

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. SUL-LIVAN). 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.