

Act, and argued to strike down the Affordable Care Act's contraception coverage mandate.

So from reproductive rights to civil rights to gun safety, name a partisan legal case from the past 5 years, and there is a good chance that Britt Grant has been involved, taking up a fringe legal argument—way out of the American mainstream—to weaken well-established rights and overturn precedent in pursuit of an ideological objective.

I would also like to bring to my colleagues' attention that in speeches and in handwritten notes—even with this extreme record—Judge Brett Kavanaugh has repeatedly praised Britt Grant's record. In fact, Kavanaugh called Britt Grant “a superb solicitor general of Georgia.” That is someone with these extreme views.

Judge Kavanaugh's ringing endorsement of Britt Grant's record may serve as a window into his own judicial philosophy. It makes you wonder: What, exactly, does Judge Kavanaugh agree with her on so that he would call her so many laudatory things?

Does he agree with Britt Grant that a woman's constitutional, guaranteed freedom to make her own reproductive choices should be curtailed, even though an overwhelming majority of Americans support Roe? Does he believe, like Britt Grant, that States should be able to define marriage as only between a man and a woman, even though the Supreme Court has declared things the other way? Does he believe, like Britt Grant, that insurers shouldn't have to provide contraceptive coverage?

Britt Grant is the kind of lawyer Judge Kavanaugh, in his own words, considers “superb.” Maybe that is why they both ended up on the same short list of 25 potential out-of-the-mainstream court nominees—out of the mainstream because they were vetted by the Heritage Foundation, which believes that the government should not be involved in healthcare, and by the Federalist Society, whose leader's goal is to repeal Roe v. Wade, even though 71 percent of Americans are against that repeal.

Whether you are a Democrat or a Republican or Independent, you should want a better process for choosing judges. The American people deserve judges from the legal mainstream who will interpret the law rather than make it, who will respect and defer to precedent unless there is a darn good reason not to—not just folks picked off some list prevetted by extreme conservative groups that don't represent what a majority of Americans think, and they probably don't even represent what a majority of Republicans think. But the Republican majority has been advancing an assembly line of nakedly partisan, ideological judges like Britt Grant. That Judge Kavanaugh has praised her record so roundly is concerning.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). 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 Britt Cagle Grant, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I intend to speak for a few moments as in morning business concerning the National Flood Insurance Program, which is set to expire tomorrow night at midnight, July 31, and which certainly this body will not allow to expire. We will undoubtedly reauthorize the program and not leave millions of Americans without flood protection at the height of the Atlantic hurricane season.

The House has sent us legislation that provides for a clean reauthorization, temporary as it may be. It will keep the program going without injecting reforms or changes, and it reassures homeowners and property owners across the country who rely on this program that it will still be there and that they can count on it.

We are not bathing ourselves in glory by doing this. I think we would all acknowledge that passing this reauthorization right before the deadline does not entitle us to pat ourselves on the back. Instead, it should motivate Members to work across the aisle to provide meaningful reforms. I have a suggestion or two for some meaningful reforms when we take this up on a permanent basis.

We may have assured Americans today and tomorrow that when we act on this, they can rely on the National Flood Insurance Program through No-

vember, but we need to assure them that they can rely on the program for the next year, for the next 5 years, or for 10 years. That will be a challenge over the next several months.

We need to make this program financially sustainable for the long term, but we also need to assure property owners that they are not going to be hit with a huge insurance bill they can't afford. History does not provide the public with very much encouragement with regard to actually getting some reforms done. We have to keep it going with a patchwork.

Out of the 41 times that the National Flood Insurance Program has been reauthorized over the past 20 years, reforms have been included only 3 times out of 41. That is not a great record. I hope that before the end of this calendar year, we can add a fourth substantive change to make some progress.

One thing I hope we can do is to enact the changes to the COASTAL Act in a bill that I have introduced called the COASTAL Implementation Act. If you recall, after Hurricane Katrina, we saw how discrepancies between wind damage and water damage on the total-loss properties often prevented property owners from being made whole. There was a dispute between the flood insurance folks and the wind insurance folks, and the property owner was caught in the middle.

The COASTAL Act and the followup COASTAL Implementation Act seeks to address these discrepancies with better data collection and more accurate poststorm assessments. More specifically, we want NOAA, or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to be able to assess the strength of wind and water at affected sites. With sound data, the property owners can receive fair compensation for their losses—some, perhaps, from the flood insurance coverage, and some from the wind insurance coverage. Reducing cases of “indeterminate losses” would ultimately reduce costs to the National Flood Insurance Program and better serve the public.

My other reform proposal also seeks to arm us with better data. I call this legislation the MEMA Act, which stands for Municipality Empowerment Mapping Achievement. Under this act, FEMA would publish the NFIP's rate maps. These maps would cover the entire United States, and they would be created using the latest technology. Information on an area's flood hazard risks should be accessible and comprehensive.

Accurate maps can also help to draw businesses to our smaller communities. Without this information, these businesses might go to a nearby urban area to invest. The playing field should be leveled in this regard. Other ideas, such as competition from the private sector, can help to bring down high flood insurance rates.

What we don't want to do is to drive folks away from coastal areas. Forty