

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I know all of my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats alike, are anxious to be able to go back home and talk to their constituents, perhaps have a long-delayed medical procedure or doctor visit, or simply take a family vacation during the traditional August recess.

My Republican colleagues and I are, likewise, eager to go back home and talk about the benefits of the One Big Beautiful Bill. I was in Amarillo, TX, in the Texas panhandle on Friday, and just in having a back-and-forth Q&A with the folks who were there, it is evident to me that there is so much in the bill that it takes a while to really explain the benefits.

We know we avoided a tax increase that would have totaled trillions of dollars, roughly benefiting \$3,000 per Texas family.

But there were other benefits that helped our agriculture community, things that, ordinarily, we would have put in a farm bill but made sure we strengthened the safety net for the folks who produce our food and fiber. And then there are other provisions, like the no tax on tips, no tax on Social Security, or overtime.

So there is so much in the bill that is hard to communicate, which means we need to get back home and talk about that and why it is a grand slam home run for our constituents.

But having said that, I don't believe that the Senate should leave town without ensuring that President Trump has his nominees and his team in place. We still have somewhere on the order of 140 backlogged nominees by this President that have been obstructed by the Democrats. We find ourselves really in an unprecedented situation where Democrats, rather than picking and choosing the nominees they choose to object to, have simply chosen to object to all of them, forcing us to burn a lot of valuable floor time that we could be using for other more constructive purposes and delaying President Trump who, after all, won the election last November, the team that he is entitled to help him govern and carry out his policies.

It is absolutely unprecedented, the sort of stonewalling that we are up against. Our Democratic colleagues, after all, are the ones who are holding up this process. I know some people listening may say: Well, isn't this sort of partisan grid lock normal?

The answer is no. We certainly have our fights here and that is OK, that is all well and good. But the reason why Republicans are complaining and the President is complaining about Democratic obstruction is that there is no precedent for objecting to nominees by a President by allowing either a voice vote, which is a nonrollcall vote, or unanimous consent when they are noncontroversial nominees.

This chart to my left indicates that civilian nominees, as opposed to military nominations—which the Senate also confirms—but nonmilitary nominees confirmed by voice vote or on an expedited basis or unanimous consent during a first term.

You see George Herbert Walker Bush. So 98 percent of his nominees to Senate-confirmed positions were confirmed by voice vote or unanimous consent. Again, Clinton, similar numbers, 98 percent. Then you get to George W. Bush and Barack Obama. That number dropped from 98 percent to 90 percent. That is still a pretty good record of expediting these nominees, making sure that the President, whether that President be a Democrat or Republican, have their team on board, which is what the American people voted for when they were elected. Then you see when President Trump came along, the rules of the road were changed where only 65 percent of his first-term nominees were confirmed by voice vote or unanimous consent on an expedited basis. It literally took years for President Trump to get all his nominees on board because of the foot-dragging by our Democratic colleagues back in his first term. Then you see what goes around comes around. Biden's nominees, roughly 57 percent of them, handled on an expedited basis. But what we have seen this term, after this most recent election, is without any precedent, as you can see here.

Basically, what our Democratic colleagues are saying is we will agree to no confirmation votes on Trump nominees during his second term. This is part of what, I guess, you would call the resistance and the polarization of our politics and the fact that our Democrats are not the Democrats of old. These are radicalized people who cannot agree to anything, even when it really is not something that is controversial.

Again, it is fine to disagree about things that we do disagree on. We see the world in a different way or we think we have different and better ideas about what would serve the interest of the American people. But to mindlessly object to President Trump's nominees and deny the American people the benefit of their vote in the last election is simply unfair. It is unfair to the American people whose interests are being harmed by denying these people from being in place and doing their job. It is unfair to President Trump, who is being denied the team that he is entitled to help him carry out his policies. And, finally, it is unfair to the nominees themselves, many of whom have quit their jobs, sold their business, and are simply waiting month after month after month to be able to be confirmed. These are people who are, by and large, not political partisans. They are people who are interested in serving their country in some capacity or another.

Many of these nominees—I think, roughly, 30 of them—are Senate-con-

firmed nominees to serve as an ambassador in our embassies around the world.

