crime. It lays out new requirements for departments to explain their policies on how, when, and why no-knock warrants are used. On behalf of the many people looking for answers in my hometown of Louisville, I am, unfortunately, especially interested in that provision.

In recent weeks, the Democratic leader and many of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have insisted—insisted—over and over and over again that they wanted to consider legislation on this subject prior to the Fourth of July. My friend the Democratic leader repeatedly expressed how eager—eager he was to consider these issues here on the Senate floor, but now we read this: ''Senate Democrats are agonizing over what to do about Senate Republicans' police reform proposal.'' What is there to agonize over?

And we read this: ''[The] Senate Democratic leader . . . faces a tough call on whether to let a Republican-backed police reform bill advance on the Senate floor.''

''Agonizing''? ''Tough call''? It seems to me that proceeding to consider Senator SCOTT's legislation, proceeding to take up the subject on the Senate floor, would only be an agonizing prospect if Members were more interested in making a point than in actually making a law.

For anyone who actually wants to legislate, it shouldn't be a difficult call to vote to begin considering Senator SCOTT's legislation. It will be exactly the vote which this moment demands.

Last week, I understand the Speaker of the House herself said: ''We'd like to end up in conference'' on police reform legislation. The only way to do that would be if the Senate passed a bill. Even the Speaker does not seem to understand why Senate Democrats would block this Chamber from even considering the JUSTICE Act.

Senator SCOTT and Senate Republicans are interested in making a law. The President and the administration want to make a law, and even the Democratic House leadership apparently would be happy to see a conference committee. So maybe the only group left in Washington who are reportedly agonizing over whether to block discussion of police reform or to let it proceed seem to be our Senate Democratic colleagues.

I hope that whatever strange political calculations are making this difficult for our friends across the aisle will yield to common sense and to the American people's hunger for progress. We are going to find out when we vote later this week.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

JUST AND UNIFYING SOLUTIONS TO INVIGORATE COMMUNITIES EVERYWHERE ACT OF 2020—Motion to Proceed

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 480, S. 3985.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 480, S. 3985, to improve and reform policing practices, accountability and transparency.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 480, S. 3985, a bill to improve and reform policing practices, accountability, and transparency.

Mitch McConnell, Cory Gardner, Ben Sasse, Steve Daines, Rob Portman, John Cornyn, David Perdue, Joni Ernst, James Lankford, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Crapo, Thom Tillis, Todd Young, Michael B. Enzi, John Hoeven, Tim Scott, Lindsey Graham.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Cory T. Wilson, of Mississippi, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

JUSTICE IN POLICING ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the American people are crying out for major, significant changes in policing in this country. Being killed by the police is now the sixth leading cause of death for young men in America. Young Black men are 2.5 times more likely than White men to be killed by police, while Black women are 1.4 times more likely than White women to be killed by police.

As hundreds of thousands of Americans of all ages and colors take to the streets to demand change, we need legislation that rises to the moment. So Democrats introduced a bill 3 weeks ago that would bring strong, comprehensive, and lasting change to police departments across America: the Justice in Policing Act.

Our colleagues in the House are expected to pass that bill this week. However, here in the Senate, our Republican colleagues have responded to our comprehensive proposal with an approach that is piecemeal and half-hearted. The longer you look at the Republican policing reform effort, the more obvious are the shortcomings and deficiencies.

The Republican bill does nothing—nothing to reform the legal standards that shield police from accountability for violating Americans' constitutional rights. The Republican bill does nothing—nothing to encourage independent investigations of police departments with patterns and practices that violate the Constitution. The Republican bill does nothing—nothing to reform the use of force standard, nothing—nothing on qualified immunity, nothing on racial profiling, and nothing on limiting the transfer of military equipment to police departments.

The Republican bill doesn't even truly ban choke holds or no-knock warrants. It leaves major loopholes when it comes to choke holds and only requires more data on no-knock warrants. More data would not have saved Breonna Taylor's life. Allowing police to use choke holds whenever they say that deadly force is necessary is not going to save lives.

We need a bill that achieves genuine police reform. The Republican proposal comes across like a list of suggestions.

I would repeat this important warning: If we pass a bill that is ineffective and the killings continue and police departments resist change and there is no accountability, the wound in our society will not close; it will fester. This is not about making an effort or dipping our toes in the water. It must be about solving a problem that is taking the lives of too many Black Americans.

This is not a time for studies or commissions or tinkering around the edges.

This is not a debate about tax policy or transportation policy. It is a matter of the constitutional rights of the American people, and it is truly a matter of life and death.

Unfortunately, Senator SCOTT's bill is deeply and fundamentally flawed. It would not have prevented the death of George Floyd or Breonna Taylor or Ahmaud Arbery or Michael Brown or Eric Garner, and if it will not stop future deaths of Black Americans in police custody, then it does not represent the change that is demanded right now.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. President, on COVID, over the past several weeks, there has been an alarming increase in the number of COVID–19 cases in a number of American States. Florida, Texas, Arizona, and North Carolina continue to report thousands of new cases each day. State officials in Texas and Arizona are warning about the dire number of hospitalizations. Anyone looking at the facts would conclude that we need to figure out what is causing these increases and put measures in place to limit this new spread of the disease.

But President Trump does not look at the facts or try to understand them. Instead, the President is so consumed with his own ego, his own political interests and perception of how he has handled this crisis, that he is actually downplaying the numbers and inventing ridiculous excuses for why COVID–19 cases continue to increase.

At his inadvisable and very poorly attended rally in Tulsa on Saturday, President Trump said that he told his administration to ''slow the testing down, please,'' so the number of COVID cases will not look so bad for him. It is amazing he said that. Don't learn the truth about a serious and deadly disease so he might look better?

He went on to say that testing was ''a double-edged sword.'' Let me break the President's statement down for a moment. By calling testing ''a double-edged sword,'' the President means that, on one hand, testing could be good because it, you know, tells us who has COVID–19, but, on the other hand, testing might not be so good because the more cases make the President look bad. Who thinks like that in a time of a raging pandemic?

White House officials tried to claim the President was joking, but, today, the Vice President denied that they were just in jest, calling them ''a passing observation,'' whatever that means.

Regardless of whether he was serious or not, the President's comments are factually inaccurate. The increase in testing is not responsible for the increase in the number of cases. In fact, the rate of positive cases is going up in many States, which means community spread.

There is a lie sitting at the heart of all of this. President Trump wants Americans to believe that the number of cases is going up because his administration has done such a great job on testing. The truth is, the administration can't even get around to spending the money Congress has provided for improving testing and tracing.

Senator MURRAY and I sent a letter last week to HHS Secretary Azar, asking him why the administration hasn't disbursed the $14 billion we gave it to ramp up testing and the tracing capability. This $14 billion is just sitting there, waiting for the Trump administration to use it to help our country. Senator MURRAY and I are looking for answers. Why isn't the money being distributed when it is desperately needed? What the heck is going on?

It is hard to imagine a more haphazard, less-focused, and less-consistent response from an administration during a national crisis. Whether it is calling COVID a hoax or prescribing bleach or having his ego-driven rally over the weekend, the President keeps reminding us that he doesn't take the COVID pandemic seriously enough. Ironically, the best thing about the President's rally was that so few people attended. Otherwise, the risk of spreading COVID would have been significantly higher.

U.S. ATTORNEY GEOFFREY BERMAN

Mr. President, on another matter—there are so many matters and so much trouble this administration is in that it is hard to count, and you would probably need several hours to document and talk about them all—last Friday night, Attorney General Barr claimed that Geoffrey Berman, the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, was ''stepping down.'' A short time later, Mr. Berman revealed that the Attorney General was lying and that he was not, in fact, stepping down. Over the past 2 days, this sordid, ham-handed plot by President Trump and Attorney General Barr to oust a well-respected U.S. attorney played out in public view.

But for Mr. Berman's principled stand, the White House and the DOJ would have subverted the chain of succession in the Southern District of New York to install a pliant U.S. attorney from New Jersey in Mr. Berman's place. Thankfully, due to Mr. Berman's courage, that plan was thwarted, and Mr. Berman's deputy will take over the leadership of the Southern District and continue its important work. She has a fine reputation as a prosecutor and someone of integrity. People of integrity don't seem to be welcome in this administration.

