

Prayer to pause and pray, I would simply say this:

Let us pray as a nation.

Father, guide us. We need Your help. The controversy, the division in our Nation, the anger, the struggle. Help us to be able to love one another. Help us to be able to see each other as You have created us and to respect You, Your wisdom, and Your guidance. Father, we admit that we do not know as much as You, so we need Your help. We need Your insight.

For our first responders and our military scattered around this Nation and around the world, we pray for Your protection for them. We pray that You would give them insight to help them to represent us well.

For members of our State Department, members in our government who are scattered around the Earth, members of our intelligence community and others who serve us every day, God, would You guide them and would You protect them in their tasks and give them the insight they need.

For Federal employees who serve our Nation each day and for members of our Nation who are finding ways to serve each other in our communities, would You help us this day to love one another and to be able to set the tone for a world that is watching us as a nation.

Help us represent well, You, who You have called us to be individuals.

In the Name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.

CONTRABAND CELL PHONES IN PRISON

Mr. President, on Facebook, a posting was made not long ago, and it was sent to a correctional facility in Oklahoma, and this was the posting, simply a question: "How do I contact the facility regarding your inmates that sex offenders have a cell phone in your prison and they are having contact with children on social media?"

An inmate who is a sex offender with a cell phone in a prison in Oklahoma contacting children should give a chill to all of us. I wish that were the only example. Just in Oklahoma last year, 7,518 cell phones that were contraband cell phones were picked up in Oklahoma prisons—just last year, 7,518 contraband cell phones.

This is within the correctional facility. This is from one of the facilities. That table is 12 feet long, and in many spots, the cell phones are stacked up 10 deep on this picture. These were all taken from inside the prison. Do you want to know what that looks like for the whole State and how that is gathered? The picture would look like this. This is the gathering of cell phones from my State, from correctional facilities across the State.

The challenge that we have is—for all of us—how do we stop these cell phones from getting inside the prison? That is a corruption issue, and sometimes it is a perimeter issue. It will be wrapped in duct tape and thrown over the fence. It will be slipped through at some point. A guard or someone who works inside the prison will be paid off to deliver it

and drop it in a certain spot. The result of it is the same: contact with people on the outside—contact that leads to dramatic effects. It is not only contact with people outside, like these predators who are sex offenders reaching out to children from inside the prison, but over and over again there are consequences.

We have the consequences of individuals—for instance, white-collar criminals who are continuing to run their companies. There was the famous occasion of the person known as the Pharma Bro, who bought out pharmaceutical companies, drove out competition, jacked up the prices, and ended up going to Federal prison, but even from prison he was able to get access to a cell phone and continue running his pharmacy operation from inside the prison.

There was an occasion not long ago in Oklahoma where an individual who was a murderer and, while he was in the State penitentiary, used cell phones to direct others to distribute methamphetamine for him across all of Northeastern Oklahoma. He was running a meth ring with his cell phone from inside the prison.

There was a prison facility, Lee Correctional Institution, where there was a mass riot that broke out inside the facility. In that riot seven inmates were killed and 17 others were injured. This happened in South Carolina. Afterward the South Carolina Department of Corrections director blamed cell phones for fueling the deadliest prison riot they had in South Carolina.

In another case, back in an Oklahoma prison, many of those charged within the prison have gang ties—MS-13, Crips, Indian Brotherhood, Universal Aryan Brotherhood, Irish Mob. Records show that those individuals had access to cell phones and were running their gangs outside the prison from inside the prison. We have one individual who is serving 20 years in prison for robbery and assault with a dangerous weapon and drug manufacturing and who used his cell phone to control the methamphetamine distribution and transactions outside the prison.

We have a RICO case in the Northern District of Oklahoma right now, which is racketeering, which is happening from large numbers of cell phones in an Aryan Brotherhood gang, a White supremacist group that is operating a drug ring outside the prison and coordinating their work and operation inside the prison.

This is not unique to Oklahoma. This is happening in prisons all over the country. We can go to one after another after another.

The two issues that have to be addressed are stopping the flow within, but the second, more obvious question that I hear from people when I raise this issue is this: Why can't the prisons just jam the cell phones?

That is a great question. Federal law does not allow State prisons to jam the cell phones.

