

Don't take my word for it; just look at the agenda of some of the recent people who have won Democratic primaries in New York City. The Democratic socialist platform also wants to defund the Department of Defense, get rid of the U.S. Senate, and draft a new Constitution. Other countries that tried socialism have failed. Socialists' ideas and candidates offer failed ideas.

We should not forget what history has taught us or, as George Santayana once said almost 100 years ago: If you don't learn from history, you are going to repeat the same mistakes.

The United States was founded on principles of individual liberty and on unalienable natural rights, with the government's primary function being to preserve those rights and prevent fellow citizens or attacks by foreign powers from violating our constitutional rights.

Americans have been reluctant to grant too much power to the government since the very beginning. Ultimately, free markets have helped America become the richest country in the world and have lifted more people from poverty than anything else in human history.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 808

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I rise today with a very simple request: I am asking that the Senate speak with a unanimous voice in condemning one of the worst acts of judicial misconduct we have seen in years.

Judge Eleanor Ross has been a district judge in the Northern District of Georgia for over a decade, and it is clear that she engaged in conduct that falls beneath the dignity of her high office in the Federal judiciary.

After a courageous law clerk came forward, a special committee on the Eleventh Circuit was appointed and ultimately made several deeply disturbing findings.

First, based on testimony from Judge Ross' law clerks, the committee found that over the course of 2 years, Judge Ross engaged in a sexual relationship with a high-ranking official of the Atlanta Police Department. This conduct occurred in her judicial chambers during normal business hours within earshot of her law clerks.

Now, think about that.

On top of that, the Atlanta Police Department, in the words of the special committee, "undoubtedly was involved in numerous criminal and civil cases being litigated" in the Northern District, underscoring how reckless the judge's misconduct truly was.

Not only did this misconduct create a possibility of an appearance of impropriety, an affair like this also exposed Judge Ross to the possibility of extortion and blackmail, as the special committee noted.

In addition to this egregious behavior in her chambers, the special committee also found an equally disturbing act of

judicial misconduct: making false statements material to the committee's investigation.

Judge Ross told the Eleventh Circuit's chief judge that she "never engaged in sexual intercourse in [her] office, nor anywhere else in the Courthouse" and that she was "astounded and confused" to be accused of this misconduct.

Now, based on the committee's findings, we know that Judge Ross' statements to Chief Judge Pryor were patently false. They were knowingly false.

We also know that it took Judge Ross nearly 2 weeks to retract the false statements. By the time she finally backtracked, the special committee had already collected substantial evidence that proved Judge Ross had made false statements.

In short, once Judge Ross realized where the investigation was going, she decided to retract her false statements and admit to the misconduct allegations. The Judicial Code of Conduct explicitly prohibits the type of conduct that Judge Ross engaged in, specifically Canon 2 states that "a Judge Should Avoid Impropriety and the Appearance of Impropriety in all Activities."

Canon 2A states that "a judge should act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary."

Commentary to Canon 2A states:

Public confidence in the judiciary is eroded by irresponsible or improper conduct by judges, including harassment and other inappropriate workplace behavior.

The committee's findings, which I have just outlined, show that Judge Ross blatantly violated all three of these judicial canons.

Now, I want to be clear, what I have just outlined is all that my resolution is asking that the Senate condemn. We are condemning this inappropriate sexual misconduct by a sitting Federal judge, and we are condemning her subsequent lying about that misconduct. That is it.

I do want to note for the record that there was misconduct in the Eleventh Circuit report that I have not included in the resolution. The committee included in its misconduct findings that Judge Ross attended a political function for DA Fani Willis. I find it unconscionable for a sitting Federal judge to have attended a partisan event with a district attorney who weaponized the judicial system in the way that Fani Willis did.

I also firmly believe that Judge Ross, by lying to Chief Judge Pryor during the course of the Eleventh Circuit's investigation committed an impeachable offense, and I fully support the House's impeachment efforts.

