

and substance abuse treatment. I am committed to building upon existing efforts and finding new ways to end the stigma attached to mental health diseases.

Third, experts tell us that it is important to standardize care for behavioral health and addiction medicines.

Fourth, we may need to equip doctors with more tools to respond to the opioid epidemic that has gripped the Nation and takes the lives of 130 Americans every day. For example, Federal regulations prevent a patient's doctor from reviewing that patient's substance abuse records. This policy is intended, appropriately, to protect patient privacy, and that is a very important goal, but if it hinders coordination of care, we may have reasons to be concerned. In some cases, doctors must have access to a patient's entire medical history in order to adequately recognize, respond to, and treat the symptoms of addiction.

I hope my colleagues in the Senate will join me in identifying bipartisan solutions to these issues. Doing so will help to improve the lives of many Americans who struggle with mental health and substance abuse disorders.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

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Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, one of the favorite parts of my job is welcoming Texans to Washington to talk about issues that they care passionately about. Something I have noticed, though, is that it doesn't matter if they are here to talk about healthcare, taxes, infrastructure, or fever ticks. The same question always seems to come up. They say: Judging by what I see in the news, it looks like nothing ever gets done around here; is that true?

I always remind them that compromise and agreement is not exactly clickbait. So while some of the bills we are working on may not consume Twitter feeds, there is a lot of great work being done here on a daily basis.

One example of that great work came last Thursday when the Senate passed the Debbie Smith Act of 2019, a major bipartisan achievement that would support victims of sexual assault across the country.

I would be negligent if I didn't acknowledge the Presiding Officer's contribution to that great effort in the Senate Judiciary Committee, for which I am grateful.

The namesake of this bill is an incredibly brave woman whom I have had the pleasure of getting to know over

the years, and I admire her tremendously. Debbie Smith is a fierce advocate for survivors of sexual assault and a champion for victims' rights, and she has become one of the most prominent voices in the fight to eliminate the rape kit backlog.

Sadly, Debbie's advocacy was born from a personal tragedy. In 1989, she was at home doing laundry when a stranger broke into her home. He blindfolded her, abducted her, and took her to a wooded area behind her home where he robbed and repeatedly raped her.

She reported the crime to the police and went to the emergency room for a forensic exam, but as days, months, and years passed, no answers came. She anxiously waited for her attacker to be identified and brought to justice, but it would end up being years before she saw that justice being done. Like millions of others across the country, Debbie's case became part of the long list of those frozen in time because of the debilitating rape kit backlog.

Though exact numbers are difficult to estimate, some experts estimate that hundreds of thousands of rape kits remain untested in the United States—a fact that should upset each and every one of us. Each of those untested rape kits represents a victim who is waiting for answers, who has to wonder each day who their attacker was, when will they show up again, and where are they now. Each piece of DNA evidence holds the key to apprehending a violent criminal and finally providing victims with some peace of mind.

For Debbie, it took 6½ years before the identity of her attacker was discovered. She has made it her mission in life to ensure that no other woman has to agonize for that long. The Debbie Smith Act was originally signed into law in 2004 to provide State and local crime labs the resources they need to end the backlog of these unsolved crimes. Because of Debbie Smith and the Debbie Smith Act, more than 860,000 DNA cases have been processed and 360,000 DNA profiles have been uploaded into the FBI's database. This accounts for 43 percent of all forensic profiles in the FBI's database.

While the original purpose for this legislation was to reduce the rape kit backlog, this DNA evidence can help to identify and to convict people who commit other types of crimes and to take more criminals off the street. By the way, we should note that if somebody has been falsely accused, this DNA evidence can exclude them as a potential perpetrator of a crime. It really works to benefit those falsely accused as well.

All in all, more than \$1 billion has been provided to forensic labs because of this law. The legislation passed by the Senate last week will provide even greater resources for this vital program.

