

In 2013, following her clerkships, Ms. Kobick joined the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office. She worked there until 2021 as an assistant attorney general in the constitutional and administrative law division. Her practice spanned a range of substantive areas, including healthcare, child welfare, administrative law, and constitutional issues. Since the summer of 2021, Ms. Kobick has served as deputy State solicitor, where she has primarily handled civil and criminal appellate litigation.

Ms. Kobick has received support from a number of groups, including from Massachusetts trial and appellate judges, former Massachusetts attorneys general, and her clerk colleagues at the U.S. Supreme Court—clerks who worked for Justices nominated by Presidents of both parties. Many of Ms. Kobick's supporters cite her dedication and character, alongside her superior skill and judgment. Unsurprisingly, the American Bar Association has given her its highest rating of "well qualified."

Perhaps the best evidence of Ms. Kobick's fitness to serve on the district court is the enthusiastic support her nomination has received from her own opposing counsel. A cadre of attorneys who has litigated cases against parties Ms. Kobick represented has praised her "meticulous advocacy" across a variety of legal proceedings.

From oral arguments before State and Federal trial court judges to appellate arguments before the First Circuit Court of Appeals and the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, the very lawyers who faced off against her in court have said that "her legal abilities and intellect are first-rate as shown through the clarity and persuasiveness of her written and oral advocacy." They have lauded her preparedness and performance under pressure, her thoughtfulness as a colleague, and her skill in diffusing "any contentious situation."

Over the course of her career, Ms. Kobick has embodied the highest standards of the legal profession. True to her roots as a public schoolteacher, Ms. Kobick has mentored public interest-oriented law students at my alma mater, Boston College Law School, and has served as a mentor with The Appellate Project, an organization that matches attorneys with law students of color who are interested in appellate advocacy.

Senator WARREN and I are proud to have recommended Julie Kobick's nomination to President Biden, and we proudly speak in favor of her nomination before the full Senate today. She is a dedicated public servant of the highest caliber, and she will bring a rare level of legal talent to the bench. Her unquestionable integrity, her impeccable reputation, and her depth in both humility and skill make her uniquely suited for service as a Federal district court judge.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote yes on cloture and then on confirma-

tion. This will be a judge all of you will be proud you have voted for.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I think we are all aware that parts of our world are on fire. The world is on fire in Ukraine and in Eastern Europe, and the world is on fire in the Middle East. I wouldn't describe the world as being on fire in the Indo-Pacific, but there are certainly embers, and they are smoldering.

I think it is clear to most Americans that President Xi in China, that President Putin in Russia, and that the Ayatollah in Iran are working together, and their objective is to have Russia dominate Central and Eastern Europe and to have the Ayatollah in Iran dominate the Middle East. The Ayatollah, of course, is funding and supports Hamas.

There is no cause in the world—none—that can justify what Hamas did to the innocent people of Israel. The people of Hamas are so evil they will kill you and drink your blood out of a boot. And President Xi and President Putin and the Ayatollah in Iran are just fine with that.

The third objective of China, Russia, and Iran is to allow China to dominate the Indo-Pacific and be free to make moves in Sub-Saharan Africa and in South America.

Parts of the world are on fire. America is about to find out what it is made of because the world I just described is not a world safe for America.

But as we meet these challenges, Mr. President—and by God, we will meet them. We will meet them. While we are doing that, I don't want us to forget about our homeland. We have a lot of problems domestically, and I don't want us to lose sight of them. I think about them every day. I know you do, too, Mr. President.

We still have millions of Americans who are too poor to be sick despite the fact that we have the best quality of healthcare in America in all of human history. Notice I didn't say that we have the best way of delivering that healthcare. But we have the best quality of healthcare in all of human history, but we have people in this country—many of them are middle class—who are too poor to be sick. Since the Affordable Care Act passed, we were told that it was going to make our lives better, that it was going to make health insurance more accessible and cheaper. Since the Affordable Care Act was passed, health insurance premiums have tripled.

We also know domestically that our border is an open, bleeding wound. It is an open, bleeding wound, and it is within the power of this Congress to fix that.

But none of those domestic problems that I just described—and I could continue with others, as I know you could, too, Mr. President—is hurting the

American people as much as President Biden's inflation. Not a single one. President Biden's inflation is gutting the American people like a fish. It is a cancer—a cancer—on the American dream.

