

meet Big Labor's every demand. Today we will have the chance to get things back to normal for the long term.

Mr. Ring has a distinguished record in labor negotiation. I would urge my colleagues to join me in voting to confirm him today.

After Mr. Ring, the Senate will turn to the nomination of Pat Pizzella to serve as Deputy Secretary of Labor. The fact that this Cabinet agency has gone 15 months without its No. 2 official is yet another testament to the historic obstruction visited on this administration by Senate Democrats. He has been sitting on the calendar for 6 months despite his ample qualifications. I would urge all of my colleagues to vote to finally advance Mr. Pizzella's nomination.

TAX REFORM

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, this week we have been discussing the stark difference between the Obama administration's agenda and the policies that President Trump and this Republican Congress have implemented.

During the Obama years, the overwhelming majority of all the limited new growth and new jobs went to the biggest and richest urban areas. Times were good if you happened to live in New York, San Francisco, or a few other places, but if you were one of the millions of Americans in our Nation's towns, smaller cities, suburbs, or rural areas, they were not so good. According to one estimate, between 2010 and 2016, 73 percent of all the employment gains in the country went to metro areas with more than 1 million residents. Practically everywhere else, Americans either treaded water or started sinking.

This President and this Republican Congress were sent here to put this right, and because the American people gave us a chance to do so, they now have leaders in Washington who focus on cutting taxes instead of raising them, rolling back overregulation instead of piling on more suffocating rules, and looking out for the best interests of all workers and job creators, not just those in our biggest and wealthiest cities.

The early results from our inclusive opportunity agenda are clear. After years of stagnation, we are beginning to see signs that rural America turned a corner in 2017. One analysis found that last year, rural areas outpaced the rest of the country in job creation, relative to the share of the economy they started out with. There is still much, much more to do, but these early promising signs add up to hundreds of thousands of new jobs. That is a sight for sore eyes in Kentucky, West Virginia, Montana, Maine, and so many other States.

What about our smaller cities? I recently heard from my friend Senator TOOMEY that, because of this historic tax reform we passed last year, Car-

pen Technology in Reading, PA, will invest \$100 million in expanded manufacturing capabilities—\$100 million in our economy and American workers because of tax reform. For this American manufacturer, founded in 1889, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act means a new hot rolling mill to produce the special alloys for aerospace and consumer electronics. They are also investing in 3D printing. This is what happens when manufacturers have the breathing room to bet on the U.S. economy and on their American workforce. Breathing room is exactly what our policy is giving them. Carpenter already employs more than 3,000 Pennsylvanians, and with this kind of major capital investment, I expect they will be competing for future generations of skilled workers as well.

Pennsylvania should be proud of Senator TOOMEY. He is one of the leaders who have helped lead the charge for tax reform. It is a shame his colleague, the senior Senator for Pennsylvania, put party politics ahead of workers and taxpayers and voted to block tax reform right from the beginning.

Fortunately, my Democratic colleagues failed to block tax reform from taking place, even though many now want to repeal the law that has led to new jobs, higher wages, and increased opportunities all across our country.

Stories like these are just the first fruits of tax reform, regulatory reform, and all the other ways this Republican Congress is fighting for every American worker, job creator, and middle-class family.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

REPUBLICAN TAX BILL

Mr. SCHUMER. Thank you, Mr. President.

Before I get to the substance of my remarks, I remind my dear friend the majority leader that the vast majority of the benefits of this tax break, this tax cut, went to the wealthiest of Americans and large corporations. What are they doing with the money? They are using most of it for buybacks. That was a buyback. They buy back their own stock. The CEO—already a rich guy—is making more money. The shareholders, one-third of whom are out of the country and most of whom are in the top 10 percent of America, make more money. The middle class and rural America particularly are left behind in this bill.

We could have done a tax bill where the benefits went to the middle class—not just some—10, 20 percent—but all. So this bill is a bit of a fake. There are small benefits for the middle class, along with harm to their healthcare. The things put in this bill are going to raise many people's premiums far more than their small tax break.

Let's be honest about this. This bill was done for the rich and the wealthy in power, and there were some benefits to the middle class, but it could have been so much better. Our Republican colleagues listened to the wealthy special interests, the large contributors, and that is how this bill came about.

By the way, because it creates a deficit of \$1.5 trillion—and I remind our leader that rural America really cares about deficits—there are a lot of Republicans, particularly the more conservative ones, who say: Now let's cut Medicare and Social Security. How is an elderly person in rural America going to feel about that?

I would simply say that this bill was not the right remedy for America, which is owed a lot better.

SPEAKER RYAN'S RETIREMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, Speaker RYAN. I know Speaker RYAN quite well. He is a good man. He is always true to his word. Even though we disagree on most issues, in the areas where we can work together, I find him to be smart, thoughtful, and straightforward. I find him to have a great deal of integrity. We don't agree, but he has deep beliefs, and he is not like some on his side of the aisle who say: It is my way or no way. He is willing to meet you to try to get something done.

So I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Speaker RYAN. I admire him as a human being, as a religious man, and somebody who cares a lot about his family. I understand his frustrations; I do. When you have so many intransigent people in your caucus who say "it is my way or no way," and your job, even though you have deep beliefs, is to want to get something done, it is hard. It is hard.

Now, with his newfound political freedom, I hope the Speaker uses his remaining time in Congress to break free from these hard-right factions that have plagued him so and that have kept Congress from getting real things done. If he is willing to reach across the aisle, he will find Democrats willing and eager to work with him.

I say to Speaker RYAN: Let's work together. You are more of a free man now. Follow your instincts. Your beliefs will not be the same as ours, but you will want to try to come to some kind of an agreement where we can meet somewhere in the middle.