The Debbie Smith Act of 2019 will reauthorize the important funding that supports testing DNA evidence so we

can eliminate the rape kit backlog in the future and someday ensure that it will not grow again.

This reauthorization also reauthorizes important training for law enforcement, correctional personnel, forensic nurses, and other professionals who assist victims of sexual assault. This bill is not controversial, not partisan, and not divisive. In fact, not a single Senator voted against it. It is exactly the type of legislation that should get more attention here in Washington.

I thank Senator FEINSTEIN of California, who cosponsored this bill, for working with me to get it over this first hurdle. I now hope that the House of Representatives will take up the Debbie Smith Act so we can get the legislation to the President's desk to provide even more victims with answers and, hopefully, some peace of mind.

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

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

#### TRIBUTE TO SETH PRINGLE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a member of my staff, Seth Pringle, who has dedicated his life to serving his country and the people of Ohio. Not only does Seth serve the people of Ohio each day on our staff, helping Ohio servicemembers and veterans, but he also serves in uniform himself as a member of the Army National Guard.

This past week was his last in our office for a year. He is heading out soon to deploy with his unit to defend our country overseas.

Seth earned both a master's and a bachelor's degree from Kent State University. He didn't stop there. He is currently pursuing a master's in national security from the University of Akron while also working for our State and serving his country.

Seth has worked in our office since 2015. He joined our team as an intern in the Cleveland office. He impressed all of us. He was hired first part time and then as a full-time staff member, serving as a constituent advocate on veterans and military issues.

Seth has helped hundreds of Ohio servicemembers and veterans navigate the military and the VA's bureaucracy so that they can receive the medals and timely medical care and benefits they earn.

About a year and a half ago, I joined Seth and members in the community in Cleveland to present long-overdue medals to George Burrell, a Vietnam veteran who served as an Army infantryman and earned the Combat Infantryman Badge, as well as five other

well-deserved honors. Mr. Burress had never received those medals due to a paperwork error. Because of Seth's work, we were finally able to present this Ohio veteran with the honors he had earned for serving our country.

There are so many stories like that one of American heroes finally receiving the honors and the Federal benefits they have earned. So many of those stories are because of Seth's hard work.

Seth Pringle does so much for the people of Ohio, and at the end of the week, when others might look forward to a relaxing weekend with friends and family, Seth often is headed out for drill with his unit.

Now Seth's unit is deploying. While we will miss his expertise, his dedication, and his unique perspective in the office this year, we are so grateful for his service to our country.

On behalf of everyone in my office and on behalf of Ohio's 12 million citizens, we wish Seth Pringle well in his tour overseas—and all of his unit, of course. We thank him for his sacrifice and his service.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### REMEMBERING DAVID MILES KNIGHT AND BERNER RICHARD JOHNSON III

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, we have two bits of sad news about long-time Senate employees.

David Miles Knight, a beloved barber in our barbershop and one of the Senate's master barbers for the last 36 years, lost a lengthy battle with cancer.

His most noticeable and notable trait was kindness—not just friendliness but actual kindness—and a generosity of spirit. He was always eager to ask about a customer's day or a colleague's weekend and was just as eager to regale those folks with stories about his family—of Joanne, his wife; of his three sons; of his eight grandchildren; and of his two great-grandchildren. Dave's life was filled with these people—his friends and his family.

I offer my prayers to them now—to Dave's family, his friends, and his Senate family. He was considered a member of the Senate family and had been here for decades. He was beloved. We miss him.

Berner Richard Johnson III, a staff member for 30 years, known to all here

as "Bud," also passed away last night. He was a victim of a violent crime last week in DC and recently succumbed to the injuries this crime involved.

Bud was beloved by his Senate family, the softball team he coached, and his many friends and family. I offer my prayers for Diane, his partner; for Bo, his son; and for all who loved him and who will miss him.

May the memory of these two men be a blessing to their loved ones and a reminder to all of us that life is fleeting and to hold tight to those we love.