Then the DOJ announced that the President intended to nominate the sitting SEC Chairman, Jay Clayton, to replace Mr. Berman. As the Senator from New York, I will not return a blue slip on Mr. Clayton's nomination. Regardless, Jay Clayton should withdraw his name from consideration and refuse to be an accomplice to this scheme.

There appears to be no legitimate motive to fire Mr. Berman, which leaves the obvious question: Were President Trump and the Attorney General trying to remove him for a corrupt motive? Was it because Mr. Berman, in the Southern District of New York, was pursuing criminal investigations into President Trump and his associates? The President certainly has a pattern of firing government watchdogs who are investigating his misconduct or that of his associates.

We need an immediate, top-to-bottom investigation into what transpired with the plot to dismiss Mr. Berman. So I have demanded that the Office of Professional Responsibility at the Department of Justice work with the Justice Department's inspector general to determine whether there were corrupt motives for Mr. Berman's dismissal and, if so, discipline the officials involved no matter who they are or how high up they go. These two offices jointly investigated the firing of U.S. attorneys in 2006 during the Bush administration and should do so again.

The Committee on the Judiciary here in the Senate, led by Chairman GRAHAM, must also investigate what happened here, using its subpoena power, if necessary. Senator GRAHAM seems to be investigating President Obama and Vice President Biden with 53 subpoenas. He certainly must have time to investigate a serious problem that has come before us right now. After all, the abject refusal of Senate Republicans to hold President Trump accountable for his assault on the rule of law in the country is what has gotten us here in the first place.

The Senate Republicans refused to stand up to the President when he fired the FBI Director for investigating his campaign. They refused to stand up to the President when he made a national emergency in order to steal funds for the border wall. They refused to stand up to the President when he dismissed not one or two or three but four inspectors general. They also refused to stand up to the President when he tried to bully a foreign power into helping him in his reelection.

Every time the President breaks a window, the Senate Republican majority dutifully sweeps up the glass. Every blue moon or so, a Republican Senator will issue a mild rebuke of the President's behavior or will pen a strongly worded letter, but the response is never commensurate with the offense. As a result, President Trump knows there is no line he can't cross. He and his Attorney General can fire a sitting U.S. attorney without cause, perhaps for investigating criminal wrongdoing by the President or his associates, and the Senate Republicans would hardly bat an eye. Will Senate Republican Senators ever say, ''Enough''?

NOMINATION OF CORY T. WILSON

Mr. President, finally, today, Leader MCCONNELL will move forward with the nomination of Mr. Cory Wilson to serve as a lifetime appointment on the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Mr. Wilson is an avowed opponent of the Nation's healthcare law, calling it illegitimate and perverse. Even worse, Wilson has a lengthy record of support

for policies that suppress voting rights in the State legislature, and in the Mississippi secretary of state's office, he pushed for restrictive voter ID laws. He criticized the Voting Rights Act and peddled unproven claims about voter fraud. In 2011, he said the NAACP's concerns about voter suppression in Mississippi were ''poppycock.''

We are in the middle of a national conversation about police reform and systematic racial justice. Leader MCCONNELL talks about it on the floor, and at the same time, he has the temerity to push a judge with demonstrated hostility to voting rights, a man who criticized the greatest advance in civil rights legislation in the past century, for a seat on the circuit court, in which people of color make up 55 percent of the population.

The nomination is so appalling in general that, at this particular moment, several Democrats, myself included, have taken the unusual step of writing Leader MCCONNELL today to request that he withdraw Mr. Wilson's nomination. I believe, if there is sincerity in the remarks here about healing racial wounds, then the withdrawal of Mr. Wilson will occur, plain and simple. It would be disgraceful for the Senate to approve a nominee who has long trivialized voter disenfranchisement and racial discrimination at the ballot box. Leader MCCONNELL should halt any further work on Mr. Wilson and, instead, work with the administration and civil rights groups to find a nominee who will actually protect voting rights on the Fifth Circuit.

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

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

PROTESTS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, ''I hope I am over wary, but if I am not, there is, even now, something of ill omen amongst us. I mean the increasing disregard for law which pervades the country, the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions in lieu of the sober judgment of courts, and the worse than savage mobs for the executive ministers of justice. This disposition is awfully fearful in any community; and that it exists now in ours, though grating to our feelings to admit, it would be a violation of truth and an insult to our intelligence to deny. Accounts of outrages committed by mobs form the everyday news of the times.''

Now, those are not my words. Those are the words of a young Abraham Lincoln. Sadly, they ring with truth today.

In recent weeks, violent mobs have roamed our streets, defacing and tearing down statues and monuments—in most cases, with neither resistance from the police nor legal consequences.

On Friday, a mob tore down another statue just a few blocks from here. The police stood idly by and watched as rioters toppled it and set it on fire. One can only assume they were ordered not to intervene by Washington's leftwing mayor.

Here is the thing: Steps were already underway to move that statue lawfully. Washington's delegates in Congress had legislation to that effect. But mobs don't care to negotiate—only to destroy.

The delegate said: I have no doubt I could have gotten that bill through, but the people got here before due process.

It is hard to imagine a more chilling summation of mob rule. As Lincoln knew, the mob threatens not just old statues but the lives and livelihoods of us all. Indeed, the mob threatens civilization itself in many ways.

Most simply, Lincoln knew that mobs inevitably make mistakes and commit injustices. Some may celebrate the destruction of disfavored statues and monuments, but what of the vandals in Boston who defaced a monument to the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, the first African-American regiment to fight for the Union, whose bravery and skill was immortalized in the movie ''Glory''?

What of the outlaws of Philadelphia, who defaced a statue of Matthias Baldwin, a devout, passionate abolitionist?

Mobs don't discriminate between legitimate and illegitimate targets of their destruction. That is because they are mobs.

Lincoln also warned that the ''lawless in spirit'' will become ''lawless in practice'' because of mob violence seeing no consequences for crimes.

A mob doesn't stop at statues. Rioters have already torched police precincts and low-income housing in Minneapolis. Churches and synagogues have been vandalized. Next, perhaps the mob will target the homes of police officers, and soon enough the mob may come for you and your home and your family.

As the mob expands its power, Lincoln cautioned that good citizens, ''seeing their property destroyed; their families insulted, and their lives endangered; their persons injured; and seeing nothing in prospect that forebodes a change for the better; become tired of, and disgusted with, a Government that offers them no protection.''

Mob rule can only serve to demoralize our people and shake their faith in our government and our way of life. As the mob rises, civilization recedes.

Finally, Lincoln observed that ''by the operation of this mobocractic spirit, which all must admit, is now abroad in the land, the strongest bulwark of any Government, and particularly of those constituted like ours, may effectually be broken down and destroyed—I mean the attachment of the People.''

The final victim of mob rule is the very spirit of civic-minded patriotism that's necessary to preserve our Republic.

For all these reasons, Lincoln said: ''There is no grievance that is a fit object of redress by mob law.'' We cannot tolerate mob rule, and we cannot allow it to go unpunished.

While local authorities would usually take the lead in prosecuting these criminals, unfortunately, many of them seem unwilling to stand up to the mob and uphold the rule of law. Therefore, I call upon the Department of Justice to bring charges against these mob vigilantes, prosecuting them to the fullest extent of the law. The Anti-Riot Act and the Veterans' Memorial Preservation and Recognition Act can provide legal grounds in some cases; still other Federal statutes may govern in other cases; but there must be consequences for mob violence because if you give the mob an inch, it will take a mile.

Witness the events of just this past weekend, where mobs tore down statues of George Washington and Ulysses S. Grant. When you tear down statues of Washington and Grant, it is not about the Civil War; it is because you hate America. Indeed, these rioters hate America.

In Portland, where they tore down the statue of Washington, they also spray-painted on him the date ''1619,'' a reference to the New York Times's revisionist, anti-American history project. Perhaps we should call them the ''1619 riots.'' After all, the architect of that execrable project said: ''It would be an honor.''

This hatred for America was nowhere on greater display than in San Francisco, where the mob tore down the statue of Grant. That would be U.S. Grant, commander of the Union Army, whose very initials embody his tenacious, unrelenting approach to war: unconditional surrender.

That would also be President Grant, the political heir of Abraham Lincoln, a statesman who smashed the first Ku Klux Klan, signed the first major civil rights legislation, and presided over passage of the 15th Amendment.

