

to do that is to include meaningful resources in the bill to fund our Federal Government and key programs when we deal with this again before January 19 of next year.

I implore my colleagues to make this a priority, to provide the robust and meaningful funding our communities need to seriously address this problem. We are in the midst of a crisis. We must do more in 2018. We have families all across our Nation with broken hearts tonight for the ones they love and the ones they miss. Let's make sure there are no more in 2018; that this ends today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes and that after I speak, Senator WYDEN be recognized.

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

#### EXTREME RHETORIC

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, 6 months ago, on a beautiful June morning, just a few miles from here in Alexandria, VA, a man with a gun opened fire on me and several of my Republican colleagues.

In the chaotic aftermath of that awful morning, the gunman's purpose slowly became clear. Because of our beliefs and our political affiliation, this individual believed my colleagues and I should die. Since that day, I struggled to understand this thinking. How could any American look onto a field that June morning, where a bunch of middle-aged men were playing baseball, and see the enemy?

Some of the bombastic rhetoric being offered this week in response to the tax reform bill has given me pause. If you listen to some of the hyperbolic vitriol that opponents of this bill are producing, the attitude that nearly killed my friend STEVE SCALISE and threatened many more lives begins to make a perverse kind of sense.

When respectable public figures go on television or take to Twitter and announce that thousands, if not millions, of Americans are going to die as a direct result of the passage of a tax reform bill, what impact do we expect this to have on the thinking of many Americans? If a person takes such outlandish statements as true, attacking Members of Congress in support of the measure almost appears to be a moral action. This could lead someone to believe that killing a few legislators might save the lives of millions of Americans.

Beyond the physical danger of promoting such misinformation, these claims do grave harm to the legislative process. How are we expected to work together to achieve anything if one side's position is viewed as the end of America as we know it? One of my colleagues called this tax reform bill "the worst bill in the history of Congress."

Upon the bill's passage, one media pundit went so far as to encourage

young Americans to flee their country and declared "America died tonight."

Full-throated and passionate debate should always be encouraged. We all love arguing the merits of supply-side economics, but this is not that. This is demonizing of the worst kind. It leaves us all in this body unable to engage in the kind of negotiations and compromise that Congress was created to foster.

To be clear, this is not a problem with one party or of one moment. During the public debate over the Affordable Care Act, Members of my party engaged in similar tactics. I was in the House Chamber when one of my Republican colleagues stood and yelled "You lie" at the President of the United States. The accusation that passage of healthcare reform legislation would result in so-called death panels was promoted far and wide by many Republicans. One conservative commentator suggested the government would begin educating seniors on how to end their own lives.

A Republican legislator claimed that the bill would put seniors in a position of being "put to death by their government." This rhetoric was wrong then, and it is wrong now.

The threat posed to all of us and to the democratic process for giving in to extreme rhetoric is not theoretical. Some of us faced it on that baseball field in Alexandria in June, and all of us have witnessed its corrosive effect on Congress. I urge my colleagues, all of us, let's end this practice where raw politics drowns out the supplications of the better angels of our nature. Let us all be more humble as to our predictive powers when it comes to placing a value on the work we do here. In reality, this legislation will probably not turn out to be as good as the proponents assert, nor as bad as the opponents contend.

The country is watching. It is my hope that we—all of us—can eschew contempt and vitriol in our speech and be more measured in our tone.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

#### RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor tonight to discuss the Senate's investigation into Russia in the 2016 election. Specifically, I have been reviewing for months documents in the possession of the Senate's Intelligence Committee. I regret to say, the depth of the committee's investigation is completely unsatisfactory into the crucial issues of what I call following the money.

Early in 2017, I began asking the committee leadership to look into any and all financial relationships between Russia and Donald Trump and his associates. In an open hearing the committee held in March, I noted a number of public facts. First, there is an extraordinary history of money laun-

dering in Russia. Billions of dollars from corruption and other illegal activities have been moved out of the country. Second, the President's son said in 2008: "Russians make up a pretty disproportionate cross-section of a lot of our assets." Third, entities associated with the President had already been the subject of millions of dollars of fines for willful, repeated, and long-standing violations of anti-money laundering laws. Fourth, the Congress and the American people still haven't seen the President's tax returns.

Since then, there have been numerous additional press stories about associates of the President and their financial connections to Russia. In my view, these stories require thorough, detailed investigation. It is not just by the press. The special counsel's indictment against former Trump campaign manager Paul Manafort included extensive detailed allegations of laundering of millions of dollars from pro-Russia-Ukrainian interests. This indictment provided a clear example of how a foreign-influenced campaign can be financed through illicit means and why the importance of following the money is so crucial.

There have been others, acknowledged financial connections, such as former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn and his payment from RT, the television station that is part of Russia's state-run propaganda apparatus.

Then there are the strange denials, such as when Jared Kushner wrote in his statement in July, "I have not relied on Russian funds to finance my business activities in the private sector."

I can state, that is some kind of good lawyering because the word "rely" is subjective. Mr. Kushner did not deny financial ties to Russia. He said he hadn't relied on those funds, not whether he had any, not whether he ever had any, but he hadn't relied on them. That is about as lawyerly and subjective a statement as you can imagine.

My bottom line is, these financial ties need to be a central focus of the Intelligence Committee's inquiry. The reason I say this, I want to spell out what the connection here is. Our inquiry covered counterintelligence concerns related to Russia and the election, including any intelligence regarding links between Russia and individuals associated with political campaigns. Following the money is counterintelligence 101.

If you want to compromise somebody, money is one of the best ways to do it. Well, let me repeat that. That is the connection. That is the connection between the counterintelligence work that is so important and part of the committee's charge. That counterintelligence work involves following the money because that is key to really getting into the question of whether somebody's been compromised because one of the best ways to do it is through funds.