are delusional. In his opposing Gavin in Virginia, Mr. Duncan advanced the offensive and discredited conspiracy theory that schools need to fear athletes who pretend to be transgender in order to gain a competitive advantage.

Outside of the court, outside of his client work, he has repeatedly addressed an organization that has been designated as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center—an organization that calls marriage equality an ''oxymoronic institution if ever there was one.''

There are other red flags about his commitment to defending civil rights.

For example, when the Supreme Court ruled that mandatory life sentences for minors were unconstitutional, he argued the ruling shouldn't apply retroactively.

He argued that prisons that are packed to double their capacity were not in violation of the Eighth Amendment's ban on cruel and unusual punishment. The Supreme Court disagreed, noting the problem caused ''needless suffering and death.''

In a case involving an innocent man who had spent 14 years on death row—an innocent man—Mr. Duncan argued that the district attorney's office was not at fault for failing to train a staff member who had withheld evidence.

When it comes to one of the fundamental rights in a democracy—the right to vote, the right of the people to choose their government officials—Mr. Duncan defended a racially tailored voter ID law in North Carolina, which the courts ultimately struck down for targeting African Americans with ''almost surgical precision.''

Any one of these cases Mr. Duncan has chosen to take should raise alarm, and any one of the ideological arguments he has made should cause concern. Yet all of them together paint an unmistakable picture of a nominee who would not uphold women's rights, LGBTQ rights, or civil rights.

To paraphrase one of his own statements, if confirmed, I believe the damage Mr. Duncan will do to people by putting his ideology over their rights will be severe, unavoidable, and irreversible. I oppose his nomination. I urge all of my colleagues to join me.

Thank you.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECESS

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until 2:15 p.m.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:27 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I rise today to oppose the nomination of Stuart Kyle Duncan to serve on the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Our Founders established our court system as an independent arbiter that would protect the rights of every American and ensure equal justice under the law. For us to move forward, our democracy requires an independent and impartial judiciary.

Unfortunately, the Trump administration has focused on nominating individuals to our courts who have extreme partisan agendas that would move us backward. This latest nomination is no different. Mr. Duncan has spent his career working to undermine the progress we have made toward building a more inclusive, more equal United States. Rather than working to include more people in our democracy, Mr. Duncan's law practice has seemingly been devoted to restricting people's rights and making life more challenging for some of the most marginalized among us. His dangerous record raises serious doubts about his ability to act impartially on the bench with regard to a number of key issues.

In recent years, our Nation has made significant progress in advancing the rights of our LGBTQ family and friends, built on the principle that all people deserve the right to fully participate in the social, civic, and economic life of our community. At every turn, Mr. Duncan has been on the wrong side of history, working at the forefront in the fight against LGBTQ equality. He has been vehemently opposed to marriage equality, filing a legal brief to the Supreme Court arguing against the decision that was reached in the 2015 Obergefell v. Hodges case, later claiming that the decision ''raises a question about the legitimacy of the Court.'' He has even gone so far as to repeatedly claim that nationwide marriage equality, ''imperils civic peace,'' a statement that is both ridiculous and offensive.

Mr. Duncan has fought against adoption rights for same-sex parents and has dismissed the real necessity for LGBTQ antidiscrimination laws.

He has been unyielding in his attempts to undermine the rights of transgender individuals. In two major cases involving transgender rights, including the now infamous so-called ''bathroom bill'' in North Carolina, Mr. Duncan has been the go-to attorney, demeaning transgender people and even describing them as ''delusional.'' Given his history, I am deeply concerned that Mr. Duncan would be unable to act impartially if a case involving LGBTQ Americans were to come before the Fifth Circuit.

I also have real concerns of Mr. Duncan's record when it comes to women's healthcare and their constitutionally protected rights because his record shows that he has been a consistent opponent of reproductive freedom.

Mr. Duncan was the lead counsel in the backward Supreme Court Hobby Lobby decision, which allows employers to deny contraceptive coverage to women. He has long supported efforts to diminish women's access to their constitutionally protected right to an abortion, arguing in favor of a Texas law in Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt that shut down abortion providers and was eventually rejected by the Court. He even contested the fact that contraceptives can be necessary to protect a woman's health and has challenged the importance of contraception to a woman's capacity to compete economically.