In one famous instance, President Grant sent in the troops to disperse a White mob in New Orleans that was terrorizing the city's Black and Republican residents and had to depose the State's lawful Governor.

Grant had zero tolerance for mob rule. He said: ''[N]either Ku Klux Klans, White Leagues, nor any other association using arms and violence to execute their unlawful purposes can be permitted in that way to govern any part of this country.''

This was a man whom the great Frederick Douglass eulogized as ''too broad for prejudice, too humane to despise the humblest, too great to be small at any point.'' Yet the mobs still came for Grant.

Some people have been asking: Where is the line? I say: This is the line—the line between mob rule and the rule of law.

Since I began by quoting Lincoln, let me conclude by borrowing from Grant, who wrote during the Battle of Spotsylvania: ''I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer.''

I will fight it out on this line if it takes a lot longer than that.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF CORY T. WILSON

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, later on this afternoon, the Senate will vote on cloture on the nomination of Judge Cory Wilson to fill a vacancy on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

I rise at this point in strong, enthusiastic support of confirmation for my friend, Judge Cory Wilson. This will be a historic moment for this body and for the administration. A vote to confirm Judge Wilson would make him the 200th judge to be confirmed under President Trump. This is the highest number of judges confirmed at this point in a Presidency since the Presidency of Jimmy Carter. Judge Wilson is an outstanding nominee to have this distinction.

The seat we are voting to fill is actually the last remaining circuit court vacancy at this time, reflecting the remarkable progress we have made in rebuilding the Federal judiciary. Judge Wilson is an outstanding nominee to mark this milestone. His credentials, intellect, and respect for the rule of law are well established.

The American Bar Association is considered by many to be the ''gold standard'' for assessing judicial nominees, and the American Bar Association has awarded Judge Wilson its highest rating of ''well qualified'' to serve on the Fifth Circuit. I certainly agree with this assessment by the ABA.

In recent weeks, Senators on both sides of the aisle have been able to question Judge Wilson about his judicial philosophy, and I believe he has shown a steadfast commitment to honoring the Constitution and enforcing the laws passed by the Congress as we have written them.

Judge Wilson is a native of South Mississippi and currently serves on the Mississippi Court of Appeals, where he decides appellate matters, including civil, commercial, domestic, and criminal appeals. He graduated from my alma mater, the University of Mississippi, with highest honors, and then he went on to Yale Law School, where he distinguished himself in many respects. He served on the Yale Law Journal, was a member of the Yale chapter of the Federalist Society, and was on the Barrister's Union, which is the equivalent of the Yale moot court. He served as a law clerk for the Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, having been appointed and having served as a clerk for Judge Cox on the Eleventh Circuit. He was a White House fellow for the Department of Defense, and then he came back to Mississippi.

Before becoming a judge, Cory Wilson was an accomplished lawyer in his own right in private practice and served in senior roles in State government in the Mississippi Secretary of State's office and the office of the State Treasury. For 3 years, he also represented Mississippi's 73rd district in the State House of Representatives, where he was vice chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

Judge Wilson is active in civic affairs and his church, Highlands Presbyterian Church. He and his wife Stephanie have one son.

He has garnered respect and admiration and endorsements from many of my constituents during the years of service, and in the last few weeks and days, I have been presented with letters of endorsement from people who know him—lawyers he practiced with and people he has been associated with. In particular, I want to draw the attention of Members of the Senate to a letter from retired Judge Robert L. Gibbs of Jackson, MS.

Who is Judge Gibbs to write a letter on behalf of Cory Wilson? For one thing, we should know that Judge Gibbs is a Democrat, and he practiced law in Mississippi for a time for Mississippi legal services. He spent 10 years in the office of the Mississippi attorney general, a statewide elected Democratic official, and then Robert Gibbs served as a circuit judge, an elected position in a Mississippi court of general jurisdiction. He served for some 7 years there as a circuit judge in Mississippi. That is who Judge Robert Gibbs is.

Here is what Judge Gibbs says about our nominee, the very Cory Wilson whom we will be voting cloture on around 5:30 this afternoon.

This is a letter dated June 10. It is to the chair and ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator GRAHAM and Senator FEINSTEIN.

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Feinstein:

I submit this letter in support of the nomination of Judge Cory T. Wilson for a seat on the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

I am former Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit Court District in Mississippi and have known Cory as an attorney, who practiced before me and as a colleague as we worked on cases together. From these experiences, I can attest that no one works harder in this profession than Judge Wilson. When we were representing clients, Cory would normally prepare the first draft of pleadings and send it to me to review. Seldom were there any reasons to make changes because he utilized his legal abilities to navigate through the complexities of the legal issues which resulted in a well thought out, plausible argument.

During Judge Wilson's investiture as a Judge on the Mississippi Court of Appeals, I had the pleasure of being one of the speakers.

This is retired Judge Gibbs saying he had the pleasure of being one of the speakers.

I spoke about three traits of Judge Wilson—(1) Respect, (2) Character and (3) Legal Intelligence. To keep this letter to a respectful length, I will not repeat everything I said but the essence is, Cory respects everyone he comes into contact with, he does not change who he is because of race or political affiliations and his ability allow him to break through legal jargon and get to the point.

Judge Gibbs goes on to say this:

Judge Wilson and I are quite different—I am Black and he is White. I am older and he is younger. I am a Democrat and he was a Republican (before he became a judge). I live in the majority African American City of Jackson, Mississippi and he lives in a suburb of Jackson. Yet these differences have become our strengths. We often have lunch and discuss the pressing issues of the day as friends. He has sought my advice, based on my judicial experience, on how to be a better judge. And while we may disagree on some matters, in the end we realize that we are just two lawyers who want our communities to be better and we know that having a fair judiciary is one of the ways to make that happen.

These are the words of an older, retired circuit judge who happens to be an African-American Democrat in endorsement of a younger White Republican nominee whom we will have a chance to vote on in a few moments. We need more members of the younger generation of whatever race who are best friends with an older generation of professionals of another race. We need more people like Judge Robert Gibbs and Judge Cory Wilson who are friends, who sit down, who have lunch together and discuss the law and the ways we can make this country better.

I think this is a profound endorsement by someone of a different race, of a different political party, and of a different political philosophy, saying that Judge Cory Wilson is someone we will be proud to vote for.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this letter be printed in the RECORD at this point.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

GIBBS TRAVIS PLLC,
June 10, 2020.

Re Nomination of Cory T. Wilson as Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Hon. LINDSEY GRAHAM,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRAHAM AND RANKING MEMBER FEINSTEIN: I submit this letter in support of the nomination of Judge Cory T. Wilson for a seat on the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

I am former Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit Court District in Mississippi and have known Cory as an attorney, who practiced before me and as a colleague as we worked on cases together. From these experiences, I can attest that no one works harder in this profession than Judge Wilson.

When we were representing clients, Cory would normally prepare the first draft of pleadings and send it to me to review. Seldom were there any reasons to make any changes because he utilized his legal abilities to navigate through the complexities of the legal issues which resulted in a well thought out, plausible argument.

During Judge Wilson's investiture as a Judge on the Mississippi Court of Appeals, I had the pleasure of being one the speakers. I spoke about three traits of Judge Wilson—(1) Respect, (2) Character and (3) Legal Intelligence. To keep this letter to a respectful length, I will not repeat everything I said but the essence is, Cory respects everyone he comes into contact with, he does not change who he is because of race or political affiliations and his ability allow him to break though legal jargon and get to the point.

Judge Wilson and I are quite different—I am Black and he is White. I am older and he is younger. I am a Democrat and was a Republican (before he became a judge). I live in the majority African American City of Jackson, Mississippi and he lives in a suburb of Jackson. Yet these differences have become our strengths. We often have lunch and discuss the pressing issues of the day as friends. He has sought my advice, based on my judicial experience, on how to be a better judge. And while we may disagree on some matters, in the end we realize that we are just two lawyers who want our communities to be better and we know that having a fair judiciary is one of the ways to make that happen.

If you need any additional information or have any question, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,

ROBERT L. GIBBS.

Mr. WICKER. Again, let me just stress to my colleagues that Cory Wilson has gained a reputation as a fair and impartial judge and a good and decent man, and I am confident that this reputation will follow him as he serves on the Fifth Circuit. He will serve the circuit and our Nation well as a U.S. circuit judge.

