

Although any backup was dozens of miles away, Marshal Hansen rode out to investigate. As he did his job, he was shot dead. It is believed that the murder of the marshal had been targeted.

More than a century has passed since Marshal Hansen died in the line of duty. Yet his legacy of service, selflessness, and sacrifice lives on.

Today, Wyoming officers proudly protect and serve across our State. Officers work double shifts. They answer emergency calls. They stay late into the night. And they do all of this to keep their community safe.

And I am always going to support the men and women of law enforcement without apology.

Today, Republicans are putting money back into the pockets of law enforcement. Republicans passed the Working Families Tax Cuts law. That new law includes no taxes on overtime. For Wyoming officers, no taxes on overtime—it is not just extra; it is essential.

The average tax deduction for no taxes on overtime this year is more than \$3,100.

Republicans are again delivering safer streets. The Working Families Tax Cut law invests in local law enforcement. It helps officers fight violent crime. This year, violent crime is falling across the board. Murders, robberies, rapes, aggravated assaults are all down compared to last year. Clearly, supporting law enforcement makes our communities safer.

By contrast, Democrats in Congress continue to want to defund the police. Democrats have left Immigration and Border Patrol officers unfunded since January. Tellingly, the Democrat leader recently said on this floor that ICE and Border Patrol, he said, are two groups nobody respects. Radical Democrats continue to disrespect, to demonize, and to defund the men and women who keep us safe.

Republicans are going to ensure ICE and Border Patrol are fully funded, and we are going to continue to stand up for the men and women who keep all of our communities safe.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority whip.

#### NOMINATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, later today, the Senate will move 1 step closer to confirming 50 Executive nominees without the consent or agreement of the Senate Democrats.

Last year, Senate Republicans made a change in the Senate's rules that has fundamentally undermined Senators' ability to fulfill our constitutional duty of advice and consent. They gave away this body's authority in order to appease the White House.

Now, I have been in the Senate long enough to remember a time when this was not even a major issue. It was rare that people would question a nomina-

tion. They would usually threaten to but not reach a floor vote. That has changed dramatically.

U.S. attorneys—let me use that as an example. Under President Trump's first term, virtually every U.S. attorney of the 94 vacancies was filled by voice vote—no record vote necessary. There was maybe one exception in that period, but virtually all of them were by voice vote.

Then came President Biden and a decision by the man who is now Vice President of the United States to force a vote on every single U.S. attorney. It was Vice President Vance who insisted on that, and I came to the floor repeatedly, saying: Why are you doing this? We have done this on a bipartisan basis up until now.

He said: We want to vote on every one of them.

Well, he got his way, and we stopped filling the vacancies of U.S. attorneys under President Biden. Now, under President Trump's second term, we are having individual votes on each one. I don't believe it should ever have reached that point, but it has, and I just described to you how it reached that point. Still, we have this situation where there are objections and demands for votes time and time and time again. We waste too much time on that.

Now, some of these nominees are controversial, and they would have separate votes, but that is rare. By and large, we can have agreement if we do it on a bipartisan basis. Unfortunately, this kind of voting we are going to have today basically says that we are throwing in the towel, that we are not even going to try to make this a bipartisan process, and I am sorry for that.

I warned that this new Republican precedent would open the door to jamming through extreme nominees whose only qualification is loyalty to the President.

U.S. attorneys are the top Federal prosecutors in 94 districts across the country. We rely on them to be above politics, fairminded prosecutors who protect victims and hold bad actors accountable. They should not be instruments of political retribution ever. But, as I feared, several U.S. attorney nominees in this en bloc package are extreme and, I am afraid to say, unqualified.

Last year, President Trump nominated people like Ed Martin, Alina Habba, Lindsey Halligan, and others who are not qualified for the post but committed to carrying out his retribution campaign against President Trump's political enemies.

As an interim U.S. attorney, Ed Martin led an unprecedented purge of dozens of career prosecutors in the Department of Justice and FBI agents simply because they did their jobs investigating and prosecuting the attack on the U.S. Capitol.

I sit on the Senate Judiciary Committee, and I am embarrassed for the nominees that come before us. They

are so afraid that they are going to say one word or the other that is going to trigger the ire of the President.