Medical professionals prescribe contraceptives to women for a variety of health conditions, including conditions such as ovarian cysts, which can be debilitating and could threaten a woman's fertility. Moreover, women who use contraceptives to engage in family planning often have better health outcomes, as do their children.

To compete economically on a level playing field, women must be able to make their own decisions about if or when to start a family. Studies have shown that women who have greater access to contraceptive coverage are better able to support themselves and their families and to be full participants not just in our economy but also in our democracy.

Women must be recognized for their capacity to make their own healthcare decisions, just as men are. They must also have the full independence to do so. But it is clear that Mr. Duncan has a fundamental misunderstanding of the importance of reproductive freedom and ensuring that women are treated equally.

On these key issues, Mr. Duncan lacks the impartiality and commitment to equal justice for every American that is needed to serve in a lifetime judicial appointment. This is particularly critical on the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, which covers States that lack critical protections for LGBTQ Americans and have a history of passing dangerous laws that have blocked women's access to healthcare. Marginalized individuals in the States in the Fifth Circuit and all Americans deserve judges who will always use sound judgment and objectivity and not operate with extreme ideological agendas.

I will oppose Mr. Duncan's nomination to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Thank you.

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

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to speak in opposition to the nomination of Kyle Duncan to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Mr. Duncan has spent large portions of his legal career seeking to suppress the rights of immigrants, minorities, women, and the LGBTQ community. In short, his values are grossly out of touch with a modern and inclusive America.

I can't say I am surprised that Mr. Duncan has been nominated by a President who has called Mexicans racists and drug dealers. President Trump and Mr. Duncan share the same extreme political ideology, especially regarding their view of immigrants. Mr. Duncan, in an amicus brief challenging the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents, wrote that permitting DAPA—the acronym for that program—to go into effect would exacerbate the problem of violent crime by unauthorized immigrants. This position advances the false and offensive narrative that a majority of immigrants are violent criminals. In fact, DAPA was a program that would have allowed the parent of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident who had lived in the United States continuously for years and passed a criminal background check to remain in the United States with legal status and a work permit. This program was never implemented, but it would have kept families together, and to suggest it would have benefited criminals and threatened public safety is just plain wrong. It fits with the Republican Party's misleading and racist attacks on immigrants in this country.

Mr. Duncan makes these arguments despite overwhelming evidence that immigrants commit less crime than native-born Americans, and numerous law enforcement entities have voiced their support for DAPA because the program actually advances public safety by encouraging cooperation and trust between immigrant communities and the police.

A year after voicing his opposition to DAPA, Mr. Duncan submitted another amicus brief. This time he argued against the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, known as DACA, claiming it was unconstitutional. So we know where Mr. Duncan stands in stereotyping immigrants, but Mr. Duncan is not just hostile to immigrants.

He represented North Carolina in its defense of a discriminatory voting law, urging2 the Supreme Court to hear the case. In the brief, Duncan wrote, ''The Constitution does not allow the sins of Civil Rights-era legislators to be visited on their grandchildren and great-grandchildren.'' Yet the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals had found that the law was enacted with discriminatory intent and ''targeted African Americans with almost surgical precision.'' Mr. Duncan appeared to have clearly missed the point as to who the real victims were.

In another voting rights case, Duncan argued that Texas's restrictive voter ID law helped to ''prevent voter fraud.'' Although this myth has been debunked over and over and over again, the Republican Party, President Trump, and Mr. Duncan continue to perpetuate this lie to the American people in an effort to suppress the voting rights of others.

I would be remiss if I ended these remarks without noting Mr. Duncan's extremely troubling record on reproductive rights and his hostility toward the LGBTQ community. He has continuously fought to restrict women's access to contraceptives. In 2013, he criticized the Affordable Care Act's inclusion of contraceptives as an essential benefit for the health and economic success of society, particularly women.

Given that he holds these views, it seems fitting that Mr. Duncan would serve as the lead counsel in Hobby Lobby v. Burwell, in which he argued that corporations have the right to deny contraceptive coverage to their employees. I am sure he was pleased when the Supreme Court agreed with him.