I yield the floor.

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

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

THE JUSTICE ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, as we have been working over these last several weeks to develop police reform legislation, I figured the best use of my time would be to spend that time listening, as much as anything else—listening, for example, to Black Americans about their experiences with law enforcement and the changes they would like to see in our country; listening to my colleagues in the Senate about the most effective ways to make these changes, especially under the leadership of Senator TIM SCOTT, who has personally experienced the injustices we are trying to address, and, particularly, this deficit of trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve; and listening to leaders in Texas who are working hard—in the midst of this pandemic and widespread protesting—to keep every single Texan safe. You would think, before we decide on what reforms to take, it is important to hear from those who know best what is working, what isn't, and what we need to do more of.

A few weeks ago, I called two of my friends, who happen to be the mayor of Dallas and the mayor of Houston, Eric Johnson in Dallas and Sylvester Turner in Houston, and asked them to help me pull together a group of people in both of those major American cities for an open conversation about these issues. Less than a week later, I was in Dallas for an open and honest conversation with a group of law enforcement, faith, and community leaders. They provided very useful feedback and ideas that I brought back with me while the JUSTICE Act was in draft form. After the bill was introduced last week, I was eager to hear from more folks in Texas.

Last Friday, I traveled to Houston for another similar type of discussion at city hall. Like in Dallas, we were able to hear from a variety of points of view familiar with these challenges. I was glad to also be joined by Senator CRUZ and Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE. In a way, I thought it was a coincidence, but maybe not, that this conversation happened on Juneteenth—a day that allows us to reflect on the progress we have made in the fight for equality. This year—I would say more than normal—it was a reminder of how far we have to go.

At this point, I would like to say the good news is there is a lot of common ground and good will, and I think we have a unique opportunity to do what I told the Floyd family I would do when they told me they wanted Texas-size justice. I think some good can actually come out of this tragedy, their loss of their loved one.

I heard an inspiring message from Bishop James Dixon, who is the pastor at Community of Faith Church and first vice president of the Houston NAACP. He talked about the need for unity and action in response to the widespread protests we are seeing and encouraged everyone, as he put it, to ''dignify the outcry.''

We need to affirm that, yes, there is a problem; yes, it has gone unaddressed for too long; and yes, we are going to do our best to do something about it. While there may be differences of opinion on the best route to take, the good news is we are all pulling in the same direction.

During our conversation, I was able to talk briefly about the JUSTICE Act, which was introduced, as I said, last week. Among other things, they seemed to be pleased the bill would strengthen deescalation training, as well as training on the duty to intervene in case there is something inappropriate occurring, the use of body cameras, incentivizing the States to restrict the use of choke holds, and make lynching a Federal crime.

I received some great feedback on how it will ensure that police departments nationwide are using proven best practices to keep our communities safe. As we prepare to debate this legislation this week, that conversation could not have been more timely.

Another common theme—and I have heard this before—is the growing strain on our law enforcement officers. I remember several years ago Chief David Brown saying: We ask our police to do too much. Basically, they are the ones who we know will go quickly to a crisis and intervene, no matter what it is, whether it is a domestic crisis, a mental health crisis, or somebody breaking the law. Mayor Turner, in particular, talked about how the list of responsibilities we are giving our law enforcement officers keeps growing longer and longer and longer. They are not just fighting crime; they are responding to calls about drug abuse, mental health, domestic violence, homelessness, and a range of other crises. Between COVID–19 and the ongoing protests, their jobs are not getting any easier.

As Police Chief Art Acevedo pointed out, police are performing these jobs not by design but because there is basically nobody else to do them—by default. There is no question we need more support services that can help alleviate some of this strain on our law enforcement officers. Over the years, we have tried to bolster services available for things like the First Step Act, which took prison reform from the State level to the national level. We put money into Project Safe Neighborhoods grants and Mental Health and Safe Communities Act grants. In particular, I remember when we debated the Mental Health and Safe Communities Act grants to help train law enforcement to deescalate conflicts between people undergoing a mental health crisis, during which an escalating level of crisis would be a threat not only to the individual who is undergoing that crisis but to the officer, him or herself. We actually found it to be very effective, this training.

As this list of responsibilities we are giving our law enforcement officers has grown, so has the need for additional training and additional funding for support services—ancillary services that can work in conjunction with our law enforcement officials so we can get the most efficient, most effective response to the person who needs it.

That is precisely why defunding the police is not the answer to the challenges we are facing. It is really an insult, if you think about it, and it is living in a fantasyland.

Chief Acevedo shared an analogy a fellow police chief and friend of his made about the effort to shift responsibility from police to other providers. He said: If you are building a new stadium, you wouldn't tear down or stop using the old one until the new one was complete.

If cities strip funding from their police departments without having other

support services in place, our communities wouldn't be more safe; they would be significantly less safe. So rather than cutting funding while those services are being established and strengthened in cities across the country, let's talk about the reforms that make sense.

The most impactful reforms are going to be made at the State and local levels. We can't be a city council for 330 million people. Those responsibilities, ultimately, are born at the local and State level. They are the ones accountable to the voters for the actions they take or don't take at the local level, but we know there is a role for us to play. Much of it has to do with identifying things like best practices, as well as providing money for training and resources. The hiring is done at the local level, officer training is conducted there, and decisions about day-to-day police activities are made there.

During our discussion, Mayor Turner expressed the need for folks in Congress to listen to mayors, and I am all for that. For any law we pass or reforms we make, they will be the ones responsible for implementing the changes we make.

I have been in close contact with my mayors and other officials across the State, and I don't intend for that to stop once we, Lord willing, pass a police reform bill.

This has to be an ongoing conversation between local officials, State officials, and those of us who happen to work here in Washington in the Congress. This conversation is not going to be a brief one. It is not going to be a one-time conversation. This is going to stretch on for weeks and months. Really, what we are talking about is a cultural change as much as anything else.

I want to, once again, thank the men and women in Texas who wear the uniform of our police departments and those who shared with me their ideas and feedback over the last few weeks. It has been incredibly valuable and will become even more helpful as we begin debating the JUSTICE Act this week.

Senator SCOTT, who is leading us on this legislative effort, has done a great job of compiling a broad set of reforms that will improve transparency and accountability. Many of these provisions, as I said a few minutes ago, already enjoy broad bipartisan support.

This legislation, I believe, will go a long way to improve accountability and transparency and deliver real change to communities across the country. I am glad that at Senator SCHUMER's request, Senator MCCONNELL put a bill on the floor before the Fourth of July. That is specifically what Senator SCHUMER called for and exactly what Senator MCCONNELL said he intends to do.

Now that we have the opportunity to turn talk into action, it does sound like our friends across the aisle are getting cold feet. I have been interested to read in the press where some of them said they haven't really made up their mind whether they will even allow us to get on the bill.

We can't pass a bill that we can't start. Once we start it, they will be given every opportunity to offer amendments to help improve the bill. But shutting it down just out of a fit of pique or overt politicalization does not do a service to the people we are trying to help here: to help our law enforcement officials and to help the general public and people who sense a gap of trust between those officers and the law enforcement community they serve.

Our Democratic colleagues are weighing whether to block us from even considering this bill, one that will be put on the floor, debated and voted on, just as Senator SCHUMER, the Democratic leader, requested. Unfortunately, our friends across the aisle seem focused more on the few differences between Senator SCOTT's bill and the House bill rather than the similarities. This is where I think the 80–20 rule ought to apply. If we can agree to 80 percent or 70 percent or 60 percent, why don't we do that? Why don't we put that in the bank and work on the rest?

The truth is, there are many places where these bills overlap, and there is a lot of room for us to find common ground. In order to do that, our colleagues across the aisle need to do what maybe is not their first instinct and that is to cooperate—that is the only way we get things done here—and prove to the American people that they are sincere in their desire to see us debate and pass effective reforms. There is a difference between doing that and just grandstanding and posturing, but this is not a time to grandstand. This is not a time to posture. This is a time to roll up our sleeves and work together to get things done. We need realistic, resolute, and immediate action in order to repair that broken relationship between law enforcement and some of the community they serve. So I hope our Democratic colleagues will join us in that effort this week.