When you ask them basic questions—who won the election between Trump and Biden in 2020?—they refuse to answer that question. You could take that question to any eighth grade classroom in my State or Montana—you pick it—and those kids know the answer: President Biden won. Of course he did. He got more votes than President Trump. But these nominees are afraid to say it because President Trump has never acknowledged the obvious. He has been engaged in this Big Lie strategy ever since. And they are afraid that if they cross him by saying the obvious, they are going to invoke his resistance and maybe even lose his support for whatever they are seeking—the nomination.

The same thing is true when you ask about January 6. Mr. President, you weren't here. I was here, and I will tell you exactly what happened. A mob came to the Capitol and started coming into the building, and we were warned in the Senate Chamber that the Vice President of the United States had to leave because of the danger to him personally.

Then they told us: Stay in the Senate Chamber. The mob is going to stay outside.

Ten minutes later, they stood up and said: Forget what we just said. Everybody file out as quickly as possible. They have broken the containment and are moving toward this Chamber.

And off we went to an adjoining building, waiting until the mob subsided.

Over 140 policemen were physically attacked. Two of them died a day or two later. It was a serious moment, and these men and women risked their lives to protect us.

That happened, and it was all captured on videotape. We know what happened. As a result of that, some 1,500 people were arrested for their participation in this mob action, and some of them were actually sentenced to time in prison.

What happened when President Trump was elected? Full, unconditional pardon of every single one of them. Even those that were physically assaulting the policemen in the Capitol were given a full and unconditional pardon by President Trump. That is a fact.

So when we ask these people who want to be lifetime appointments to the Federal bench what happened to the Capitol on January 6, they say: Oh, it was sunny, and there was a little wind outside.

Well, didn't you see the videotapes?

Of course they did, but they are afraid to acknowledge what actually happened for fear that President Trump will turn on them.

The latest is, when we ask them about the 22nd Amendment to the Constitution, which says that a President can only serve two terms—we ask them

a basic question—now, get this—President Trump is serving his second term, right?

Yes, he is.

Can he run for a third term?

I am sorry, I can't answer that. That may be a question that comes before the Federal court.

Once again, take it to the eighth graders in my State or yours and ask them the basic question: How many terms can a President serve? Two. The Constitution says it, and the President is in his second term.

They are afraid to say that for fear that this President will try somehow to enter into a third term in office. I can't imagine how he would. But they are afraid to answer the questions.

Those are the kinds of nominees we are getting before the Senate Judiciary Committee. I have never seen, in 20 years of service on that committee, people who are in such an embarrassing position that they embarrass themselves, their families, and friends who have gathered for them and refuse to answer fundamental, basic questions about the Constitution. I have just never seen anything like it.

Ed Martin led an unprecedented purge of all the people that I mentioned earlier. He tweeted from the Capitol on January 6, the day of the insurrectionist mob. I want to quote him. Ed Martin:

Like Mardi Gras today in DC today: love, faith and joy. Ignore #FakeNews.

Dismissing the violence of the January 6 rioters, Martin said:

We have to have less judgment on somebody who hits a cop.

I want to repeat that in Police Week because of our bipartisan salute to our men and women in law enforcement. Ed Martin, one of the top guys in the Trump administration, said in reference to what happened on January 6 in this building:

We have to have less judgment on somebody who hits a cop.

Get out of here. This man is at the highest level of the Trump administration.

Although his nomination failed to advance, President Trump continues to nominate people like Martin who defend January 6 rioters and embrace the Big Lie that the 2020 election was stolen.

It is even more of an outrage that during Police Week, when we honor law enforcement's bravery, service, and sacrifice, Senate Republicans are poised to confirm nominees who continue to spread fabrications about the police officers who protected me and other Members of the Senate, Republican and Democrat, from the violent mob on January 6.

Take Darin Smith—Darin Smith, nominated to the District of Wyoming. He stood by his radical and dangerous view that Vice President Pence should not have certified the results of the 2020 election.

Smith was on the Capitol grounds on January 6—this nominee for judgeship

was on the Capitol grounds on January 6—and made the reprehensible claim—listen to this. This is what Smith said: Hundreds of Capitol Police officers who risked their lives that day were guilty of “massive incompetence.” Smith blames the police for what happened on January 6. Without evidence, he claimed that rioters who breached the Capitol were victims of entrapment—1,500 victims of entrapment.