Yet, when the Supreme Court handed down its decision in Obergefell v. Hodges, which recognized same-sex marriage as a fundamental right, Duncan said that such a decision ''raises a question about the legitimacy of the Court.'' This comment cuts to the core of my opposition to Mr. Duncan—his disregard and contempt for judicial precedent he disagrees with.

Even before the Supreme Court considered same-sex marriage, Duncan warned that if the courts granted the right to same-sex marriage, then they might have to grant the right to marry a first cousin or a 13-year-old. To clarify, this is a man who believes that the rights of a corporation to deny employees health benefits is perfectly constitutional. Yet granting the right to same-sex marriage will lead us down a road to child marriage.

I know my colleagues are on a furious quest to pack the Federal bench with conservative judges—judges who hold outrageous views, views out of step with the American public. I do not trust, nor does his record suggest, that once Mr. Duncan puts on the judicial robe, he will uphold the rule of law for all Americans and not just those who share his ideological views.

I do not believe he can be an unbiased jurist, and that is exactly why the President nominated him and his supporters will vote for him.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the nomination of Mr. Duncan.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am here to oppose the nomination of Kyle Duncan to be a judge on the U.S. Circuit Court for the Fifth Circuit. The court of appeals for that circuit and every other in our country is supremely important not only to people who live in its direct jurisdiction but for all people of our country. Courts of appeals make decisions that are binding on district courts in that jurisdiction and also have an impact on other judges and courts throughout the country at every level.

From day one, the Trump administration has made attacking basic civil liberties a guiding principle of the policies it supports, including its judicial nominees. It is inexcusably seeking to turn back the clock on the progress we have made. We fought back hard against these arcane and irrational policies, but President Trump's attempt to stack our courts with extremist judges may, in the end, have the most long-lasting and devastating impact on our Nation. That is why I am here today, with many of my colleagues, to sound the alarm on Kyle Duncan. He has been nominated to this court, but he has made a career of seeking to turn back policies that protect the most vulnerable members of our country.

He is out of mainstream. In fact, he is out of the stream entirely. His views are extreme, fringed, and, collectively, they make him unfit to be a judge on this court that I greatly respect. Out of respect to members of the court, we should confirm someone only if they meet high standards.

Kyle Duncan has attacked the voting rights of minority groups—in one case, even defending a law that a Federal circuit court said targeted African-American voters with ''almost surgical precision.'' He has attacked the rights of same-sex couples, leading several efforts against marriage equality. He has attacked the rights of the transgender community to be safe in their schools and communities. He has attacked protections for Dreamers, making it harder for them to obtain documentation, such as simple driver's licenses.

Over and over, he has attacked women's rights and women's health in a way that I think disqualifies him for this court. Like so many other nominees before him, Kyle Duncan is an anti-choice zealot who has shown time and again that he is more worried about pushing his personal ideology than faithfully upholding the Constitution. His views on women's rights and women's healthcare are more than morally repugnant; they are downright dangerous.

In fact, Kyle Duncan has led the charge in defending unconstitutional and unnecessary laws that target abortion providers, attempting to legislate

them out of existence with little regard for the women who will be harmed as a result. These laws, which have spread around the country at an alarming rate, serve no medical purpose. They put barriers between women and the care they need and deserve. Twice—twice—Mr. Duncan has falsely argued that these restrictions targeting abortion providers in Louisiana and Texas were ''medically reasonable'' and based on ''solid medical ground.'' These laws were rightly struck down both times. Indeed, these laws are the opposite of medically reasonable. In no way are they based on medical ground. With this nominee's enthusiastic support, these unconstitutional State-level restrictions have proliferated, shutting down women's healthcare providers, delaying much needed care, and putting women's health at risk.

Kyle Duncan's peddling of misinformation as a lawyer fighting for these unnecessary and unconstitutional abortion laws is frightening enough. Imagine what he could do on the bench.

He has fought to undo historic healthcare victories provided by the Affordable Care Act's birth control mandate. As we know in this Chamber—and I think we need to acknowledge—this mandate has made a difference in the lives of an astonishing 64.2 million women who were able to access birth control with no out-of-pocket costs in the last year alone. This has given women greater power over their health, their well-being, their futures, their reproductive decisions, and their finances.

