

on the same side on the symbolism of this, but we can't pass laws that do exactly what all of us have said is wrong with our penal system, all of the unintended consequences. There is one here, and I ask, in a very polite way—I have been asking for 3 months—for one small change, and I will let the bill go today, on this day, if we can have it.

The changes have been out there. They are not brand-new. They have been in Senator BOOKER's office for 3 months. We have tried to, as he has had objections, work with him on his objections.

So I would ask unanimous consent, once again, to pass the bill, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BOOKER. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, this is a bill that has already passed this body. Same bill, same language. There was no objection. Only four Members of the House of Representatives objected. Same bill, same language.

I have heard this objection. We disagree with this. The truth is, what is being proposed is not just opposed by me, but our Republican colleagues who are sponsoring this bill, in this body, oppose these corrections as well.

In addition to that, changes to this bill now would send it back to the House of Representatives. This is a tactic that will send this bill back over to the House, where again it would have to be voted on.

This idea that somehow someone would be brought up on lynching charges for a slapping is absurd, especially as you see, with hate crime legislation, how difficult that is even to prove.

So I am deeply disappointed by the objections we have heard that were not made manifest last year, in 2019, but somehow seem to be stopping it in 2020. So I object, with this prediction: We, as a body, will correct historic ills and pass lynching legislation through this body, through the House of Representatives. One day in this Nation, this legislation will pass.

Perhaps it will have to wait until I am not here, until Senator PAUL is not here, unless he decides to go back to the 2019 Senator PAUL.

The question is, What side of history will we ultimately be on? I pray that it happens in this Congress. I pray that the President signs legislation against lynching. How historic that would be. But today it is not going to happen, obviously.

I am telling you right now, this celebration will come. This moment in American history will come. The frustrating thing for me is, at a time when this country hungers for common sense, racial reconciliation, an acknowledgement of our past and a looking forward to the better future, this will be one of the sad days where that possibility was halted.

As we all know, one of the great leaders that Republicans and Democrats all hail asked that question—How long will it take?—and the simple answer is not long because the truth crushed to earth will rise again; not long because you reap what you sow; not long because the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice.

We will pass this legislation. I pray that the Members of this body, as we are right now, are the ones to do it.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, before my colleagues exit the Chamber, I want to acknowledge their words. I want to say thank you. The passion, the emotion, the true rawness in your words are words that I think all of us, as Members of the Senate, should hear, reflect, and respect. I just want you to know I am thankful I was on the floor to personally hear. Because we can read words, but it is when we have the ability to hear and to feel those words that their true meaning comes out, so I appreciate and I thank you for that.

PROTESTS

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I had asked to come and speak on the floor of the Senate on this day, June 4. I have been actually looking forward to it and planning speaking time for months now.

June 4 is a significant day in the fight for women's suffrage. It was on June 4 of 1919 that Congress approved the amendment and sent it to the States for ratification, and then it was in 1920 that the 19th Amendment was ratified by the States.

So this was to be a time of celebration, of recognition, of women's suffrage, this centennial event.

Since that time that I first looked to schedule this, my, how the world has changed. We have been in the midst of a pandemic—over 100,000 American lives lost to the COVID-19 virus. We are in the midst of an economic crisis the likes of which we haven't seen in decades and decades.

And, just a week ago now, we witnessed the killing of George Floyd on our streets, in broad daylight. And today, June 4, is not only a recognition of women's suffrage, but it is the funeral of George Floyd.

So before I speak to the matter I intended to speak on today, I want to just briefly comment on where I believe we are as a nation right now.

I was walking into work this morning, and in my neighbor's yard is a placard, a yard sign. It has been there for some years, actually, now. It is a partial quote of Martin Luther King that states: "We can't be silent about the things that matter."

You think about those things that matter: equality, justice, the fundamental truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by God with

certain rights. And when those rights are denied, when they are violated, it is our responsibility to address the injustice. It is not our responsibility as elected Members of the U.S. Senate; it is our responsibility as fellow humans, as Americans who believe in these principles of justice and equality.

President Bush had some words this week that I found very direct, very comforting at a difficult time when it is hard to be comforted, when our spirits are so dis comforted and agitated right now. But he reminded us that achieving justice for all is the duty of all. It is the duty of all.

And we are hurting now as a nation. We have wounds from racism that have never been allowed to heal—and those words were just shared here on this floor moments ago—wounds that have never been allowed to heal, wounds that are still so open and raw. And healing can't take place until the hurt and the anger and the anguish that so many in this country still feel, so many African Americans, so many—so many who feel that the system is meant for somebody but not them; that there is not equal justice under the law; that it must be the law for somebody else.

This has been hard—hard on all of us, as we have seen the protests, many of them peaceful. In my home State, Alaskans are coming together with a shared sense of duty and responsibility to speak up about things that matter and doing so in a way that brings us together rather than divides.

We must condemn the violence we see on the street with the looting, but stopping the looting is not going to close this wound. We heal when we acknowledge our weaknesses, when we acknowledge our failures, and when we vow to address the things that matter, like equality and justice.

What we say and how we say it truly matters. I have been challenged by some. I have been chastised by some very close friends who have said: You are silent, Lisa. Why are you silent? Why haven't you—you—fixed what we are seeing?

And I have struggled. I have struggled with the right words. As a White woman born and raised in Alaska with a family who was privileged, I can't feel that openness and rawness that I just heard expressed by my friends CORY and KAMALA. I haven't lived their life.

But I can listen, and I can educate myself. And I can try to be a healer at a time when we need to be healed. That is my commitment and my pledge going forward to those I serve in Alaska and to those I serve in this country.

This is challenging for us. We know this, but we are an extraordinary country. We are an extraordinary people with extraordinary resilience.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, let me turn to the fight—the century fight