I appreciate, for one, the hard work and leadership of Senator SCOTT in drafting this legislation, and I appreciate the majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, for prioritizing its consideration on the floor. I am a proud cosponsor of the JUSTICE Act, and I look forward to voting for this bill when the opportunity comes.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I so enjoyed listening to the comments of my colleague from Texas, and it causes me to think that, yes, we are moving forward with another week, and what we have to realize is that, indeed, our Nation was built on free speech and the premise to have dissent or robust, respectful political debate. That is something that keeps our Nation strong.

To go back and look at the work of our Founders, there was barely a day that went by that they were not having that robust debate, that they were not having those arguments that were really constructive conversations that would say: We are here; how do we go here?

That is how you solve problems. Indeed, that is what Tennesseans are telling me every day that they want us to do: Solve these problems. Let's get ourselves on the right track.

When you look at it and go back and look at the Founders, you see that the debates they had were not superficial. They were not necessarily the bright, shiny object story of the day. They were deep, philosophical debates on issues that were about the future of the Nation they were trying to build. Everything was on the line, and no one kept quiet. They felt as if their opinions were important, and indeed, today, there is a lot on the line when we talk about civility and when we talk about the strength, the core, and the preservation of our rights and our freedoms. Nobody spared anyone's feelings at that point because the stakes were too high and they were focused on freedom.

How did they create a free nation? How did they create it so that it would pass to their children and their grandchildren? Indeed, you can go forward in history and look at the words of Ronald Reagan reminding us that freedom is not something that is permanent. Every single generation—every single generation—has to fight for it.

Madam President, of course, we say an extra thank-you to you and others in this Chamber who have worn the uniform and have served, and we are grateful for that service.

I would state that, in spite of all the strife that our Founders went through, they never wavered from their commitment to building a society that was, in their hearts and minds, a society of the people, for the people, by the people—of the people. It was freer and more Democratic than the land they had left in order to get here.

The First Amendment to our Constitution is more than just a prohibition against government repression. It is a warning against the private attacks on free speech. The success of online discussion platforms is a testament to how much the American people still value the free exchange of ideas.

Don't you love it? In a good conversation with good friends, somebody makes their point, and you make a counterpoint. Then you discuss it, and you have a respectful conversation.

Everyone from political candidates to corporations to the free press has taken advantage of the opportunity to reach those millions of eyeballs that are scrolling through social media timelines and news aggregation services. For a while, it looked as if the system would revolutionize the way we read and the way that we share information, the way we have that debate,

and it did—just not necessarily for the better.

I believe we should always encourage more speech, and when you look at the early days of Twitter and Facebook, it seems that they were on the right track, and we kind of call that the good old days of social media.

Over the past few weeks, we have seen these platforms devolve into a state of all-out war that makes our previous concerns about censorship and speech policing look petty. Liberal activists have deployed against anyone and anything that strays from their preferred narrative. It is the cancel culture in full force. Even more concerning than digital mob rule is the behavior of corporations and platforms caving to these intimidation tactics and selectively policing dissent.

Just imagine what would have happened all those years ago in our founding if one group decided they were going to shut up and quiet another group. What if they had decided that respect doesn't matter? What if they had decided that debate doesn't matter? It is our way or the highway. What do you think would have happened, and where would we be today?

Google and its parent company, Alphabet, have distinguished themselves as the worst offenders. Google is under investigation for potential antitrust violations, but that hasn't stopped them from surrendering to this latest political moment. Last week, Google threatened to kick two conservative-leaning media outlets off of the Google ads platform after determining content found in the respective sites' comment sections violated platform policies. A representative from Google complicated matters by running to the media and insisting that the ban was imposed because the Federalist and ZeroHedge had both published derogatory comments promoting racial violence. NBC and other news organizations ran with that false narrative, and before you knew it, thousands of voices condemned in unison the speech and opinions of dozens of writers who had done nothing wrong.

They were, as the left likes to say, ''deplatformed,'' which, of course, was the goal. The ease with which Google fell in step with this coordinated campaign to chill speech becomes all the more concerning when one considers that they didn't just threaten the livelihoods of the writers, editors, and graphic designers employed by those outlets. Google employees let their bias—hear that?—Google employees let their bias, not the facts—not the facts, the bias—their bias, the bias that they bring to work with them, the bias of their worldview, which they think is right—they let their bias and their prejudice lead the way and decided that the American people didn't need to see what those writers had to say.

Who told them that they are the speech police? Who told them: Google, you are in charge. You decide what is going to be prioritized on your platform. Google, you go in here, and you decide if this is worthy or unworthy content. It is all up to you. Google, you can subjectively manipulate these algorithms based on what you think.

What we have are Google employees who let their bias lead the way, and they decided that the American people didn't need to see what writers had written because they, the employees' superiors, decided you didn't need to know that. They determined that the speech was dangerous, harmful, and illegitimate. So what did they do? They shut it down before you could browse it.

Just imagine—just imagine—if the Founders had been so brazen in their actions: Let's not have a discussion on that point. Let's just throw it to the side. Let's not hear somebody out. Let's just push them aside. No, they didn't form a clique who said: We are better than you. We are smarter than you. What did those Founders do? They looked at one another and said: We are all in this together. We are here because freedom is paramount in establishing a nation that is a nation of, by, and for the people—all of us. That is the goal.

You know, I think what Google has done is a bold move coming from the same parent company that has allowed YouTube's reprehensible comment section to spiral into notoriety. But if you comment on the Federalist, beware. You see, it is not about protecting customers. All they are doing is defending a dangerous and un-democratic double standard.

These incidents are not isolated, and there is no meaningful choice publishers can make to take their business elsewhere because Google effectively controls online advertising. Last year, they brought in $100 billion in ad revenue. You know, even in this town, $100 billion is not chump change. That is a lot of money.

This year they are flexing their muscles against competitive conservative outlets just as more mainstream outlets are facing cutbacks and layoffs. I know this body is well aware that Big Tech needs some guide rails to control their approach to consumer privacy, data security, and these increasingly oppressive content moderation policies.

Google is the main player. The majority of searches are done through Google. Is it a monopoly? Pretty close to it. Should it be viewed under antitrust? Worthy of discussion. Right now we are working out the proper strategy to reform the section 230 protections. This is written into the Communications Decency Act that the Googles of the world hide behind when they want to silence you, when they want to shut you down because they do not agree with you. Their bias is against you. Their prejudice is against you. They don't like what you have to say.

In this body we may not agree, but we will fight to defend the right of individuals to stand up and have their say. The First Amendment says that political speech is—guess what—free speech. The First Amendment says that you, the citizen—remember that line, ''of the people.'' The people have the right to petition their government to seek a change. But, oh no, Google or Facebook—I have to say, I remember the comment from Mark Zuckerberg that Facebook was more like a government than a business.

We have the Communications Decency Act, and there is a section in it called section 230, and that is the section that Big Tech goes and cowers behind when they want to shut you up. Section 230 needs to be reformed. DOJ has said that this is something that is ready for reform. We need to protect free speech. We need to make certain that illicit content is moved off. We need to look at competition. We need to look at the threshold for users—maybe not revenue—but look at a threshold for users and put some guidelines in place. We are dealing with an industry that has moved on to using social pressure to provide cover as they act as judge, jury, and executioner over what Americans should be allowed to know.

If you are researching something online, what do you do? You Google it. You get in that search engine; you go looking for it; and then you look at the things as they come up. Maybe what you are looking for doesn't show up on the first page even though it is something that has been in the news. Why would that be? Oh, prioritization—because Google prioritizes how this information gets delivered to you: if they like it, top of the list; if they don't, bottom envelope.

Today, I sent a letter to the Attorney General, outlining the threat this poses to a free and fair press and calling for a full investigation that examines the company's control over the internet economy. I also encouraged AG Barr to meet with the news publishers who have been harmed by this anti-competitive behavior and learn firsthand about the fear and intimidation tactics activists have weaponized against legitimate journalism.

This can no longer be chalked up simply to bias. The people making these decisions are the most powerful voices in the world, and they have decided that they don't want you to think. They don't want you to challenge the narrative, and they sure don't want you to rock the boat and draw the ire of activists who still don't believe these efforts at censorship have gone far enough to silence conservative voices.

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

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

The Senator from Iowa.

