

They certainly didn't ask for every document from the Solicitor General's Office that contained a mere reference to Justice Kagan "by name, initials, or title."

Producing sensitive internal deliberations and other documents from the Solicitor General's Office would have been extraordinarily inappropriate and even damaging to the executive branch, which is exactly why the Senate did not ask for Justice Kagan's records. This decision was especially difficult because Justice Kagan had no judicial records to review.

By contrast, we have over 12 years of Judge Kavanaugh's rulings on the DC Circuit. These rulings, which my Democratic colleagues are reluctant to even acknowledge, let alone talk about, are the most relevant documents for evaluating what type of Justice Judge Kavanaugh will be.

Judge Kavanaugh's court decisions are highly relevant to understanding his legal reasoning. The same can't be said of his White House documents, which more accurately reflect the conveyor belt process for Presidential decision making.

Those who argue they need every document that even mentions Judge Kavanaugh are only now realizing the absurdity of this argument. At this point, Democrats are simply stalling for time. They made no effort to make their proposals any less unreasonable, and Senator GRASSLEY rightly rejected them.

By now, Americans are starting to see through the ruse. The real objective of these ridiculous demands is to delay—delay Judge Kavanaugh's hearing to delay his inevitable confirmation.

Last week, Senator GRASSLEY announced that the hearing for Judge Kavanaugh would start on September 4. Immediately, Democrats insisted that the committee is rushing to hold Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation hearing, but the hearings for the last three nominees—Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan, and Neil Gorsuch—were all held 48 or 49 days after the President announced their nominations. By comparison, Judge Kavanaugh's hearing will start 57 days after his nomination was announced. Apparently, the Judiciary Committee is in such a rush that it has given Senators an extra week to review the nominee's record. The left is pushing a false narrative that Republicans are rushing to hold Judge Kavanaugh's hearing. Progressives are doing this in an attempt to muddy the waters. They are hoping people will focus on spurious process arguments rather than diving into Kavanaugh's judicial record, which is all but unassailable.

Last week, a number of my colleagues tried to make hay out of the fact that the Judiciary Committee received some documents about Judge Kavanaugh on a confidential basis. These colleagues said it was a travesty that they were not being made public,

but they knew then that these documents were being reviewed so important information like Social Security numbers and other similar personal information could be redacted and removed. In the meantime, the Senators and their staff were given access to the documents right away so they could review them for the upcoming hearing. In any event, the criticism that documents were being kept confidential was quickly blown apart.

Chairman GRASSLEY recently made public more than 103,000 pages of materials from Judge Kavanaugh's time in the executive branch, and more materials are on the way. Most laughable of all, some on the left are now claiming that because there is no smoking gun in the documents, surely the production process must be nefarious.

Maybe the huge number of documents is just too boring for Judge Kavanaugh's opponents to sift through or maybe they have looked through the documents already and know the American people have nothing to complain about.

Consider the damning evidence already uncovered in these documents: Judge Kavanaugh goes to church on Sunday morning. He appreciates pizza when he is working late. He thought the last play of the Redskins game was "a total disgrace." If these mendacities aren't grounds for disqualification, then what is? What more do we have to learn about Judge Kavanaugh before we can see him for what he truly is: Joseph Stalin without the moustache or, as one of my colleagues so calmly put it, a man who will "pave the path to tyranny."

If I could tell the American people one thing today, it would be this: Judge Kavanaugh may seem like the human incarnation of a vanilla ice cream cone, but he is actually something far more sinister. Judging by the rhetoric from the left, I am convinced that this minivan-driving carpool dad is actually the second coming of Genghis Khan. Now, I have no evidence for this assertion—not right now, anyway, but if Chairman GRASSLEY will just give us a few more years to read over each and every one of Judge Kavanaugh's work emails and maybe even every handwritten note he passed in grade school, I am sure they will find something because there is no way Democrats are just making this stuff up. I hope this isn't too much to ask.

Naturally, I am being facetious only to prove a point. We have more than we need to determine Judge Kavanaugh's fitness for the Supreme Court. Based on the number of documents alone, this will be the most thorough vetting of a Supreme Court nominee in our Nation's history. I have only been here for 42 years, but I can tell you this is the most thorough vetting of a Supreme Court nominee in our Nation's history.