The job may be made harder because Congressmen SCALISE and MCCARTHY are now competing for Ryan's job and the hard right's favor—they are too vital in that caucus—but I believe Speaker RYAN is up to the job and can overcome that problem and work in his last few months here for the betterment of our country.

AVOIDING A CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, Mr. President, on the issues of yesterday and last

night, for months, I have heard my Republican colleagues argue that there is no need to pass legislation to protect Special Counsel Mueller and the Russian probe from President Trump because they have been assured by anonymous White House officials that it will not happen.

President Trump, in his own words on Monday night, made it plain as day that he may be considering firing the special counsel and/or the Deputy Attorney General, which would be equally egregious. The White House spokeswoman, from the podium, said President Trump believes he has the authority to fire the special counsel all by himself, and a report in the New York Times said President Trump considered firing Mueller as recently as December, in addition to a year ago in June.

Only an hour ago, the President tweeted that the “Fake & Corrupt Russia Investigation”—his words—was “headed up by all the Democrat loyalists, or people that worked for Obama.”

Mr. President, will you start telling the truth? Robert Mueller is a Republican. Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein is a Republican whom you appointed. Christopher Wray, the head of the FBI, is a Republican whom you appointed.

I don't know how long the President can believe people will swallow the bold mistruths he spews out day after day, but what he said—that the people the investigation was being headed up by are all Democratic loyalists or people who work for Obama—is patently false, and the President should retract it.

These kinds of remarks make it all too obvious that the President, who cares so little for truth, may be considering the firing of the special counsel or the Deputy Attorney General. So I would like to direct my remarks to my Republican colleagues. I say to my Republican colleagues, you can no longer rely on anonymous sources as a reason for delay or inaction on legislation to protect Mr. Mueller and avoid a constitutional crisis. The evidence is staring us all in the face. We cannot ignore the elephant in the room any longer because the consequences of the President taking action against Mueller or Rosenstein or issuing political pardons is just too dire. As Democrats have said, and as many Republicans have said, such action would precipitate a constitutional crisis in this country. The President doesn't seem to realize it, but I know my Republican colleagues do.

No person is above the law in this country—not even the President. He is not a King. He is the President. If the President were to interfere in any way with the chain of command in the Russia investigation or clean house at the Justice Department in order to install lackeys who will carry out his orders, we would be no better than a banana republic. The kinds of things we see happening in other parts of the globe would be happening here. In those

places, leaders use the levers of power to subvert or avoid accountability in all ways. President Trump seems to wish he could do just that.

I want to be crystal clear on this point. If the President were to take action against Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein, it would be every bit as grave of a mistake as removing Special Counsel Mueller. America, as we know it—as we love it—would diminish. I know Republicans and Democrats agree on that.

So why not take the bull by the horns? Why wouldn't we take immediate action to potentially prevent a constitutional crisis from coming to pass? Why don't we head it off at the pass and move bipartisan legislation that has been introduced this morning, through the Judiciary Committee—which I am told Senator GRASSLEY is seriously considering—on to the floor of the Senate, where I hope Leader MCCONNELL will place it. A bipartisan group this morning—Senators GRAHAM and TILLIS, BOOKER and COONS—have introduced legislation that would help protect the special counsel. Why not pass this legislation now and avoid a constitutional crisis? Why not avoid an injury to the body of this great country and then try to stitch it up? Why not avoid an injury instead of sustaining it and trying to stitch it up? That is what we should be doing.

Let's not wait until it is too late. Let's head the constitutional crisis off at the pass by passing the bipartisan legislation introduced by Senators GRAHAM, TILLIS, BOOKER, and COONS and take the threat of a crisis off the table right now.

So I urge Senator GRASSLEY to schedule a hearing and markup on this bill and to report it out of his committee. He must be sure not to water it down with amendments or accept changes that would render it useless. I urge Leader MCCONNELL to then take that bill and put it on the floor where we can debate and pass it. Surely, something this serious deserves the time and attention of U.S. Senators. I dare say, if bipartisan legislation like this came to the floor, it would pass by a large majority—Members of both parties—and the pressure on the House to do the same would be large.

The rule of law cannot be a partisan issue and should not be a partisan issue. We cannot let it become a partisan issue. The Congress must clearly, loudly, and with one voice pass legislation to ensure that any effort by the President to remove Special Counsel Mueller or Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein would be rendered unsuccessful.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of John F. Ring, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board for the term of five years expiring December 16, 2022.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

THE OLD GUARD

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, last Friday marked the 70th anniversary of the 3rd Infantry Regiment's reactivation, and as one of its veterans, I didn't want to let the moment pass without notice.

The 3rd Infantry Regiment, more commonly known as the Old Guard, serves across the Potomac River at Arlington National Cemetery. Most here and most in the Gallery have probably visited the cemetery and seen Old Guard soldiers guarding the Tomb of the Unknowns or conducting funerals. Arkansans who visit me here in the Capitol consistently tell me that Arlington is a highlight of their trip. That is not surprising to me, because Old Guard soldiers set the standard for their dedication, their diligence, and their devotion. The 3rd Infantry is the Nation's oldest Active-Duty infantry unit, and yet the reverence we feel for them goes beyond their mere length of service and to what they represent: the dignity of freedom.

On April 6, 1948, the 3rd Infantry was reactivated on orders of the Secretary of the Army. The ceremony was held just a few steps from here, on the East Plaza of the Capitol. Then, the Old Guard immediately conducted another ceremony to present the Flag of Liberation to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. That flag had flown over this very Capitol on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, 1941. Then, those forces raised that flag over Rome, Berlin, and Tokyo after we had defeated the Axis powers. Finally, the Old Guard led the large Army Day parade from the Capitol down Constitution Avenue, where