Yet Mr. DUNCAN has attacked the birth control mandate repeatedly. He sought to leave a woman's right to access affordable healthcare to the whims of her employer. Worse, he has absurdly denied that contraception is healthcare at all and has said the idea of contraception as a right is ''disturbing.'' It is a constitutional right. To him, it is disturbing. What kind of a judge will he be?

Despite what Kyle Duncan believes, birth control is healthcare. A woman's access to it is a right, and his false, ideologically driven assaults are wrong.

I will oppose Kyle Duncan's nomination to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to complete my brief remarks before we vote on the nomination of Mr. Duncan.

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you.

Mr. President, in a few minutes, we are going to vote on the nomination of Mr. Kyle Duncan for a position on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Mr. Duncan was nominated by President Trump. He has been vetted—examined, if you will—extensively by the White House. He has been vetted—examined, if you will—extensively the Department of Justice. He has been vetted by the FBI. He has been vetted by the American Bar Association, and he has been vetted by the Senate's Judiciary Committee. All of those entities have found that he is qualified—indeed, more than qualified—to sit on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

If you look at his resume and his experience, you will understand why. Mr. Duncan clerked for the Honorable John Duhe on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. As you know, Federal clerkships are highly coveted, but judges generally pick the top students and the top members of their class. Mr. Duncan was picked.

He has an LL.M. from the Columbia University School of Law, one of the finest law schools in the world. Mr. Duncan is an honors graduate of LSU Law School and an honors graduate with a B.A. degree from Louisiana State University as well.

He has argued over 30 cases in Federal and State appellate courts. Some lawyers never argue a single one. He has briefed, prepared, and argued some 30 cases.

He served in the office of the attorney general in the State of Louisiana as appellate chief. He has represented my State in many high-profile cases, and he also has experience as an assistant solicitor general in the attorney general's office in Texas.

Those who know Kyle and who have participated in the vetting process know that he is articulate, a careful thinker, and has a deep understanding of the importance of the separation of powers, and for that reason, he has been supported by a bipartisan group of both current and former lawyers.

I do not recognize the Kyle Duncan being described by some of my colleagues. I say this with all due respect. I think some of my colleagues, in criticizing Mr. Duncan, are confusing the role of the lawyer and the client.

I used to practice law. When a client came to me and said ''Kennedy, I need you to represent me,'' I did what they asked in that particular lawsuit. If his position was lawful, I would say: OK, tell me what your problem is and what your arguments are, and I will look at it from my standpoint and maybe supply some additional arguments under the law. But when my client described to me his problem and his analysis of it, I can't remember a single time when I said: Oh, jeez, I don't agree with you. I don't like your politics. I just don't agree with your position. I could have, but that was not my role as a lawyer. So long as what my client was proposing was legal, my role as their lawyer was that they were entitled to legal representation. My role was not to substitute my judgment for theirs.

I have listened to my colleagues' criticism of Mr. Duncan. They don't know what his beliefs are, with all due respect. They have said: Well, in this case, he said that, and in this case he said that, and in this case over here, he said that, as though it was his point of view. They were his clients' points of view.

Mr. Duncan has developed an expertise in constitutional law. He is a senior partner in a boutique firm. That means, of course, as you know, a smaller firm that has a specialty here in Washington, DC. Clients from all over the country and from all over the world come to him with constitutional law problems, and they ask him to litigate. They ask him to espouse their point of view—not Mr. Duncan's point of view, but the client's point of view. It is just not fair, it seems to me, to criticize a lawyer for doing what he is bound by our code of ethics and, indeed, the law to do.

If I didn't think Kyle Duncan would call the balls and the strikes based on the rule of law that we cherish in America, I wouldn't be standing here today, but he will. I would respectfully suggest that all of my colleagues put aside the politics, put aside whether they like President Trump, and look at this man for himself. What they will see is a very qualified, very successful lawyer who worships the rule of law and who will apply the law as this Congress and the U.S. Supreme Court have dictated.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Duncan nomination?

