

I prevail upon the conscience of my Republican colleagues, who I know want to be fair to this man, look at the body of evidence impartially. There is simply a preponderance of evidence that Mr. Farr was involved, often intimately, in decades of voter suppression in North Carolina. The standard for this vote is not whether or how Mr. Farr should be punished or excoriated for what he did but a much higher one: whether a man with this history deserves to be elevated to a lifetime appointment on the Federal bench.

Whether you are Republican or Democratic, a liberal or conservative, that has to be—has to be—disqualifying for a seat on the Federal bench.

SPECIAL COUNSEL INVESTIGATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now, on another matter, the special counsel investigation.

To date, the special counsel's investigation has produced no less than 35 indictments or plea deals—35—and that does not include two additional guilty pleas of people initially investigated by Mueller but were handed off to other branches of the Justice Department.

Just this morning, Michael Cohen has pled guilty to lying to Congress about projects in Russia.

It is a reminder that there has been a remarkable volume of criminal activity uncovered by the special counsel's investigation. No one, especially not the President, can credibly claim that the investigation is a fishing expedition. Calling Mueller's investigation a witch hunt is just a lie—plain and simple, a lie.

The President's actions clearly show he has a lot to hide, that he is afraid of the truth, and doesn't want Mueller or anyone else to uncover it, but it hasn't stopped the President from repeating these lies. In fact, in recent days, President Trump has escalated his attack on Special Counsel Mueller. Almost daily, the President's Twitter feed is littered with baseless accusations about the investigation. President Trump retweeted an image of several of his political opponents, including Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein, behind bars. Can you believe that? The Deputy Attorney General behind bars? And this is the man—the President—our Republican colleagues refuse to call out against?

Just yesterday, President Trump said this about a potential pardon for Paul Manafort, now accused of lying to prosecutors and violating his plea agreement. He said:

I wouldn't take it off the table. . . . Why would I take it off the table?

That is a pardon.

Let's not forget, President Trump has already fired the Attorney General and replaced him with a lackey without Senate approval. The nominee's only qualification seems to be that he has a history of criticizing the special counsel.

So this idea that we don't need to pass legislation to protect the special

counsel because there is no way President Trump will interfere with the investigation is flatout absurd.

I once again call on my friend the majority leader to schedule a vote on the bipartisan bill to protect the special counsel. If he continues to refuse, we will push for the bill in the yearend spending agreement.

I yield the floor.

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 and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report:

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Thomas Alvin Farr, of North Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, the clock is ticking and the days are passing us by, but we know we have a deadline to meet on December 7, and if we don't meet that deadline, then there will be a lot of lives disrupted and a lot of people will say: There they go again. Congress is unable to work together to try to solve problems, just creating more distrust and undermining confidence in our ability to actually do our job to govern.

What I want to talk about specifically is this fight over border funding because that is what the deadline is on December 7. Our Democratic friends have said: We are not going to fund President Trump's wall. On the other hand, we see caravans of people coming from Central America, coming through Mexico, closing down the ports of entry at the San Ysidro bridge between Tijuana and San Diego. What I fear is, we have made a parody out of what the problem is. We have thought about the challenge of border security and immigration in too small a way and not given the complete picture of what the challenges really are.

I just have to believe that if we were willing to acknowledge the facts, that we would be more inclined to work together to solve the problem, and I feel like we are looking at these problems like we are looking through a soda straw.

I have heard people talk about the humanitarian crisis at the border there at Tijuana caused by this huge caravan of Central Americans who want to storm the barriers and enter the United States illegally, and people question why would we stop them, why would they use nonlethal means like tear gas and pepper spray like President Obama did during his administration and which now Customs and Border Protection is doing again in order to protect the sovereignty of our country and to protect our borders from those who would enter it illegally.

So let's not look at this through a soda straw. Let's open up the aperture and look at the larger problem because it is a very serious problem, and it affects many lives, both here, in Mexico, and in Central America.

Our Democratic colleagues have offered a lot of criticism of the Trump administration when it comes to border security, but anytime you ask them, well, what is your solution, what are you offering as an alternative, it is crickets—complete silence. In other words, they are not offering any constructive solutions, just criticism. Our constituents deserve more than just for us to criticize one another. They deserve our working together to try to come up with solutions.

This is a crisis that has arisen as a result of our inability to acknowledge that this is a failure to enforce our immigration laws, a failure to fix our broken immigration system, and a failure to secure our borders.

Coming from Texas, representing 28 million constituents in a State which has a 1,200-mile common border with Mexico, this affects my constituents in my State directly. We are at ground zero, and I have tried my best to get educated about the problem and potential solutions. My trips to the border, talking to people in border communities who live and work in those communities, talking to our heroic Border Patrol agents, and visiting our ports of entry where millions and even billions of dollars of commerce flow legally between the United States and Mexico—that is important not only to our border communities but to jobs in the United States.

The border communities that rely on the flow of legal commerce through our ports know that without border security, legitimate trade can easily be brought to a standstill. In fact, that is exactly what has happened at San Ysidro, the port of entry between Tijuana and San Diego. They had to shut down the port of entry. So people whose jobs depend on those ports of entry and the trade and commerce that goes on between our countries, they are the ones who are being hurt by the uncontrolled disruption of legal immigration. Any disruption of legitimate trade has an immediate impact on the businesses and the employees and affects the livelihoods of our border residents.

An unsecured border creates avenues for the entry of drug cartels and