Why don't we change that law?

That is another great question, and it should have been answered by this body a long time ago. But communications companies and cell phone company lobbyists overwhelmed this body and pushed back and said: Let's study the issue.

For years the cell phone lobby has come to Members of Congress and said: We totally agree with you that this is a problem. Let's study it.

I have met personally now for several years with the leadership of the FCC, which has jurisdiction over this, and said "Let's resolve this issue about prison cell phones," and every year when I meet with FCC folks, they say "We are studying it." At the same time, meth rings and sexual predators are operating inside our prisons. "We are studying it."

I waited patiently until the last study just came out. The summary of the last study that just came out on cell phones in prisons and jamming them—the study basically came back and said: We need more study on this issue. That was the result of the study.

One of the prisons got permission and a waiver to test a cell phone jammer in their prison with what is called a microjammer; they can put a jammer to block the cell phone coverage in one particular housing unit. They came back with the results of that from one individual State prison and said it was successful. The cell phone companies responded by saying: Hey, we wish you would have included us in that study. We should have been involved in that study. We need to do another study on top of your study to make sure it is all correct. Study after study after study is done when this is what is happening in our prisons.

So let me just bring this up to the cell phone industry: You do not want your company name attached to pedophiles in prisons who are contacting children outside the prison, waiting until they are released. You do not want your company name attached to a meth ring being operated inside a prison because you wanted to study the issue more. You do not want your company name attached to a prison riot where they directly linked the access to cell phones as leading up to that riot.

Every one of the major cell phone companies in the United States has done lab testing of jammers in their labs. This is not something that needs to be studied again. They all know the results.

What is worse, if you go back to 2005—New Zealand had already seen this issue arising in 2005. New Zealand worked with all of the cell phone companies in their country, and guess what. They studied it and implemented a policy to start jamming cell phones in their prisons in the following years. The cell phone companies overseas have already studied this in New Zealand.

Let's take it to the UK in 2012. In 2011, all of the cell phone companies

worked with the UK Government to be able to study cell phones in prisons, came to a decision about the best way to jam those signals, and, in 2012, the UK passed a piece of legislation to get this resolved.

So this has been studied in labs; it has been studied in New Zealand; it has been studied in the UK; and all we are hearing is it needs to be studied more here.

My suggestion is simple. Let's jam cell phones in prisons for the protection of our guards, our families, and to block criminal activity operating from inside our prisons. We know how to do this. We have the technology to do this. This body needs to address it in law and make sure it gets resolved in the days ahead. I look forward to passing that and not doing one more study to delay action on it.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 30 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF STEPHEN MOORE

Ms. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. President.

I think it is fair to say that most Americans didn't wake up this morning thinking about the role the Federal Reserve plays in their lives. The people we represent are focused on putting in an honest day's work, taking care of their families, and gradually climbing the economic ladder. The Fed is focused on making sure our economy is giving them every opportunity to do just that—or at least it is supposed to be.

The Fed's mission is to keep employment high, prices stable, and our financial system in good working order. When it succeeds, we see the full potential of the American economy, the greatest force for prosperity the world has ever known. When it fails, ordinary people can wind up losing their jobs, their homes, and their savings.

Even though most Americans don't know their names or think about their work, the seven members of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, nominated by the President and confirmed by Congress, have an important job to do.

The Fed is not supposed to be a place for politics. It is not a job for politicians. It is a job for the most accomplished and thoughtful economists and financial experts we have—men and women who truly understand not just what makes an economy work on paper, but what makes our economy truly work for working Americans.

Through his choice of nominees for this position, a President demonstrates whether he understands the importance of a functioning financial system and respects the American people, who rely on the Fed to keep our economy on solid footing. Through our consider-

ation of those nominees, we here in the Senate do the same—which brings me to the President's latest choice for this position: Stephen Moore.

Let's be clear about who Mr. Moore is. He is not a professor of economics at a prestigious university. He has won no prizes for his intellectual scholarship. In fact, he has never authored or coauthored a single peer-reviewed article or journal ever.