Moreover, Smith is not remotely qualified to be a U.S. attorney. He is going to be in the package, take it or leave it. Prior to becoming interim U.S. attorney, he had no courtroom or litigation experience whatsoever—none.

Smith's lack of experience has had real-world consequences. At least seven criminal defendants have filed motions to dismiss charges brought by Smith because he told members of the grand jury that the defendants were “murderers” and that every case before them involved “bad people.” Even the Wyoming U.S. Attorney's Office has admitted Smith's irresponsible and unprofessional comments were “ill-advised.” That is the word they used—“ill-advised.” Worse than that, Smith has violated these defendants' rights and endangered public safety by putting these prosecutions at risk.

He wasn't ready for this job. He still isn't.

Another nominee Senate Republicans are rubberstamping today is Phil Williams, nominated to the Northern District of Alabama. He bears many unfortunate similarities to Ed Martin. Neither one had any prosecutorial experience prior to their nomination. Instead, like Martin, Williams' main qualification appears to be he is a podcaster and he makes social media posts in which he spouts MAGA orthodoxy.

Like Ed Martin, Phil Williams has whitewashed January 6 and maligned the law enforcement officers—not the mobsters—the policemen who were here protecting Members of Congress, our staff, and visitors. Williams claimed that January 6 rioters were “hunted down”—his words—by law enforcement, whom he accused of “prosecutorial abuse many, many times over.”

This is a man whose nomination for a lifetime appointment to the Federal court is going to be voted on today, during Police Week.

He went on to call the prosecution of January 6 rioters “the Salem Witch trials on a national scale.”

Williams criticized the 87-month sentence imposed on a rioter named Guy Reffitt, claiming he is, according to Williams, “nonviolent.” In fact, Reffitt traveled to the Capitol on that day—January 6—wearing body armor, carrying handguns and cuffs, and planning to kidnap NANCY PELOSI and MITCH MCCONNELL.

Prior to his arrest—listen to this—Reffitt, who has been described as “nonviolent,” said to his own minor children:

If you turn me in, you are a traitor, and traitors get shot.

Senate Republicans will also approve Dan Bishop, nominated to the Middle District of North Carolina—another nominee who has no previous experience as a prosecutor. Lifetime appointment to the Federal bench.

As a Member of Congress on January 6, 2021, Bishop voted against certifying the 2020 election results. He didn't accept what is clearly the fact: The President lost the 2020 election. President Biden won.

Bishop falsely claimed that “Democrats' attack on our elections . . . was coordinated & widespread.”

Even today, Bishop refuses to disavow debunked theories about the insurrection. He told me: “I have heard credible accounts that black-bloc/Antifa agitators were in the crowd and among the first to vandalize the Capitol building, so I think that leftists participated in and perhaps instigated the mayhem in part”—one of the wild conspiracy theories which he still stands by.

There is a clear through line here with these extreme, unqualified nominees. Their MAGA loyalty all but guarantees they will use their post in the U.S. Attorney's Offices to go after the President's political opponents.

President Trump has nominated these January 6 apologists for another equally concerning reason: He wants to make the case that the 2020 election was stolen to justify interfering in the 2026 elections, and he wants loyal foot soldiers in the U.S. Attorney's Offices who will help him carry out this mission.

Confirming these nominees to top law enforcement positions, particularly given their attacks on police officers simply for doing their jobs on January 6, is disrespectful to law enforcement—even more so during Police Week.

I urge my colleagues: Today, when this package comes before us, oppose these nominees. And because this racist package of nominees is a “take it or leave it” on nearly 50 nominees, by all means, leave it.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

#### RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this year, as we all know, we are celebrating America's 250th anniversary. This, of course, is an opportunity for all of us to reflect with gratitude on the many liberties and freedoms that we enjoy—fundamental freedoms not enjoyed by most of the rest of the world—all of which help make America an exceptional nation.

America is a country envied by millions or perhaps billions of people around the world who long to experience the liberties we too often take for granted here at home. But it is also true that many countries do not share