But I have not included those aspects in my resolution that I am about to ask unanimous consent for. The reason why? As I mentioned at the outset, I believe the Senate should speak with one voice and unanimously condemn Judge Ross' conduct. I don't want to

give my Democrat colleagues any reason to object to this resolution.

So what I am asking unanimous consent for is simple: a condemnation of Judge Ross' sexual misconduct and subsequent lying during the course of a judicial investigation.

The American people deserve Federal judges who uphold the highest standards of integrity and professionalism on the bench; not those who turn their chambers into a venue for extramarital affairs. There is no reason any Member of this body should object to that resolution today.

Mr. President, with that, as if in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 808, which is at the desk; I further ask that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, you heard her lay out the case of wrongdoing by a judge. I am going to ask for the Senate to take action to condemn that conduct. Seems pretty straightforward, doesn't it? Turns out, it would be the first time in the history of the Senate that we do something like this.

We asked the Congressional Research Service: Is there any Senate precedent for what the Senator from Tennessee is doing? They responded: There is no Senate precedent for either introducing or passing a Senate resolution condemning a judge's illegal misconduct.

What? Out of thousands of judges in the United States at the Federal level, surely in history, someone has done something wrong that should be condemned, but it has never been done.

Well, it gets down to some basic elements of constitutional law. You start with this, the Constitution of the United States. And the Constitution of the United States says in article I, section 2, the House of Representatives shall have the "sole power of impeachment"—removal from office. The sole power of impeachment is in the House of Representatives, not the Senate.

So why is that stopping us from this condemnation? Well, let me explain. Under the Constitution, Congress does not respond to judicial misconduct in the form of a Senate resolution. It never has.

It is the responsibility of the House of Representatives, specifically the House Judiciary Committee, to investigate the allegations of misconduct and consider the next steps, including impeachment.

But here is the critical element: Who is the jury? Where is the trial? It is right here. After someone has been impeached in the House of Representatives, for example a President, the case comes to the Senate for trial. I have sat through at least three of those,

maybe more. So we are juries; the U.S. Senate is a jury.

What this Constitution, again, tells us when it comes to the role of the Senate: The Senate shall have the sole power to try all impeachments. No question about that. If the House impeaches, it is our job to decide whether we agree or not. It takes an extraordinary vote to impeach.

And, also, let me be clear, this is critical:

When sitting for that Purpose, they shall be on Oath or Affirmation.

That is a pretty high standard, isn't it? You have to swear that what you are doing is constitutional or to the best of your ability. So it is an awesome responsibility. We sit like juries in criminal courts and civil courts across the United States, and we make bottom-line decisions as to whether the House impeachment shall be sustained.

So the action starts in the House. If they vote to impeach, it comes to the Senate. The Senate sits as a jury and decides whether or not the impeachment goes through. That is why this resolution needs to be defeated.

Senators serve as jurors in impeachment matters. Passing this resolution—passing this resolution, calling on the Senate to condemn this judge before there has been any effort at impeachment in the House of Representatives—is going to do what they call “taint the jury.”

He would have already taken a position on the case as to who is right and who is wrong. You can't do that. Voir dire in the courtroom is the judge asking the basic question of potential jurors: Do you have any prejudice against this case that stops you from finding the truth?

And people say: I don't. I have an open mind, and I will listen to the evidence and the law.

Well, what the Senator from Tennessee wants us to do is to taint the jury, to get us on record before the House has any impeachment activity, before we sit as a jury as to how we are going to rule. That is why it has never been tried before on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

I also note the resolution contains multiple material inconsistencies on what the Eleventh Circuit found during its investigation of Judge Ross' misconduct. This underscores that the Senate has not engaged, prior to the election of this resolution, in its own investigation or factfinding. The only factfinding we have is from one Senator in Tennessee.

According to the Congressional Research Service, there is no precedent for the Senate adopting a resolution condemning alleged judicial misconduct. The Senate has never done this before. We should not establish a new precedent here, especially when it could taint the jury pool if the Senate later considers articles of impeachment, if that ever happens. It could also open the door to Senate resolutions about other instances of judicial misconduct.