In my State alone, in Louisiana—we are not a wealthy State. My people are pretty middle class. They get up every day. They go to work. They obey the law. They try to do the right things by their kids, try to save a little for retirement. The median household income for a family of four in my State is \$55,000 a year. A lot of States are above us; some are below us.

President Biden's inflation, which is manmade—and that man's name is Joe Biden—is costing my people, the average Louisiana family, \$806—not a year, a month, \$806 a month. That is \$9,700 a year. Now, imagine if you were making \$55,000 a year, and you have to come out of pocket with an extra \$9,700 a year. You blow through your savings. You max out your credit card. You borrow from your children's college education plan. You borrow from relatives. And then what do you do?

I know what some of my colleagues are thinking: But, KENNEDY, we are doing better on inflation.

We are, and I am so thankful. A year ago, inflation in this country was 8.2 percent. Today, it is 3.7 percent. I am so happy, and I hope it continues to go down, but it is important for us to remember what that means.

A reduction of inflation from 8.2 percent to 3.7 percent—which is still, of course, too high—just means that inflation is rising less rapidly. We still have inflation. Prices are still high, and they continue to go up; they just are not going up as quickly as they were. That is a good thing, but it doesn't solve the problem. That is what we call disinflation. When inflation is rising and we stop it from rising so quickly, that is called disinflation. But that is not what most Americans care about, although that is important to them. What they care about is prices going down, and that is deflation. We do not have deflation.

The point I am trying to make is, we are stuck with these high prices. If they get inflation down to zero, those prices are not going down; they are going to remain the same. They are just not going to rise as quickly. We are stuck. The American people are stuck with these high prices because of the Biden administration.

I could cite you all the sterile statistics you would like, but I want to try to describe in specific terms what it is like for my people to go to the grocery store, to have to—this is an exaggeration but not by much—to have to think about, well, do I have to sell blood plasma today in order to go to the grocery store? Do I have to draw down on the second mortgage on my home in order to go to the grocery store?

Since President Biden has been in office, consumer goods in the United States of America are up 17 percent,

electricity is up 25 percent, eggs are up 29 percent. They are not going down, folks. Even if inflation goes to zero, those prices aren't going down. Potato chips, up 30 percent; bread, up 28 percent; coffee, 30 percent; rice, 26 percent. Flour is up 28 percent; milk, 18 percent; half a gallon of ice cream, 21 percent; chicken, 20 percent.

When you look at larger categories, this is what is happening to the American people. Since President Biden took office—since President Biden took office—all goods and many services in the wealthiest country in all of human history are up 17 percent. Food is up 20 percent. Housing is up 17 percent. Clothing is up 12 percent. Used cars and trucks are up 25 percent. New cars and trucks are up 20 percent. Mortgage rates are up 174 percent—174 percent.

Some may be saying: Well, but wages are going up too.

Thank goodness. In some cases, wages have gone up. But the average wage of the average American has gone down after inflation. The appropriate way to look at wage increases is not to look at the raw aggregate increase; it is looking at the increase after inflation. If you take all of the average wage increases in the United States of America and you looked at the average inflation in the United States of America, workers have actually lost ground. Workers today, in November of 2023, are actually making less per hour after inflation than they were in February of 2021. So don't let anybody tell you that wages have made up for this. They haven't kept up with inflation.

Don't let anybody tell you we are winning the war on high prices. We are getting inflation down, no thanks—no thanks—to the Biden administration and, quite frankly, the U.S. Congress. That is thanks to the Federal Reserve. They have tightened interest rates, which has hurt a lot of people, but they have gotten inflation down. They had to do it with one arm tied behind their backs because the other way you attack inflation and the only way we have ever successfully gotten it down is to have Congress do its part and reduce the rate of growth and spending and debt accumulation. But we haven't done that. We haven't done that. In fact, since 2019, the population of the United States of America is up 1.9 percent. Our country has grown 2 percent since 2019. Do you know how much our budget has grown? Fifty-five percent.

This inflation is manmade, and the man's name is Joe Biden, and we need to address it.

