my strongest possible endorsement, and I encourage my colleagues to join Senator COONS and me today in supporting his nomination on the Senate floor.

And with that, I don't see if—I don't know that our colleague—here comes Senator COONS, here to speak on behalf of this nominee as well.

I will just say this: You know, we have judicial nominees come before us, not every day but often in this body. In some cases, the folks who are from the State where that nominee hails, they know them, have at least a passing knowledge of them, and have maybe met them.

We have known Greg Williams for almost a quarter of a century. He is not just one of the finest lawyers in our State; he is one of the finest human beings in our State.

It is an honor for me to join Senator COONS in suggesting his name to the President of this country. We are grateful the President actually submitted that name now to the U.S. Senate for our consideration.

And with that, I am going to yield the floor. I see we have Senator CASSIDY here. I don't know if he has the opportunity to—no, he is going to wait for a while.

I am going to just stop right here. Senator COONS stopped just briefly. I think he is going to be right back on the floor; and, hopefully, he will be able to pick up right where I—I will do the handoff to my colleague from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 1 minute of floor time to speak to the impending nomination.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I would like to thank my colleague and senior Senator, my friend, Mr. TOM CARPER, who allows me to be his wingman here on the floor of the Senate and in our home State of Delaware.

I just wanted to speak briefly to the outstanding qualifications of the nominee that will be before us in a moment, Greg Williams of Delaware.

As a member of the Delaware Bar, as a member of the Judiciary Committee, I have joined my senior Senator, friend, and colleague in advancing this nomination, both suggesting to the White House strongly that he would be an excellent next member of the important Federal bench in Delaware and

that he would represent our Nation well and contribute to our Federal judiciary, which is globally the gold standard for its capability, its independence, and its integrity.

Greg has practiced for decades in Delaware. He is one of the best respected, leading complex commercial litigators, and an experienced intellectual property litigator.

The District of Delaware is one of the busiest Federal courts in our entire country. Because of our unique place in American corporate law, because of the quality and the competence of our bench, we handle an enormous number of patent cases, a significant number of corporate cases.

I don't know if my colleague has mentioned one of the top-of-the-charts cases about to come to Delaware, but when you make a promise to purchase a company like—I don't know, hypothetically, Twitter—and then the deal comes apart, that ends up in a Delaware court called our chancery court. Our Federal District Court and our Federal Bankruptcy Courts handle significant litigation.

Greg is someone who also, as a family man, as a person of faith, as an outstanding leader in our community, as the past president of the bar association, as the past chairman of the judicial nominating commission on behalf of our Governor, he has served our community.

He brings his heart, his values, his intellect, and his skill to his service each and every day, and I am honored to join my senior Senator in speaking on his behalf on the floor. And I look forward to working with my colleagues across the aisle to ensure a swift confirmation vote today.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am hearing a lot of news reports, and if they are correct, it sounds like the majority party has a very partisan bill that they want to call a drug pricing bill.

And I am also told that this is moving along because it looks like the Parliamentarian is currently reviewing that proposed legislation to see if it fits into the process of reconciliation.

If the majority party passes its partisan bill, it will be bad policy for patients and taxpayers, but that doesn't mean we don't have answers to the problems that they are trying to solve.

But first of all, let me say what the Senate-proposed legislation—what we know about it—would do. It would put taxpayers at risk for more spending. It

would fail to enact any bipartisan accountability of Big Pharma and powerful middlemen that we call pharmacy benefit managers or PBMs for short.

Yes, a bipartisan bill limiting pharmaceutical increases is possible. And their bill has been developed in secret, with no markup or open debate.

Now, this partisan bill and this process are a far cry from bipartisan drug pricing ideas that I have developed over the past few years.

In the past 12 months alone, I have passed five bipartisan drug pricing bills out of committee that will lower prices and create more competition and hold Big Pharma and PBMs accountable.

In addition, I have a comprehensive bill to lower prescription drug prices that could pass the Senate with at least 60 votes. My bill is bipartisan; it has been negotiated; and it is comprehensive.

The bill is called the Prescription Drug Pricing Act. It is also known as Grassley-Wyden, but I want to be fair to Wyden. I am not sure that he would claim that he negotiated that bill, but I still like the bipartisan part of it.

The Senate should act today on this bipartisan bill to lower drug prices because this is what Grassley-Wyden would do: It would lower costs for seniors by \$72 billion. It would save the taxpayers \$95 billion. Those are CBO figures.

It establishes an out-of-pocket cap, eliminates the donut hole, and it redesigns Medicare Part D, that needs some redesigning after 19 years. This legislation will hold Big Pharma and powerful PBMs accountable.

Now, too often, cheaper alternatives like generics are available, but Big Pharma and these middlemen have an incentive to push the patient into higher-cost drugs, and patients pay the cost. My bill ends that incentive and is very pro-consumer.

A third point I want to make, it ends taxpayer subsidies to Big Pharma. It does it by capping annual price increases of Medicare Part B and D drugs at inflation. In other words, drug companies can't raise prices two or three times a year 5 to 10 percent—once a year at no more than CPI.

A Kaiser Foundation study found that half of the drugs in Medicare Part B and D increased higher than inflation over the period of time that Kaiser study covered. Over 600 drugs during the study increased 7.5 percent or more.

Another point of the bill: It establishes accountability and transparency. There are 25 major provisions to my bill to reform how the pharmaceutical industry operates.

Accountability in my bill includes, one, ending clawbacks that drive up costs at pharmacy counters for the patient. Second, ending "spread pricing" in Medicaid contracts that drive up taxpayers' costs. Three, requires sunshine on powerful PBM financial audits so the public knows the true net cost of a drug.

Everything with PBMs is opaque. You don't know what goes on between the manufacturer and the consumer.

And, four and lastly, requires sunshine on excessive drug price increases and sunshine on the launch price of a new high-cost drug.

Big Pharma and powerful middlemen benefit from the current system that we have today, and at the same time, patients and taxpayers suffer. My bill's bipartisan reform will change all of that.

Finally, the bill is bipartisan. I suppose Democrats get tired of me talking about a bipartisan bill when they are in the secrecy of their rooms drawing up their own bill.

We have 11 Republicans who supported this bill in the Finance Committee markup or are cosponsors of the bill. Thirteen Democrats supported this bill in markup. It was debated and negotiated in public.

But don't take my word for it, take it from some of my Democratic colleagues. A few months ago, the senior Senator from Delaware said this:

Senator GRASSLEY did, I thought, a masterful job in drafting a bill with broad bipartisan support.

And the chairman of the Finance Committee and senior Senator from Oregon—and he is probably going to hate me for saying this, but I am going to quote him:

Big Pharma was relentless in fighting what Senator GRASSLEY is talking about and has been for 2 years.

My bill will save seniors money, save taxpayers money, hold Big Pharma and powerful middlemen accountable, and enact necessary reform and sunshine; plus, it has bipartisan support.

So we can lower drug prices without having to resort to this partisan reconciliation process. The Grassley Prescription Drug Pricing Reduction Act is a solution. It is a product of a bipartisan, transparent process. Compare that to the secrecy of the Democratic reconciliation process.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant executive 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 Executive Calendar No. 989, Gregory Brian Williams, of Delaware, to be United States District Judge for the District of Delaware.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Sherrod Brown, Tammy Baldwin, Tina Smith, Jeanne Shaheen, Chris Van Hollen, Elizabeth Warren, Catherine Cortez Masto, Benjamin L. Cardin, Christopher Murphy, Maria Cantwell, Christopher A. Coons, Mazie Hirono, Jack Reed, Gary C. Peters, Tammy Duckworth.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.