We must have the highest standards for Federal judges, and the alleged conduct in this case is inappropriate, unacceptable, perhaps even indefensible. But the Constitution is clear. It is a matter for the House to consider at this point rather than the Senate. For these reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BARASSO). The objection is heard.

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I think it is clear what Senator DURBIN is doing today. He is seeking to protect a Democrat-appointed judge, appointed under President Obama, and trying to distract from her clear misconduct.

Now, at the Senate Judiciary Committee, we have the responsibility of advice and consent. We have the responsibility of oversight.

And one thing that I will note: I think the Senator has misunderstood the resolution. It is not an impeachment resolution. It does not call for an impeachment. It explicitly points to the information in the Eleventh Circuit's special committee report and pulls directly from that report what occurred in Judge Ross' chambers, and therefore there needs to be a condemnation of this activity.

Passing this would have the Senate speak with a unanimous voice against this activity, and I would have encouraged my colleagues to pass the resolution and to make clear that this conduct falls far beneath the high standards we should be holding the Federal judiciary to every single day. It is clear the Senate Democrats are not interested in that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we are not judging by this action of objecting the conduct of this judge. That is not for us to judge. Under the Constitution, it is clear. That will be a decision by the House of Representatives and maybe ultimately by the Senate.

There is a reason why this has never been done on the floor of the U.S. Senate, and the Senator from Tennessee ignores that reality. It has never been done because it would taint the jury pool if there was ever an impeachment action against this judge. That is why I objected.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, before I start, let me offer the Presiding Officer my best wishes for a very, very happy birthday. I might regale you with singing “Happy Birthday.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Order. (Laughter.)

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. But I have a terrible singing voice, and so I will spare the Senate the embarrassment of that particular performance.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 557

Mr. President, I am here today because there is the simple fact that climate change is real. Earlier this year,

I came to the floor and asked my colleagues to agree on that simple, known, scientific fact. Well, they could not.

So I returned to the floor several times in the hopes that my Republican colleagues could at least agree to some of the simple truths that make up the bigger picture of the reality of climate change. I asked if we could agree that oceans are warming, that sea levels are rising, or that the economic harms of climate change are already beginning to hit and will only get worse going forward. Every time, Republicans objected. I do, however, persist.

Today's simple truth is this: Climate change portends a cascade of financial market collapses that could destabilize the national and global economies. My question today is, Can we all agree on that?

Well, here is my evidence: We know that climate change makes many natural disasters more frequent and/or—could be either—more extreme, including hurricanes, floods, and wildfires—the same wildfires that blanketed much of the Midwest, Northeast, and Mid-Atlantic in smoke just last week, resulting in American cities like Chicago, Detroit, New York, and Washington having the worst air quality in the world—worse than cities in India, worse than cities in China.

We know that these disasters are expensive. Between 1980 and today, U.S. losses from billion-dollar climate disasters totaled over \$3.1 trillion adjusted for inflation—\$3.1 trillion lost to Americans. And, of course, that only accounts for the 431 disasters that cost over \$1 billion each. There are plenty more harms beyond that \$3.1 trillion.

The trend is projected to continue. Modelers for Deloitte, the corporate consultancy, project that unchecked climate change could cost the global economy \$178 trillion—\$178 trillion U.S. dollars—in the period between 2021 and 2070. The U.S. economy is in here as a \$36 trillion hit in net present value across that half-century span. Deloitte's modelers also predict a global GDP decrease of around 7.6 percent by 2070.

Other financial experts have warned that worldwide GDP per capita, GDP divided by population, could decline by close to 20 percent within the next three decades. Indeed, in 2023, the now-Prime Minister of Canada, Mark Carney, who had previously served as the governor of the Bank of Canada and the Bank of England, testified before the Senate Budget Committee that “estimates suggest that, over the balance of this century, climate change could reduce the level of global GDP per capita by 10–20 [percent] without efforts to limit warming, the equivalent of a decade of no economic growth.” He said, “Similar estimates have been found for the United States”—very like Deloitte's projection for the Americas.

So that is climate risk. Now let's look at what it means for financial