STATE DEPARTMENT INSPECTOR GENERAL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have a letter printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, DC, June 12, 2020.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Committee on Finance,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRASSLEY: Your May 18 letter to the President concerning his removal of the Inspector General of the Department of State has been referred to the Department.

In order to address your concerns as they relate to the Department, the Department is prepared to provide you a briefing with a senior official at your earliest convenience. Additionally, the Department is enclosing its recent letter, on which you were copied, which addresses the reasons for Secretary Pompeo's recommendation to remove the State Department Inspector General.

Sincerely,

MARY ELIZABETH TAYLOR,
Assistant Secretary of State,
Bureau of Legislative Affairs.

Enclosure: As stated.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, DC, June 8, 2020.

Hon. MICHAEL E. HOROWITZ,
Chair, Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIR HOROWITZ: In light of new information disclosed to the State Department for the first time on June 2, 2020, the Department is writing to formally request that the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) examine a series of questions related to the conduct of former State Department Inspector General Steve Linick. Specifically, the Department has become aware that Mr. Linick may have hand-selected a potentially-conflicted investigator to look into possible misconduct by his own office and then withheld the resulting report, which noted his own apparent non-compliance with State Department Office of Inspector General (OIG) email policies, from State Department leadership, despite repeated requests for a copy of the report.

In short, the events described below suggest that there may have been a significant breakdown in the typically-rigorous standards of an IG investigation, warranting CIGIE review.

Mr. Linick had served as Inspector General of the State Department since September 2013. On May 15, 2020, President Trump decided to remove Mr. Linick from that position and placed him on 30 days of administrative leave. As described in the attached letter to the House Foreign Affairs Committee dated June 1 (Tab 1), the President's decision to remove Mr. Linick from this position was made upon the Secretary of State's recommendation. This recommendation was based, in part, on concerns related to Mr. Linick's failure to formally refer to CIGIE—as agreed with senior Department leadership in the fall of 2019—the investigation of a leak of a highly-sensitive draft report to the media on September 13, 2019, which was attributed to ''two government sources involved in carrying out the investigation.'' State IG Set to Recommend Discipline for Trump's Top Iran Hand, The Daily Beast, Sept. 13, 2019.

As described in the Department's attached letter, and contrary to that fall 2019 agreement, Mr. Linick instead referred the matter for review by the Department of Defense's (DOD's) Acting Inspector General—without informing State Department leadership that he was taking a different course. Only after the DOD IG provided its initial findings directly to Mr. Linick in late 2019 or early 2020 did Department leadership become aware that Mr. Linick had hand-selected his own investigator for the matter, outside of the CIGIE process. Mr. Linick then refused multiple requests by Department leadership for a copy of the resulting report. Notwithstanding these repeated requests to Mr. Linick, who reports by law to the Secretary of State, the Department was, for the first time, provided a copy of the March 17, 2020 DOD OIG report on June 2, 2020 (Tab 2) as a result of a request by Congress, nearly two weeks after the President removed Mr. Linick from his position.

Beyond the concerning process that led to the DOD IG reviewing this matter, the DOD IG report itself raises a number of new questions that, together with the Department's original concerns, further substantiate the Department's misgivings with Mr. Linick's performance as Inspector General and merit a review by an independent investigatory body. As we did originally with Mr. Linick, the Department renews its request that CIGIE review these questions.

Breach of Agreed Steps for Investigating a Potential Leak from OIG. Last fall, State Department leadership asked Mr. Linick to refer for review by CIGIE the unauthorized disclosure of a draft inspector general report, which the media attributed to ''two government sources involved in carrying out the investigation''. State IG Set to Recommend Discipline for Trump's Top Iran Hand, The Daily Beast, Sept. 13, 2019. It was natural to assume that sources involved in ''carrying out the investigation'' may refer to sources within the State OIG, which—if true—would undermine confidence in the professionalism and integrity of the OIG. Mr. Linick agreed to the request, but the Department learned months later that, instead of formally referring the matter to CIGIE, Mr. Linick asked the DOD Acting Inspector General to review the issue. In other words, Mr. Linick failed to inform Department leadership that he had hand-picked another IG to investigate potential misconduct by his office and that he had deviated from the clear course agreed upon with leadership.

Following the completion of a draft report by the DOD Acting Inspector General in late 2019 or early 2020, Mr. Linick briefed Department leadership on certain findings but refused to provide the written report, or even a written summary, to Department leadership for review, raising further concerns about the fairness of the process followed. As of the time of Mr. Linick's removal, the Department had still not received any documented findings on the matter. By contrast, an appropriate referral to CIGIE would have produced a final report that Department leadership could review and assess whether there may have been inappropriate conduct in Mr. Linick's office.

Potential Conflict of Interest in Choice of Investigator. The person whom Mr. Linick asked to review the matter, outside of the CIGIE process, was then-DOD Principal Deputy Inspector General Glenn Fine, who at the time was the DOD's Acting Inspector General. This was an unusual choice because Mr. Fine appears to have been a fact witness, potentially one with knowledge of information relevant to the subject of the investigation described in the report. Specifically, the DOD OIG report notes that Mr. Linick said that he ''spoke about the evaluation report'' with Mr. Fine before the media leak occurred. If Mr. Fine himself had confidential information about the draft report before it was leaked, it raises serious questions as to whether it was appropriate for him to lead the investigation into the subsequent leak. It is unclear whether Mr. Fine was even interviewed in the course of the investigation. Allowing a fact witness to an investigation to shape the terms of the investigation—let alone lead the investigation—seems inappropriate. At a minimum, the choice of investigator in this case raises material concerns about whether the report itself represents a complete and adequate investigation of potential misconduct within the State Department Office of Inspector General.

Limited Investigation. As noted above, the Department finally received a copy of the DOD Acting Inspector General's report on June 2, 2020, and following the Department's review, the Department has identified a number of concerns as to its scope. For example, the report notes that Mr. Linick himself ''asked the DoD OIG to conduct a *limited inquiry* into whether any DOS OIG employee was the source of the unauthorized disclosure.'' (emphasis added). The DOD OIG conducted personal interviews, in which all interviewed staffers ''said they did not release any information in the report to the media.'' The DOD OIG also reviewed official email accounts and found that no employee directly sent an email from their State Department email address to the news media, other than the communications director.

However, the scope of this review appears to have been exceedingly cursory, and the report itself indicates that the scope of the investigation was by design ''limited.'' It is also unclear whether it was appropriate for Mr. Linick, as a fact witness to the investigation, to dictate the ''limited'' scope (rather than a ''full'' scope) given the significance of the leak. It is hard to imagine that an OIG or CIGIE would, in the course of its normal investigations, allow possible fact witnesses or interviewees to influence the scope of the investigation. Moreover, merely asking an interviewee if he/she directly transmitted the leaked documents and asking only about emails from official accounts would catch only the most blatant mishandling of information and would fail to uncover any person who disclosed the draft through an intermediary or sent the report from a personal email address. Further, the DOD IG does not appear to have questioned whether any interviewee had knowledge of who may have improperly disclosed the report or engaged in other questioning aimed at discovering the true source of the leak.

Use and Concealment of Improper Email Practice. The DOD OIG report identifies a concerning email practice used by Mr. Linick. The DOD OIG found: ''IG Linick sent a password-protected, draft version of the evaluation report in question to his Gmail account eight times over six days in August 2019. On one occasion, he emailed a password-protected draft of the evaluation report from his Gmail email account to his government email account.'' As the DOD OIG report notes, this usage appeared to contravene the State Department OIG's own policy: ''Use OIG provided equipment and systems/applications at all times, including OIG email, to conduct official OIG business. The use of corporate or personal equipment, systems/applications, to include to email, or other file storage sites to store, process, or transmit OIG or Department data is prohibited.'' State OIG Information Systems Rules of Behavior. Mr. Linick clearly should have followed his own organization's specific information security policies—particularly involving a draft report on a highly-sensitive personnel issue.

We understand that Mr. Linick may have received the initial report noting his improper usage of personal email as early as late 2019 or early 2020, and it is the Department's understanding that he never shared the written report with any person at the State Department (including in his own office), despite repeated requests by Department leadership for a copy of the report. Likewise, he never informed State Department leadership that the report found that he did not comply with OIG email practices. Allowing the head of an investigated office to determine the manner and scope of the release of a report that addresses his own conduct is inappropriate, which is presumably why CIGIE's own guidelines would have required the results of a CIGIE review to be shared with appropriate officials in his supervisory chain.

