

beyond Hong Kong. It matters to us. It should matter to us. What is happening in Hong Kong is not just important for those residents but for the rest of the world. Today the people of Hong Kong are fighting against an unpopular and unfair extradition bill. They are really fighting for a future in which they can enjoy basic human rights, natural rights that everyone should have, including the right to free speech, the right to a fair trial, the right to be confident that your government will follow the laws of the society in which it exists, and participation in a just and fair representative system of government.

If the Chinese officials in Beijing and the Communist Chinese who rule mainland China have their way, they will extinguish these rights for the people of Hong Kong. If the extradition bill were to become law, it would threaten all of those rights because of the chilling effect of the threat of being extradited to the lawlessness of the Chinese judicial system.

In some important ways, I think Hong Kong can be seen as a canary in a coal mine for Asia. What happens in Hong Kong will at least set expectations, create a climate that will maybe affect what happens in Taiwan over time, other Asian nations that are struggling for freedom in the shadow of China. The fact is, China itself is controlled by an authoritarian government, interested primarily in its own survival. That is the top priority of Beijing's leadership. They have created a modern-day police state. They use mass surveillance, censorship, internet applications in order to control their own citizens. They have imprisoned over a million of their own citizens, the Muslim Uighur minorities, in concentration camps.

China's authoritarianism threatens free and open societies all around the world. A democratic Hong Kong is a direct threat to the Communist regime in Beijing because people across China, naturally, ask the question: Why do Hongkongers get to have more rights and a better life and more freedom than we have? That is the threat the government in Beijing is trying to extinguish.

We, of course, recently had the blessing of being able to celebrate our own Independence Day, when Americans reflect on our own struggle against tyranny, against an unjust government, and our successful effort to throw that off and establish this, the world's greatest, most vibrant, and freest democratic society.

In many ways, the Hongkongers are fighting for some of the very same values as our Founding Fathers did during the American Revolution. I think it is important that we in the United States not turn a blind eye to the struggle for freedom that is happening outside our borders. I think it is important that Americans continue to stand in support of the voices in Hong Kong calling for freedom, for democracy, and re-

spect for basic human rights. I will do what I can in the Senate to support the people of Hong Kong in their peaceful protests for their own freedom, and I call on my colleagues in this administration to join me.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:30 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. CAPITO).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, if I understand the procedure, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are postcloture on the Bress nomination.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I rise today to oppose the nomination of Daniel Bress to the Ninth Circuit in California.

First, by history and tradition, this is a California seat on the Ninth Circuit. The fact is that Mr. Bress is neither a California attorney nor a California resident. In fact, he has not been a resident of the State for over a decade. He has lived and practiced in the Washington, DC, area for almost his entire adult life.

As California Senators, Senator HARRIS and I know that experience and connection to California are really necessary for a Ninth Circuit judge to be effective on the bench. We know our State, we know our constituents, and we know the challenges they face.

That is why the blue slip is so important. Honoring the blue slip ensures that Senators who understand and are accountable to their constituents have a say in judicial nominations for their home States.

Senator HARRIS's and my blue slips were not returned. That ultimately symbolizes our objections. I was also very disappointed that the White House ignored that and moved forward with Mr. Bress's nomination.

Senator HARRIS and I worked in good faith with the White House to find nominees acceptable to the President and to us. During our negotiations that took place, we informed the White House that we could support several other nominees who were, in fact, selected by the White House. Yet the White House and the Republican members of the Judiciary Committee have claimed we were at an impasse. That is simply not true. For reasons still unknown to us, the White House abandoned our negotiations and nominated Mr. Bress for this seat instead.

I am very disappointed that Republican leadership decided to schedule a vote on Mr. Bress's nomination, given both of our objections to his nomination and our concerns about a lack of connection to our State.

Next, I want to discuss what I mean by a lack of connection to our State.

The White House has greatly exaggerated Mr. Bress's connections to California to justify their decision to move forward with a non-California nominee.

I have studied Mr. Bress's record extensively, and I would like to run through some of what I have found.

Mr. Bress claims to spend a substantial amount of time working in his law firm's San Francisco office. However, as recently as November 2018, Mr. Bress's profile on the Kirkland & Ellis LLP website listed him as an attorney working exclusively in the firm's Washington, DC, office. His profile page likewise provided contact information—phone and fax—only for the Washington, DC, office.

Just before he was nominated, Mr. Bress's Kirkland & Ellis profile was revised to list him as an attorney in both the Washington, DC, and San Francisco, CA, offices of the firm.

In addition, according to a review conducted by my staff, every public legal filing signed by Mr. Bress lists his office as Washington, DC. This includes legal filings submitted in California courts. Mr. Bress has never had an oral argument before the Ninth Circuit—never had an oral argument before the Ninth Circuit.

The chairman of the Judiciary Committee entered a letter into the record at Mr. Bress's hearing identifying 26 cases in California courts that Mr. Bress has been involved in. However, according to Mr. Bress's Senate Judiciary questionnaire, 11 of these 26 cases were asbestos lawsuits for a single client, the chemical company BASF Catalyst. Another four cases were products liability lawsuits involving another single client, the air conditioning manufacturer United Technologies Corporation. So those are two clients. This is hardly the wide breadth of California court experience that one would expect of a Ninth Circuit court appointee.

Mr. Bress does not belong to any legal organizations in California. His children do not attend school in our State. He has voted only once since high school in a California election. And he does not have a California driver's license. Finally, Mr. Bress does not own any property in California outside of one share in a family business venture.

These facts, along with Mr. Bress's residency in the Washington, DC, area—he lives here; his family lives here—make clear to us that he is not a Californian, nor is he suited for the Ninth Circuit.

This is something we have never experienced before; that is, bringing a judge from one coast to put him on the Ninth Circuit on the other coast.