#### DISASTER RELIEF

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on disaster relief, millions of Americans have waited long enough for their government to provide relief in the wake of recent natural disasters. We have 1 week left in this work period. This is crunch time. It will be an awful conclusion to this work period if we leave without passing a relief package. We must focus on concluding our negotiations and reaching consensus on our final legislation.

That is why I am alarmed by rumors that the Republican majority may attach a simple extension of the Violence Against Women Act to the disaster bill rather than to the new reform bill that was passed by a huge bipartisan majority in the House. That is a formula for deadlock when we pass it here and send it to the House, but they will not vote for it.

Why do we have to load up the disaster bill with extraneous provisions, especially those that might bring conflict?

We must be very careful not to allow this and other extraneous provisions to get on the bill that have opposition from Members. It would only imperil the success of bipartisan disaster relief. We have come to a conclusion on Puerto Rico, and I am glad our Republican friends have finally seen the light and have not treated Puerto Rico unfairly so that we can move forward with all disaster relief.

The President sent over a proposal on the border, and we have sent back a counter proposal with many of the things—but not all—that he included. Some are objectionable. That is extraneous, but we might be able to come to an agreement on that.

These other extraneous provisions? Our Republican leader has said that he wants to get this done Thursday. Well, a surefire way of not doing it is jamming the House, filling it up with provisions that would not pass the House.

So let's all roll up our sleeves, get to work, refrain from our desires to put other things on this must-pass bill, and get disaster relief done. We Democrats will work in good faith to resolve all the remaining issues. But before the week is out, let's get a bill we can vote on. Let's deliver relief to disaster-stricken Americans and put an end to what has been a needlessly partisan episode.

#### WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on women's health and a woman's right to choose and the judges we are appointing, the past week marked a low point for our country on the issue of women's reproductive rights.

While an overwhelming majority of Americans want to keep *Roe v. Wade*, a total of 30 States have now sought to restrict the rights of women to make their own healthcare decisions, and some would either directly or virtually undo the *Roe v. Wade* decision. Alabama's Republicans have passed the most extreme example—that is the one I was talking about—but Republicans in Missouri and Texas are not far behind. And this is not merely a few fringe politicians making a statement way out of the mainstream; this is a systematic effort by Republicans in State legislatures to restrict women's reproductive rights and ultimately overturn *Roe v. Wade*, even though the vast majority of Americans don't want that to happen.

Meanwhile, here in the Senate, Leader MCCONNELL has lined up a conveyor belt of far-right judges who have reprehensible records on women's rights.

Last week, the Republican majority considered a judge, Kenneth Lee of California. Here is what he said about sexism. He said it is "irrelevant pouting." Tell that to women who have been discriminated against in so many different ways that we read about. How about Ms. Wendy Vitter? All of our Republican friends voted to put this woman on the bench. She once promoted the idea that contraceptives cause cancer and claimed that Planned Parenthood kills 150,000 women a year. Both were confirmed to lifetime appointments. It is incredible. These are people way on the extreme—way on the extreme.

And here comes another one. The Senate is voting on yet another judge with a horrendous record on women's rights—Mr. Daniel Collins, nominated to the Ninth Circuit over the objection of both of his home State Senators. He has defended the rights of pregnancy clinics to withhold from their patients that they don't provide abortion services and filed an amicus brief in support of the Hobby Lobby's petition to deny its female employees contraceptive care. He is a longtime donor and member of the Federalist Society, and he has ensconced himself in one of the most anti-choice organizations in the entire country. Let's make no mistake about it—to read some of the articles about the Federalist Society, it was formed with the goal of curtailing women's rights. Many of its advocates believe that *Roe v. Wade* should be repealed.

Let me just call out my friends on the Republican side. When the Alabama law came about, the vast majority of my friends on the other side stayed silent about the extreme anti-abortion measure in Alabama and some of the other States, and then some