While some have suggested it might not be a bad thing to have a range of experience on the Federal Reserve Board, it is unclear what experience Mr. Moore has that would contribute a useful perspective. He has never run a bank or a business of any size. In fact, he has barely any experience in the private sector at all. No, Stephen Moore is a political operative and a pundit. There is nothing wrong with that, *per se*, but the fact is that President Trump picked him not because of anything he has accomplished in business or in the study of economics but rather because of what Mr. Moore believes—or at least what he goes on TV and says he believes.

As we try to decide who Mr. Moore is and whether he is, in fact, suitable for a job that has never before been held by someone with his total lack of qualifications, we might start by taking a look at the opinions he has shared over the decades he spent doing little else but sharing his opinions. For example, nearly all economists agree that empowering women to participate fully and equally in the workforce would result in huge gains for our economy. In fact, earlier this decade, a McKinsey analysis found that the increased number of women entering the workforce between 1970 and 2011 accounted for roughly a quarter of the gains in GDP achieved over that time period.

This McKinsey study noted:

Still, the full potential of women in the workforce has yet to be tapped. As the U.S. struggles to sustain historic GDP growth rates, it is critically important to bring more women into the workforce and fully deploy high-skill women to drive productivity improvement.

That is why so many of us in Washington are focused on empowering women to find jobs and build careers, to balance the responsibilities of work and family, and to participate in the economy on equal footing with men.

Mr. Moore apparently disagrees. He believes and has written that “the male needs to be breadwinner of the family.” When it comes to pay discrimination, Mr. Moore was unconcerned with the fact that, on average, women were earning 77 cents on the dollar compared to men. In fact, just 5 years ago, he warned that raising women's pay “could be disruptive to family stability.”

Perhaps Mr. Moore should read the McKinsey study. After all, it was produced for the Wall Street Journal, where he is a frequent commentator and used to serve on the editorial

board, so I am sure he could get a copy of it. But the more Mr. Moore's public statements are examined, the more it becomes clear that his views on women and the economy might have less to do with the economy and more to do with women.

Here is just one example. Mr. Moore apparently believes that efforts to address sexual harassment and assault on college campuses are quote “draining all the fun out of college life.”

He goes on to elaborate:

Colleges are places for rabble-rousing. For men to lose their boyhood innocence. To do stupid things. To stay out way too late drinking. To chase skirts. (At the University of Illinois we used to say that the best thing about Sunday nights was sleeping alone.) It's all a time-tested rite of passage into adulthood. And the women seemed to survive just fine. If they were so oppressed and offended by drunken, lustful frat boys, why is it that on Friday nights they showed up in droves in tight skirts to the keg parties?

This is the sort of thing a college freshman writes on his Facebook page that comes back to haunt him in his first round of job interviews. Mr. Moore chose to put those words in a newspaper column, underneath his name, at the age of 40.

Then again, anyone familiar with his record wouldn't be surprised to learn that Mr. Moore doesn't take sexual assault seriously. CNN recently unearthed that years earlier he had mocked the Violence Against Women Act as “objectionable pork” and referred to a program designed to promote gender quality in education as “vile.”

So in addition to “chasing skirts” on college campuses, Mr. Moore seems to believe that women's equality is ruining another favorite pastime—sports. He wrote that “co-ed sports is doing irreparable harm to the psyche of America's little boys,” and he mused about urging his young son to assault a kindergarten named Kate Lynn just because she was a better soccer player.

In another bit of sports commentary, Mr. Moore wrote:

Here's the rule change I propose: No more women refs, no more women announcers, no women beer vendors, no women anything. There is, of course, an exception to this rule. Women are permitted to participate, if and only if, they look like Bonnie Bernstein. The fact that Bonnie knows nothing about basketball is entirely irrelevant.

At the time Mr. Moore wrote this, Bonnie Bernstein was a prominent journalist and ESPN analyst, and he was a 42-year-old married man. But that didn't stop him from further underscoring his creepy affections for Ms. Bernstein, adding that she should be required to wear a halter top on the air. “If Bonnie were President of the United States,” wrote this adult male in a national publication about a complete stranger, “she'd be a Babe-raham Lincoln.” Perhaps that is why Mr. Moore has also said that powerful men should never meet alone with women, because they might wind up being accused of sexual harassment. Maybe it is a rule he should follow. Frankly, if I