So as we fight a hostile world which day by day is becoming less safe for the American people, I don't want us to lose sight of another problem—an equally important problem—that is stealing the American dream, and it is called President Biden's inflation.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be permitted to speak prior to the scheduled rollcall votes: Myself for up to 15 minutes, Senator GILLIBRAND for up to 5 minutes, Senator COTTON for up to 5 minutes, and Leader SCHUMER for up to 5 minutes.

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

ISRAEL

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, 1 month ago today, Hamas launched its unprovoked attack on the State of Israel, on innocent men, women, and children, civilians all. Hamas entered the country by land, air, and sea, and they brutally murdered more than 1,400 Israelis. They also took hundreds of hostages, some of whom were American citizens. They abused and assaulted innocent civilians and left a trail of devastation in their wake.

In the face of Hamas's barbaric attack, Israel has done what any country would do and defended its citizens and its sovereignty, and it has every right to do so. This basic truth has somehow become a point of confusion in some circles, but we should not be confused.

Many on the far left—including at least one Member of the House of Representatives—have pointed to Israel's defense as an example of what she calls genocide. They act as though Israel was the aggressor here, not Hamas. They called on the President to speak out against the actions of the victim, not the aggressor. It is as though they think Israel is somehow the moral equivalent of the terrorist group Hamas.

It is especially disturbing to see this rhetoric spreading on social media because many people who were not familiar with the facts, the circumstances, and the history of Hamas and Israel, Iran, and Hezbollah—they may actually believe the disinformation and propaganda they see on social media. It is also very deeply disturbing to see how it is absorbed and embraced by many college campuses, and it is downright disturbing, of course, to see it repeated here in the Halls of Congress.

There should be no confusion. Hamas is the aggressor, and Hamas bears ultimate responsibility for the pain and suffering in Israel and in Gaza. Hamas's own tactics are the very reason for the loss of life in Gaza and that it has been so high, because these terrorists, who care nothing about the individuals, have a long history of using Palestinian civilians as human shields for their own benefit.

And then Hamas operates a vast network of tunnels underneath Gaza. The tunnels shield terrorists from the dangerous fighting above ground. They also store critical supplies like water, food, and fuel, which are being kept

from the Palestinian civilians. As many of us are concerned about the humanitarian disaster caused by Hamas's attack on Israel, it is Hamas itself that is exacerbating and making the humanitarian crisis worse.

It seems likely that the tunnels are also the hiding place for more than 200 hostages taken by Hamas last month. A video recently shared online of a Hamas gunman who was captured and interrogated by the Israeli officials was particularly revealing. He said that Hamas shelters in tunnels and basements under clinics, schools, and hospitals because they know the Israelis will not target those locations out of concern for the collateral damage or damage to innocent civilians. That is why Hamas deliberately places innocent Palestinians between its terrorist foot soldiers and incoming rockets.

As a result of Hamas's human shield strategy, the number of civilian casualties in Gaza is devastating. There is no denying that. It is important, though, to remember that the pain and suffering that is occurring throughout Israel and Gaza is directly attributable to Hamas, a U.S.-designated terrorist organization serving as a proxy for the No. 1 state-sponsor of terrorism, which is Iran. The blood of this war is clearly on Hamas's hands.

As the fighting continues, I am reminded of a saying that has been around for years: If Hamas laid down its weapons today, there would be no more violence. If Israel laid down its weapons, there would be no more Israel.

Hamas is not fighting for peace. It is trying to wipe Israel off the map—again, as a proxy for its sponsor, which is the Supreme Leader in Tehran. They all share a desire to wipe the Jewish State off the map entirely.

The United States cannot equivocate between good and evil. We must stand with Israel. There is no question that words are important. We have a responsibility to voice our support, speak out against Hamas, and call out dangerous anti-Semitic slander when we see it.

But words alone are not enough. America has a responsibility to come to the aid of our ally with the resources it needs not only to fight but to actually win this war. This includes air defense systems that safeguard Israeli people from rocket attacks. It includes intelligence support to stay one step ahead of the terrorists. And it includes military aid to find and eliminate the Hamas threat.

As part of that commitment, Congress has a big job to do. We need to pass a supplemental funding bill to ensure Israel has the tools it needs to defeat Hamas terrorists, and, last week, the House of Representatives did just that. They passed an Israel aid bill with bipartisan support. Their legislation would provide up to \$14.3 billion to ensure that Israel has the resources they need to defend themselves.

Our friends across the Capitol offset the spending by reallocating a portion