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 82 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Alexander	Enzi	Kennedy
Barrasso	Ernst	Lankford
Blunt	Fischer	Lee
Boozman	Flake	Manchin
Burr	Gardner	McConnell
Capito	Graham	Moran
Cassidy	Grassley	Murkowski
Collins	Hatch	Perdue
Corker	Heller	Portman
Cornyn	Hoeven	Risch
Cotton	Hyde-Smith	Roberts
Crapo	Inhofe	Rounds
Cruz	Isakson	Rubio
Daines	Johnson	Sasse

Scott	Thune	Wicker
Shelby	Tillis	Young
Sullivan	Toomey	

NAYS—47

Baldwin	Hassan	Peters
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Sanders
Booker	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Jones	Schumer
Cantwell	Kaine	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Smith
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Tester
Coons	Markey	Udall
Cortez Masto	McCaskill	Van Hollen
Donnelly	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Feinstein	Murphy	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden
Harris	Nelson	

NOT VOTING—3

Duckworth	McCain	Paul

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 788, Mike Pompeo.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Mike Pompeo, of Kansas, to be Secretary of State.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Mike Pompeo, of Kansas, to be Secretary of State.

Mitch McConnell, Orrin G. Hatch, Todd Young, John Cornyn, Bill Cassidy, John Boozman, Deb Fischer, David Perdue, James Lankford, Roger F. Wicker, John Thune, Tom Cotton, Mike Rounds, Roy Blunt, James M. Inhofe, Thom Tillis, Bob Corker.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 619, Richard Grenell.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Richard Grenell, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Germany.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Richard Grenell, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Germany.

Mitch McConnell, Cory Gardner, Orrin G. Hatch, Tom Cotton, James Lankford, Steve Daines, Roy Blunt, Mike Crapo, Johnny Isakson, John Thune, Thom Tillis, James M. Inhofe, Pat Roberts, Lindsey Graham, James E. Risch, John Hoeven, John Boozman.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions be waived.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the Dunkin nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TAX REFORM

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I was reading a piece in the Wall Street Journal last week by Kevin Hassett, who was the Chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisers. His piece made an important point that doesn't often come out as clearly as it should, and that is that when American businesses benefit, American workers benefit. My friends on the other side of the aisle like to obfuscate that point.

Presumably they think they can gain political points by pitting businesses and workers against each other, as if benefits for businesses and benefits for workers were somehow diametrically opposed and as if, somehow, workers could thrive while businesses struggle.

As the piece I was reading pointed out, ''In a modern competitive economy, workers do well when their employers do.'' If you think about it, it really is just common sense. The vast majority of working Americans work for businesses, whether they are self-employed, an employee of a small business, or an employee of a large corporation. For those employees to thrive, the businesses they are working for have to thrive as well.

Struggling businesses do not invest in workers; they can't. They don't hire new employees. They don't raise wages. They don't improve benefits.

On the other hand, thriving businesses do invest in their workers, they do hire new employees, they do raise wages, and they do improve benefits. Leaving aside the fact that most business owners want to invest in their workers, successful business owners have to invest in their workers if they want their businesses to keep thriving.

For starters, successful businesses tend to need new workers, and the way to attract new workers is with good wages, good opportunities, and good benefits. Once a successful business has good employees, it tends to want to keep them so that the business can keep prospering and thriving. How do businesses keep employees? The same way they attract them in the first place—with good wages, good opportunities, and good benefits.

As Mr. Hassett notes in the Wall Street Journal:

Research by economists Alan Krueger and Lawrence Summers, both of whom served in the Obama administration, shows that more-profitable employers pay higher wages. Any company that attempts to pay a worker less than he is worth will quickly lose that worker to a competitor. Thus, firms that want to thrive must invest in their plants and their workers.

Ask any business owner in the country, and he or she will tell you that it is a competitive labor market. Unemployment is at a 17-year low. In a tight, competitive labor market, employers have to work to keep their employees.

Our focus with last fall's tax reform was on making life better for ordinary Americans, so we set out to put more money in their pockets right away by cutting tax rates across the board, nearly doubling the standard deduction and doubling the child tax credit. As a result, for 2018, a family of four making $73,000 will see a tax cut of more than $2,000.

We knew the tax cuts, as helpful as they are, weren't enough. Americans also needed access to profitable careers, good jobs, good wages, and good