I don't have to remind all of us that the world has become a much more dangerous place, and the idea that the United States would not have Senate-confirmed Ambassadors in these Embassies around the world is simply shooting ourselves in the foot. China and Russia and our other adversaries certainly have their Ambassadors working in each of those countries to further their interests, but the idea that the United States would be absent because Senate Democrats simply refuse to confirm these Ambassadors is really beyond the pale. It hurts not only the United States and our foreign policy and our diplomatic efforts, but it also, again, causes harm to the individuals who volunteered to give up their lives and their livelihoods to serve our country, just to be left hanging without any real hope of getting confirmed on a timely basis.

We are not talking about lifetime-tenured judges. Those, obviously, are sort of a different category. We aren't even talking about the President's Cabinet, which is a handful of his most key and most important advisers. What we are talking about, really, are rank-and-file people who are confirmed by a vote of the Senate.

I personally believe that we should change the law and not require Senate confirmation for many of these positions. It is a formality, really, to have to vote on some of these nominees. For example, there is the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration—I am not sure exactly why the Senate should be voting to confirm at all somebody who has been nominated to that position—or the Director of the U.S. Geological Survey or the general counsel for the Veterans' Administration. But regardless of whether or not they should be confirmed by the Senate, they currently are required to be confirmed, and the Democrats simply are mindlessly obstructing the confirmation of these noncontroversial, really apolitical nominees.

We also have people like the Federal Transit Administrator and the Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors—both waiting for confirmation.

The level of partisan gamesmanship that we are currently seeing is really something we have never seen before. This is not healthy for the country, and it is not healthy for this institution.

Again, what we have tended to see is that what goes around comes around. So the temptation will be, if President Trump can't get his team confirmed, when the next Democrat gets elected President of the United States, what will be the natural reaction to that President's nominees? Well, it is going to be to try to do to him what they did to President Trump. I don't think that is good for the country.

We need to break this logjam, and we need to do it now. I believe, if we can't

reach some sort of negotiated outcome that is satisfactory to President Trump, then we need to either stay here or change the Senate rules. I believe that the status quo is unacceptable and that something has to give.

The Senate Democrats are the ones who brought us to where we are today. They are the ones responsible for the blame. But more importantly than that, the American people deserve the services of these individuals who have been nominated for these various Senate-confirmed positions. President Trump is entitled to his team, and this mindless obstruction has to come to an end now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

TARIFFS

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity to talk about two subjects very different in nature. I want to start with the deadline and, I believe, tomorrow's imposition of a 50-percent tariff on Brazil imports.

I really appreciate what the administration is doing, trying to get other countries on notice that we are tired of unfair balance of trade. We have probably allowed it to go on for too long. So some of the chaos that some people may think the administration is creating with these tariffs is absolutely necessary to stop the chaos of the United States being unfairly positioned with trade partners. So on that side of the ledger, I support what the administration is doing.

But as somebody who advised businesses on capital expenditures, on corporate relocations, on manufacturing facilities, those sorts of things, in my prior career, I am worried about how this 50-percent tariff on Brazil—a country that we have a trade surplus with—undermines our credibility as we are trying to negotiate these other tariffs because I met with some members of the Brazilian senate earlier this week in my office. I actually had a number of them there. It was opposition and governing party in my office.

The President has threatened a tariff on Brazil because he is not satisfied with the outcome of a judicial proceeding related to a prior leader in Brazil. I had someone who described themselves as a friend of this man who said: I am a friend of this person, and we are working to try and get that judicial outcome reversed, but we don't understand how a judicial decision of a sovereign nation would end up resulting in a tariff for a country that has a trade surplus with the United States.

I agree, and I think it really puts Brazil in an untenable situation. To avoid the tariff, they would have to disrespect their rule of law, and they would have to overturn, arbitrarily, something that has gone through their courts. Whether or not their courts live up to the standards of the United States, I don't know. I guess you could argue it one way or the other. But at the end of the day, they are a sovereign

nation, and we have a positive balance of trade with them, and we are asking them to reverse a court decision or encounter a 50-percent tariff on goods coming into this country. Well, think coffee, think inputs from manufacturing, think any number of products that you buy, apparel that says "Made in Brazil" having a 50-percent tariff applied to it because our President of the United States doesn't like the outcome of a court system in a sovereign nation.