OIG Launches Questionable Parallel Investigation Under a Possible Conflict of Interest. At the same time that the DOD IG was conducting its review, Mr. Linick reportedly opened a parallel investigation of other State Department employees for the same potential misconduct for which his own office was being investigated. See Kylie Atwood, Fired State Department inspector general was cleared in leak inquiry prior to his removal, sources say, CNN, May 28, 2020. This decision, if accurately reported, seems unusual because the September 2019 media leak was specifically attributed to ''two government sources involved in *carrying out the investigation*'' (emphasis added), not to Department employees who may have been fact witnesses (and were clearly not responsible for ''carrying out'' any investigation).

Mr. Linick's decision also raises the question of whether this parallel investigation was intended to divert attention from the DOD IG's own investigation into the State OIG. Indeed, public reporting suggests that State OIG was continuing its own investigations of other Department employees before the DOD OIG report was even finalized. See id. It should have been obvious to Mr. Linick that launching a parallel investigation into the same misconduct for which he and his own office were being investigated created both a real and apparent conflict of interest and risked interfering with the DOD OIG investigation into his own office. An investigator who is still working to clear his or her own name has a motive to shift the blame to another person.

Inappropriate Contacts with OIG Staff in an Apparent Attempt to Obtain Department Records, Contrary to Instruction. When Mr. Linick was removed from his position on May 15 and placed on administrative leave, his physical access was terminated, and he was clearly instructed by Department officials not to contact OIG staff members about official matters or return to his former office, without authorization by Department officials, who would facilitate any such contacts.

However, it has come to the Department's attention that he has violated these instructions on multiple occasions while he was on administrative leave. For example, we understand that, in the days before his Congressional testimony, he sent a text message to the Deputy Inspector General, Diana Shaw, requesting a copy of the DOD IG report. Without informing her own chain of command, we understand that Ms. Shaw then contacted the DOD Office of Inspector General to request a copy of the report on Mr. Linick's behalf. It is not clear what Mr. Linick's motivation was, but it was not his decision (nor his former Deputy's) to make this request for release given that he was, at the time, on administrative leave pursuant to the President's decision with a new Acting Inspector General in place. We understand that Mr. Linick has repeatedly returned to his former office without seeking authorization from his Department superiors, also contrary to the clear instructions he received. Mr. Linick should follow the same rules that apply to other government officials who are placed on administrative leave in such circumstances; he is not entitled to a different set of rules.

A Pattern of Leaks Continues. Even though no one at the State Department other than Mr. Linick appears to have had a copy of the DOD Inspector General's report (not even his Deputy) before June 2, 2020, CNN ran a story on May 28, 2020 that the DOD OIG report had exonerated Mr. Linick of leaking. Kylie Atwood, Fired State Department inspector general was cleared in leak inquiry prior to his removal, sources say, CNN, May 28, 2020. These reports raise additional concerns as to this disturbing pattern of leaks, further warranting CIGIE review.

Last fall, the Department had serious concerns with the leak of a draft State Department OIG report and recommended that review by CIGIE was the appropriate step for an independent review. Unfortunately, Mr. Linick's failure to follow through on that course—or to seek agreement from his reporting chain on any change in course—has only confirmed the Department's recommendation and has raised even further concerns about Mr. Linick's judgment and conduct.

Therefore, we ask CIGIE to investigate not only the original unauthorized disclosure, but the conduct described in this letter.

Sincerely,

BRIAN BULATAO,
Under Secretary for Management,
U.S. Department of State.

BLACK REVOLUTIONARY WAR PATRIOTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, as Americans, our understanding of history has a tremendous impact on our sense of who we are and where we are headed. That is why it is so important for Americans to have a good understanding of our history—all of our history.

Slavery is a great stain on our country's history, and its legacy impacts us yet today. We must not flinch from recognizing the suffering inflicted on so many Americans, contrary to our highest ideals as a nation.

Still, our Nation is unique in human history in that it was founded not on the basis of some sort of common ethnic identity but on certain enduring principles that are the equal heritage of all Americans. Those principles are best articulated in the simple but eloquent words of the Declaration of Independence. I don't have to put quotes around these because everybody knows these words: ''We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all people are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.''

Our patriot forefathers concluded that these principles were worth fighting for, and, indeed, they took up arms. The odds were stacked against them, and they happened to know that, but they, nonetheless, risked everything because they believed so deeply in those fundamental truths that were stated in the Declaration of Independence.

Among those who risked life and limb for our Nation's founding principles were between 5,000 and 10,000 Americans of African descent who volunteered to serve as soldiers and sailors during the American Revolution.

Their patriotic sacrifices at the very beginning of our Nation contributed immeasurably toward laying the foundation of the freedoms we enjoy today.

The civil rights movement was later able to build on that solid foundation by calling on America to, as Dr. King said, ''live out the true meaning of its creed.'' Dr. King was absolutely right in pointing out that Black Americans have every right to fully claim our shared heritage as Americans, having helped build and shape American institutions and society from the beginning, as shown by the very sacrifice they made in the Revolutionary War. This proud history is part of who we are as Americans, but it is too little understood and, hence, fully not appreciated.

That is why I was proud to colead legislation that authorized the establishment of a National Liberty Memorial on the National Mall to honor the underappreciated contributions of Black Revolutionary War veterans and patriots, as they are.

I am proud to say that Iowa can claim at least one of those patriots, Cato Mead, who was born in Connecticut and is listed in Revolutionary War pension court records as a ''free person of color'' who lived out his twilight years in Southeastern Iowa. He is buried in the Montrose Cemetery in Montrose, IA.

The National Mall Liberty Fund is now in the process of raising money for an environmental assessment to complete final site selection for this very important memorial.

Now, more than ever, Americans need this monument as a tangible reminder that despite the lingering legacy of slavery, the promise of liberty and equality is a shared heritage of all Americans from the founding generation to this very day.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CORONAVIRUS

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, States across this country, including New Hampshire, are beginning to reopen after this pandemic, although, the pandemic isn't really over. The ongoing economic and public health fallout from COVID–19 continues to affect families and businesses in my State of New Hampshire and across this country.

Every day, community leaders, public health professionals, and frontline workers tell me about what they are facing. They have raised concerns

about the massive reduction in local tax revenue and the very difficult decisions that will soon need to be made if Federal assistance doesn't arrive soon.

I have heard from teachers and school administrators about the challenges they have encountered trying to educate their students during the pandemic and the difficulties they are anticipating as they begin to plan for the school year coming in September.

The shift to remote learning has exposed the disparities in broadband access across New Hampshire and across this country that leaves behind many students and makes it extremely difficult for teachers to deliver a quality education, especially for students with disabilities.

So many small businesses, while they are very grateful for the Paycheck Protection Program and the loans and grants that have been made available through the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program, are telling me it is not enough; that revenues for many of these small businesses are still at unsustainable lows, particularly for those in tourism, entertainment, and hospitality—in New Hampshire, tourism is our second largest industry—and that they need help if they are going to weather this storm.

So I can't understand why this body and why Majority Leader MCCONNELL doesn't feel a sense of urgency to pass legislation that will continue to help Americans during this time of crisis.

It has been more than 1 month since the House of Representatives sent to us the Heroes Act to continue to provide assistance to Americans who are in need. In the time since, we have not taken up any proposal that would provide comprehensive relief for the sectors of our economy that are still hurting.

We just can't wait until the end of July, when we know that there will be so many families, workers, and businesses across the country who will be in an even more dire position than they are now.

Americans are urging Congress to act, and we should work together in a bipartisan way, just as we did with the first three—really, four, if you count the second count of the small business assistance. Those four bills all passed with strong bipartisan votes. Now it is time for us to do that again, to provide Americans with the relief they so desperately need.

Congress has taken some very important bipartisan steps to provide assistance to the Nation, but the conversations I have had with Granite Staters on the frontlines are a very powerful reminder of how much work still lies ahead.

We should provide assistance for our hospitals and healthcare providers, especially for nursing homes and long-term care facilities because, in New Hampshire, they have accounted for more than 70 percent of COVID–19 deaths, and across the country, for a very high percentage.

We need to provide support to all of our essential workers who are still on the frontlines getting out there every day, despite the health risks; that includes grocery store workers, healthcare workers, and first responders who are sacrificing so much for our health and safety.