We should call this hubbub about documents for what it really is—a naked partisan ploy, a red herring meant to distract the American people

from Judge Kavanaugh's indisputable credentials. Watching this confirmation unfold is like watching the tortured last moments of a blowout basketball game. Democrats are down 30 with 10 seconds left, but they keep fouling to stop the shot clock in an attempt to avoid their inevitable defeat. Enough already.

It is time Democrats come home from their fishing trip. We could spend eons angling for scandal in the river of documents the Judiciary Committee provided us, but nothing will bite because there is nothing there. Democrats know this by now, and it is time they admit it to the American people. The longer they wait, the more desperate they look.

To my progressive colleagues—and I have to laugh at the word "progressive." They are anything but progressive; they are regressive, but I will call them progressives today. To my progressive colleagues, I will say this: Let's not waste any more time. By now, it is evident to even the most committed partisans that Judge Kavanaugh is supremely qualified for the Supreme Court. So stop playing politics and join us in supporting his confirmation.

NATIONAL SUICIDE HOTLINE IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, on another matter, I would like to thank those who have worked with me on the important issue of mental health and suicide prevention. This week, President Trump signed into law my National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act, a bill that stands to save thousands of lives.

This legislation becoming law is the high point of an effort that began in December 2016, when I held a roundtable discussion at East High School in Salt Lake about the growing issue of teen suicide. A theme from that roundtable, and many other subsequent conversations, was the need for greater access to help—simply finding someone to talk to.

Too many Americans who are struggling with mental illness or see their friends or family members suffering do not know where to turn for help. By making resources like the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline system more accessible and user-friendly, we can truly save thousands of lives.

I thank all of those who helped get this bill across the finish line, including Utah State Senator Daniel Thatcher and Representative Steve Eliason, and of course Congressman CHRIS STEWART, who introduced the bill in the House. Most important, though, were the voices of so many Utahns who have felt the tragic effects of the suicide epidemic. I am heartbroken by their loss, but hopeful this law and their continued advocacy will turn the tide in the campaign against this epidemic. This is important, and I hope we will all get behind this and do what is right.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

NOMINATION OF BRETT
KAVANAUGH

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, I come to the floor to discuss one of the most significant responsibilities I have as a U.S. Senator; that is, providing advice and consent to the President's nominee to the Supreme Court.

I just had the privilege of hearing from my distinguished colleague Senator HATCH, Chairman and President Pro Tempore HATCH. I have heard about the scandals: He drives a minivan. He goes to church on Sunday. For heaven's sake, he is a Redskins fan?

I applaud the chairman for frankly sharing perspective around some of the ludicrous arguments being made by the other side about moving forward with an outstanding nominee for the U.S. Supreme Court, Judge Kavanaugh.

Confirming a Supreme Court Justice is a lifetime appointment. Laws come and go, but judges stay on the bench for a lifetime. So it is critical that we confirm the right person to serve on our Nation's highest Court.

The American people want a Supreme Court Justice with impeccable academic credentials—someone who does not legislate from the bench but upholds the rule of law and follows the Constitution.

A few weeks ago, I had the pleasure of meeting Judge Kavanaugh in my office. I can say, without a doubt, Judge Kavanaugh should be and is ready to be our next Supreme Court Justice. Judge Kavanaugh is one of the most qualified people to ever be nominated to the U.S. Supreme Court. You may hear from the other side that he is out of the mainstream. That is simply not true. In fact, the Supreme Court has adopted Judge Kavanaugh's reasoning more than a dozen times. This gives him one of the most impressive records of any Federal appellate judge and hardly places him outside of the mainstream.

During my meeting with Judge Kavanaugh, we had a very thoughtful discussion about the Founders' vision and intent when they crafted the Constitution. We discussed the separation of powers. We discussed the importance of the Second Amendment. Just as he does with his rulings on the court, Judge Kavanaugh did not focus on his personal opinions but rather he brought it back to the text of the Constitution and the historical understanding required. That is exactly what we need on the Bench from our highest Court.

