

marriage to same-sex couples. He, thankfully, did not prevail in that view because the Court upheld the rights of same-sex couples to be married, and he continued his opposition to marriage equality by representing the owners of an Oregon bakery who refused to bake a cake for same-sex couples.

He testified in favor of legislation the Texas Observer described as a “license to discriminate” adoption bill that would permit adoption agencies to refuse to place children with same-sex couples.

Many in Congress, including myself, worked to pass the Equality Act, which would reflect the core of the Supreme Court’s ruling by adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the Federal code’s list of protected classes.

He has referred to this effort as a weaponization of Obergefell that seeks the public affirmation of the “erotic desires of liberated adults.”

Even as I recite these quotes, I can hardly believe that at this moment in our history, at this time of awareness among informed and tolerant people who believe in inclusiveness and equal justice under the law, that someone nominated to this position of paramount responsibility would have these views and articulate them in this way.

If the Equality Act were to become law and face a challenge in Judge Kacsmaryk’s court, could litigants feel comfortable or confident that they would receive a fair hearing? Is there any gay, lesbian, transgender, or non-binary person who would feel their case would receive a nonbiased treatment in his court?

I have such deep doubts, as should my colleagues, that I cannot vote for him. I will oppose his nomination, and I hope my colleagues will join me in voting no on Matthew Kacsmaryk.

I yield the floor.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. For the information of all Senators, at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 19, the Senate will vote on confirmation of the following nominations in the order listed, and if confirmed, the motions to reconsider shall be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action: Executive Calendar Nos. 22, 28, 50, and 118. Under the previous order, the closure motion on the motion to proceed to S. 1790 will ripen following disposition of Executive Calendar No. 118.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session to be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO PASTOR DAVE STONE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, all of God’s children are blessed with certain gifts, and we are each called to put them to work to glorify Him. Today, it is my sincere privilege to pay tribute to my friend who has answered this call and used his considerable gifts with compassion and grace. At the end of May, Dave Stone stepped down as the senior pastor of Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, KY. I would like to take a moment to honor his years of pastoral leadership and to sincerely thank him for his care and dedication to our church family.

Elaine and I have been attending Southeast for nearly two decades, drawn by the moving preaching and the warm community. Dave has been an integral part of that spiritual life for 30 years, and there are so many of us in Louisville who have been made better by his friendship and leadership. Throughout his 13 years as senior pastor, Dave was our shepherd and used his many talents to point tens of thousands to the Lord.

When Dave first joined Southeast, his devotion to Christ and His church instantly became clear. Dave came not only with an inspirational vision, but also with a deep sense of humility. To anyone who walked into this church, he made a point to welcome them like a lifelong friend. In both the easy and the difficult times, Dave shared his sense of joy in everything he did for the church. His warmth and humor made a positive and tangible impact on me and many other members.

Dave assumed the responsibility of senior pastor after the retirement of Bob Russell, who had served the church community in leadership roles for 40 years. The next year, Southeast announced the establishment of a second location, a remarkable sign of growth and a testament to Dave’s leadership. Southeast has continued adding more campuses to the church, and now it reaches believers on TV, on the radio, and at seven locations. Through this development, Southeast has become the largest church in Kentucky and the seventh largest in the entire country.

Southeast’s impressive growth also brought more responsibilities for Dave, his team, and his family. Whatever challenge presented itself over the years, Dave’s skilled ministry helped the community thrive. Thousands of people have watched Dave preach, relied on his mentorship, and enjoyed his friendship.

Dave admitted that he hates the word “retirement,” but he also knew it was time to pass the baton. When he announced his departure, Dave expressed his deep gratitude to the church leadership, staff, and all the faithful. He once again showed himself the humble pastor who fulfilled his mission from God.

Now that he has officially stepped down as Southeast’s senior pastor, Dave is looking for his next calling. I am confident he will continue using his many gifts to draw the faithful to the Lord. He will also get to spend more time with his wife Beth, his children, and his grandchildren. Although Elaine and I will certainly miss his Christian spirit and good humor, we wish Dave and his family all the best on their next adventure.

NOMINATION OF MATTHEW J. KACSMARYK

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I rise today in opposition to the nomination of Matthew Kacsmaryk to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas.

June is the month that we recognize as Pride Month to celebrate the lesbian and gay community and to acknowledge that individuals should not be discriminated against on the basis of their sexual orientation; yet, today we are voting on a nominee, Mr. Kacsmaryk, whose career has been defined by opposition to the rights of LGBT Americans. He has argued against marriage equality and defended a company that refused to provide service to a same-sex couple, simply based on their sexual orientation.

It is disappointing that the Senate is moving forward on his nomination, and even more disappointing that the majority has scheduled this vote during Pride Month.

Mr. Kacsmaryk’s long record of opposing civil rights protections for LGBT Americans should disqualify him from service on the bench. They demonstrate that he puts his personal opinion above Supreme Court precedent.

Specifically, I want to highlight some key positions in his record.

In 2015, Mr. Kashmir made comments deeply critical of United States v. Windsor, the case that struck down the Defense of Marriage Act, or DOMA. Mr. Kacsmaryk claimed that the Obama administration, which refused to defend DOMA, had “effectively collaborated with the adversary.” Mr. Kacsmaryk’s comments make clear that he believes those fighting for the right of LGBT American, including the right to marry, are adversaries. Someone making a statement like this should quite simply not be a Federal judge.

He likewise claimed in a radio interview that efforts to achieve marriage equality were marked by “lawlessness,” adding that the Justice Department’s refusal to defend DOMA was an “abuse of rule of law principles.”