We should provide investments in our Nation's infrastructure, like broadband, to make sure we have better access to telehealth and education opportunities.

We should provide support for sectors of our economy that have taken major losses, like the clean energy sector, which has lost more than 600,000 jobs over the past few months.

We should provide help for food and rental assistance for those who have lost income and are struggling to make ends meet.

We should support the Postal Service so it can continue to serve our communities and small businesses. In New Hampshire, we have so many small towns that depend on the Postal Service for prescription drugs. Families in those towns depend on the Postal Service for prescription drugs and to communicate with the outside world. Especially now, when so many people are still feeling so isolated, they need to know they can count on the Postal Service and that it is not going to get into a financial crisis this summer.

Finally, we need to support our States and our local communities. They have been on the frontlines fighting this pandemic. As the cost of COVID–19 response efforts continue to rise, mayors, town administrators, and county officials are all grappling with whether they are going to have to lay off first responders, firefighters, police, teachers, and municipal workers—all of those people who continue to provide services in our communities and without whom people are going to face even more dire consequences. States and communities need help now. They should not have to cut essential services and frontline workers.

In Congress, we must also provide additional support to small businesses. PPP, the Paycheck Protection Program, by any measure, despite some of the challenges, has been the most significant small business assistance program in our Nation's history. It has delivered over $500 billion in aid in a very short time.

I am proud to have worked with a bipartisan group of colleagues to offer that provision, but when we first sat down to design it just over 3 months ago, none of us had any concept of the magnitude of this crisis or what would be its duration. Since then, we have learned just how devastating this disease is and how terribly difficult it is to defeat.

I have heard from so many businesspeople in New Hampshire who took a PPP loan. They used the proceeds just as we had intended: They kept their employees on the payroll or they hired them back if they had already laid them off. They have kept their lights on. Now it is time—when they are beginning to reopen their businesses, and they are still running short because those loans are about to run out, they need more help. If we don't provide it, they are going to lay off all those workers again. For many small businesses, they are going to be forced to close their doors.

Last week, I was pleased to work with Senators CARDIN and COONS to introduce the Prioritized Paycheck Protection Program, the P4 Act. That is legislation that would provide a second round of PPP funding for smaller businesses and particularly for those in the restaurant and hospitality industries which have been hit especially hard in recent months. They were the first to be closed down by government order, and they are the last to be able to open back up.

I am hopeful that, once again, we can work in a bipartisan way to make a proposal that will have support on both sides of the aisle and that will ensure that more businesses can stay afloat as we reopen our economy.

Our country is still hurting, and the coronavirus isn't going to go away without a vaccine. It is going to take a while for us to get back on our feet as a nation.

The devastating health and economic effects from COVID–19 will not be alleviated just because we pretend the coronavirus is going away. It will not be alleviated unless Congress acts. It was the decisive action that we took back at the end of February and March that has allowed so many businesses to stay afloat, so many families to continue to feed their kids and to pay their rent. It is going to be critical for us to continue to take action to provide that assistance.

We can't wait. We can't take a wait-and-see approach. We know that people are hurting right now. So I urge the Senate to take up and pass legislation. Let's negotiate what we don't like about the Heroes Act. Let's make changes, but let's take up that relief bill and continue to provide the help Americans are calling for. We have no more time to waste.

Thank you.

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

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Cory T. Wilson, of Mississippi, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Cory Gardner, Lamar Alexander, Richard C. Shelby, Steve Daines, David Perdue, Pat Roberts, Lindsey Graham, Tim Scott, Richard Burr, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, John Barrasso, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith, John Thune.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Cory T. Wilson, of Mississippi, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 124 Ex.]

YEAS—51

Alexander	Fischer	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blackburn	Graham	Risch
Blunt	Grassley	Roberts
Boozman	Hawley	Romney
Braun	Hoeven	Rounds
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Shelby
Cramer	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Loeffler	Thune
Cruz	McConnell	Tillis
Daines	McSally	Toomey
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	Young

NAYS—43

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Rosen
Bennet	Harris	Schatz
Blumenthal	Hassan	Schumer
Booker	Hirono	Shaheen
Brown	Jones	Smith
Cantwell	Kaine	Stabenow
Cardin	King	Tester
Carper	Klobuchar	Udall
Casey	Leahy	Van Hollen
Collins	Manchin	Warner
Coons	Markey	Warren
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Whitehouse
Duckworth	Murphy	Wyden
Durbin	Peters	
Feinstein	Reed	

NOT VOTING—6

Heinrich	Murkowski	Sanders
Merkley	Murray	Sinema

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 43.

The motion is agreed to.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, this past Saturday, June 20, we marked the 20th commemoration of World Refugee Day. Since 2000, World Refugee Day annually shines a light on the struggles of displaced people all over the globe and encourages us all to redouble our efforts to help them.

We are currently experiencing the most severe refugee crisis in recorded history. There are almost 80 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, of which more than 30 million are refugees and asylum-seekers. Every 2 seconds, someone is forced to leave his or her home because of conflict or persecution. That means that, since I began speaking, roughly 20 individuals have become newly displaced.

These numbers are staggering and difficult to comprehend, but try to imagine for a moment what it means to be a refugee: to watch your home torn apart by conflict; to become the target of violence and oppression; to fear so greatly for your life and the lives of your loved ones that you choose to leave everything you know behind and take a dangerous journey to a place where the language and the culture are unfamiliar, where you have no support system, where you may struggle every day to make ends meet.

This nightmare is the reality for almost 80 million human beings around the world. The situation has only worsened since the outbreak of the global COVID–19 pandemic. The majority of refugees are in low and middle-income countries, where weak health systems are already struggling to provide the basics of care. According to the International Rescue Committee, just 34 conflict-affected and fragile countries could see between 500 million and 1 billion COVID–19 infections, leading to between 1.7 million and 3.2 million deaths over the course of the pandemic. Furthermore, refugees and displaced persons tend to live in precarious conditions that make them even more vulnerable to the coronavirus. They often live in crowded housing situations with little access to basic hygiene services, the perfect breeding ground for infectious diseases to spread. For instance, there are about 850,000 Rohingya refugees living in congested camps in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. As the coronavirus began to take hold there in March, experts warned that the lack of sanitation and capacity for social distancing in these refugee camps would create the ''perfect storm'' for transmission of the disease.

Additionally, many refugees are employed in informal industries with little to no options for sick leave, restricted access to public health services, and have few, if any, resources to weather the financial burden of quarantine measures. Many are forced to defy stay-at-home orders to find ways to support their families, risking their health and that of their loved ones to provide basic shelter and food.

Take, for example, the story of Orlando, a member of an indigenous community in Venezuela who is among the 4.5 million Venezuelan migrants and refugees who have fled the country's hunger, violence, and insecurity since 2014. He now lives in Brazil with 18 other families from his indigenous group. He and his family make their living as artisans, but when lockdown orders prevented them from selling their crafts, they could no longer afford rent. All 120 of the individuals living in his house were expelled, sent to the street in the middle of a pandemic. Meanwhile, many of Orlando's family members became sick with the virus, and one sadly passed away, devastating the community. Unfortunately, stories like this one are common among refugees.

The good news is that there are a number of incredible multilateral and nongovernmental organizations working tirelessly to ensure that displaced people are safe, healthy, supported, and treated with the dignity they deserve. These organizations deserve our gratitude and, more importantly, our assistance. In my home State of Maryland, organizations such as the IRC, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society—now HIAS—and World Relief are there to help refugees start a new life in the United States. Especially now, as the COVID–19 pandemic stretches resources and capacity of service providers around the world, it is critical that the United States do its part to help address the refugee crisis.

That is why I joined all the other democratic members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in introducing legislation to provide an additional $9 billion in funding for international efforts to fight the COVID–19 pandemic and strengthen our refugee resettlement process to accommodate those affected by the global health crisis. I also urged Secretary of State Pompeo to contribute at least $500 million to the U.N. campaign to protect displaced and disadvantaged persons around the world from the coronavirus.

Historically, the United States has prided itself on offering safe harbor to the world's refugees. This country, after all, was founded by a group of people fleeing religious persecution. The plaque on the Statute of Liberty, perhaps the most famous symbol of American freedom and democracy,