I want to thank President Trump for nominating such an outstanding and well-qualified jurist. I would also like to thank Chairman GRASSLEY for committing to a fair and transparent process for moving Judge Kavanaugh through this process so that he can be confirmed prior to the Supreme Court's October term.

I am most confident that Judge Kavanaugh will serve well. I look forward to casting my vote to confirm him.

I yield back my time.

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

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

WATER RESOURCES
DEVELOPMENT ACT

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I am here to call on the Senate leadership to bring up the Water Resources Development Act, or the WRDA bill. It needs to come up soon for consideration because right now, in Florida, we are facing a massive environmental and economic crisis, and it is so sweeping that it brings up the memories of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oilspill, or the BP oilspill.

Right now, neon green slime is clogging the Caloosahatchee River on the west coast, and the St. Lucie River on the east. I have been to Stuart on the east coast. I have smelled the stench of toxic algae choking the waterways. I have talked to mothers and grandparents who are worried about exposing their children to the harmful toxins, and they are concerned about this if they get anywhere near there. That is why we wrote to the CDC, asking for healthcare guidance.

I have met with business owners who have literally had to close their shops because of the algae. If they are fishing boat captains, obviously, that is what happens. If it is a bait and tackle shop—you get the picture. If the stench of algae is so bad in the location of a shop—whatever its business—they still have to close. It is not right. It is not fair for the hard-working fishing guides, the restaurant employees, or anybody who has a business involving our beautiful beaches. People enjoying the natural bounty are all being affected through no fault of their own. That is on the east coast.

On the west coast of Florida, our white sand beaches aren't as crowded with tourists, but with what? The rancid corpses of fish. This is the pufferfish. This is on one of Southwest Florida's beaches. The turtles are casualties from massive, noxious red tide. This event—a bacteria that occasionally appears in the Gulf of Mexico has moved very close to the shore this year. It has lasted for 10 months and counting. Hotels and restaurants are half full. Boat captains are facing one cancellation after another. Look at this. This is on a beach where 267 tons of dead fish and sea life have been removed from about 150 miles of Florida's world-renowned beaches, and that is just this year alone.

These pictures are horrifying enough, but go there; it is even worse in person. The local governments have spent a lot of money going out and cleaning up the beaches. What has happened is absolutely heartbreaking. I am a fifth-generation Floridian, and I have never seen it this bad.

I have never seen our beautiful beaches covered like this. That is why Senator RUBIO and I are pushing so hard for the Water Resources Development Act. It includes a critical project to address the algae by providing additional water storage for Lake Okeechobee so that the Army Corps doesn't have to discharge so much to the east and west.

It also, very importantly, authorizes a reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee, along with stormwater treatment areas, which can help clean up the water so that they can send the water into the reservoir that is in the St. Lucie on the east. This reservoir is on the west, near LaBelle. They can send the water there, store it, start to treat it, and then let it go as the natural flow going south to the Everglades. This project in the Water Resources Development Act is part of the historic Everglades restoration effort that many of us have worked so long and hard to advance. It is just one piece, but it is one that absolutely cannot wait. If we don't act soon, I am afraid there will not be much of an environment in South Florida left to save.

I urge the majority leader to schedule a vote on the WRDA bill as soon as possible, and I urge my colleagues to support the Water Resources Development Act when it comes to the floor of the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Rhode Island.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT
AGREEMENT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, because the time between now and 11:30 is to be shared between me and the ranking member on the Finance Committee, Senator WYDEN, I ask unanimous consent that when Senator WYDEN appears, I yield the floor to him; that at the conclusion of his remarks, I be recognized to conclude my remarks; and that in the RECORD, my remarks be consolidated after Senator WYDEN's remarks.

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

WILDFIRES

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE not just for today, as we talk about wildfires, but because, year after year, he has been on this floor, prosecuting the consequences—playing out the consequences of the failure of dealing with climate change. Certainly, it is hotter and dryer in the West. What I am going to do is to spend some of this short period we have together in describing these wildfires.