So I would encourage the President to do like that senate member in my office, who is a member of the opposition, the minority party, who says: He is a friend of mine. We are working through our court system, but allow us to do that. Please don't do the economic damage to a nearly 200-year-old relationship with a sovereign nation.

And on that subject, I agree.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, I do want to take a moment to talk about a separate subject, and that has to do with the blue slip.

Like Chair GRASSLEY said in the Judiciary Committee, most people would not even have any idea what a blue slip is, so let me just explain.

We have district court judges. For district court judges, their territory remains in a given State. We have three districts in North Carolina. We have a policy where both Senators must return a blue slip—I think it was literally blue at some point. I have never seen it, but they had a tradition. But they have to return a blue slip in order for a judicial nominee to move forward. President Trump is, rightly, frustrated because blue slips are not being returned.

But I would urge my colleagues to, respectfully, tell the President that we would do damage to this institution and we would do damage to the power of individual Members if we were to rescind the blue slip.

I am a great example of that. In fact, there were nearly 40 district judges that came open in the Biden administration that the Democrats honored the blue slip on. I am not even going to talking about U.S. attorneys and others who are subject to the blue slip. But the Democrats honored that tradition in the 4 years that Biden was in power, and we honored that tradition in the 4 prior years that President Trump was in power.

I am retiring, and I won't be here in 17 months. But I am telling my colleagues, I have seen that issue cut both ways. I have actually even seen honoring the blue slip in my unique circumstance in a way that I don't think has occurred in years. I built relationships with Democrat Members who were willing to tell their chair that they wanted to honor an agreement that I had to not even confirm a circuit court judge who is not subject to the blue slip anymore.

So if we really want to work agreements here and we really want the

gears of the Senate to work, understand it is about relationships and trust, and the tradition of the blue slip is foundational to those relationships and trust. So rather than succumbing to the moment and the pressure to destroy a decades-old tradition, figure out how to get it done in spite of those limits.

If my colleagues invest in that, I will guarantee you, you will be in the same position someday like I was in the last part of last year to have Democrats agree with a Republican in the minority to not have a circuit court judge shoved down my throat for the circuit that I am in.

If we yield to the pressure of the President, if we don't honor what we have heard Chair GRASSLEY say is foundational and very, very important to the Judiciary Committee, I think those who will be here after I leave will regret it.

On a final note on that subject, Chair GRASSLEY came to me on the Senate floor a couple of weeks ago and said: I am polling Members about whether or not we have support in the blue slip.

I said: Chair GRASSLEY, you can rescind the blue slip if you feel like you have the support, but you need to understand that I will honor the blue slip for as long as I am a U.S. Senator. And with the numbers in the Judiciary Committee today, that means that regardless of what my other colleagues want to do on the blue slip, I am simply not going to allow it for the next 17 months. So let's move on, honor it, and do the work. I guarantee you if you do, you can get a lot done here and still work within the norms of this great institution.

I want to thank Chair GRASSLEY for being the great chair that he is and for standing up for that very principle.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). The Senator from Nebraska.

REMEMBERING RYNE SANDBERG

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the loss of a man who had a great impact on the city of Chicago, the Chicago Cubs, and my family.

Ryne Sandberg was the greatest second baseman to ever play for the Cubs. He came to the Cubs in 1981 as part of a trade where the Phillies sent Larry Bowa to the Cubs, and Dallas Green insisted on Ryne Sandberg being a part of that trade because he had seen him play.

From the get-go, Ryne Sandberg made an impact on the Chicago Cubs. Just a couple of short years later, in 1984, Ryne Sandberg led the Cubs to their first playoff appearance since the 1945 series. It was an MVP season for him. He had 19 home runs, and that was just the beginning of a fantastic career.

I was just getting to Chicago around that time, and that season is what made me a Cubs fan. I recall going to many games and watching Ryne Sandberg play. He was one of the best second basemen in the game. He set