

her employer for discrimination when she finally learned that her male colleagues had been paid more than her for several years. Justice Ginsburg's dissent in this case became the basis for the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which we passed in 2009, making it possible to bring lawsuits when gender-based pay discrimination is actually uncovered.

As a testament to the legal giant she was, Justice Ginsburg's accomplishments on behalf of women are just one part of her legacy, and that legacy I strongly believe is going to be honored more and more in the years to come. She died last Friday, just 46 days before the 2020 Presidential election.

Importantly, under a Republican standard adopted in 2016, the Senate should not consider a Supreme Court nomination until after the inauguration of the next President, whoever that may be. Until recently, Republicans have been intent on their own standard, which they used to block consideration of Merrick Garland, President Obama's nominee, to fill Justice Scalia's seat on the Court. Now, can we have one set of rules for Democratic Presidents and another for Republican ones? I think not. To allow otherwise undermines not only our faith in Congress but also the faith of people that we are going to stick by what we do and be impartial in the judicial system. Now, just 41 days before the election, Senate Republicans must abide by their own standard.

What is at stake? There is a great deal of attention this week as to whom the President might select. The simple truth, however, is this: No matter whom President Trump nominates, fundamental rights and protections must be considered because they become at risk if the nominee doesn't respond positively and effectively to these.

For example, in November, the Court will hear a renewed legal challenge—brought by the Trump administration—to the Affordable Care Act. Given President Trump's promise to appoint a Justice who would strike down the Affordable Care Act, healthcare access and protections for the nearly 130 million nonelderly Americans with pre-existing conditions are really in certain peril, and we have every reason for serious consideration and opposition if this protection is not continued.

It is unbelievable that during a pandemic that has already killed more than 200,000 Americans, this President and his allies are rushing a nomination that could leave up to 30 million Americans without healthcare. I hope that doesn't happen.

The next Justice will also decide cases concerning women's reproductive rights, voting rights, access to justice, environmental protections, the rights of LGBT Americans, and the rights of American workers. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a champion for all these rights and protections. She is very hard to replace, and it is important to

think of those rights that need continued protection when the replacement is made by the President.

We cannot allow the Senate and the President to jam through a nominee who will undo this legacy, which is so important to every American because every American has that legacy today, firm, and uses it virtually every day of their life.

We are ready to fight, and we will do everything in our power to safeguard these hard-won rights and protections. It is really important. Of all the nominations I have sat as a fairly long-term member—since 1993—of the Judiciary Committee, these protections and rights are really all important and must be protected. They will be what we are looking at when the nominee comes to the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

BILLION DOLLAR BOONDOGGLE ACT

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I grew up on a family farm with modest means. As a young girl, I saw Washington, DC, as a place for men in big fancy suits and big fancy houses. While a lot has changed since that time—for one, there are a lot more women like me serving in the Senate—so much here is still the same.

You see, too many folks in Washington get their paychecks from American taxpayers but don't honor the folks who pay their salary. Instead of holding bad actors accountable, whether it is reckless spending or raunchy behavior on taxpayers' time, it gets swept under the rug.

Let me give you an example. I have a bill right now. It is called the Billion Dollar Boondoggle Act. It passed committee unanimously. It is actually one of the simplest bills I have ever introduced. It literally requires the government to report on projects that are, No. 1, behind schedule and, No. 2, over-budget. It is a simple reporting requirement. Again, it passed through the committee unanimously.

The bill has the support of my Republican colleagues, but I am being stonewalled by my friends across the aisle. Folks, I cannot fathom why some Senate Democrats would oppose a reporting requirement to identify wasteful spending.

You might ask: If this bill is so simple, why does it mean so much to you? Because it matters to my fellow Iowa taxpayers. They expect Washington to use their tax dollars wisely, not throw them down bottomless sinkholes that go unnoticed. Ask any small business owner in Iowa whether the bottom line allows them to be over-budget or behind schedule. They would be out of business. They would be out of business in a heartbeat. Yet we can't even pass a bill to report on these cost overruns, much less address them. I guess it is perfectly fine for Washington to take more and more from working families and small businesses.

Folks, I think it is downright shameful that we just can't pass this simple

bill. I will remind you again, it passed unanimously through committee.

While there is a heck of a lot of political posturing that goes on in the Senate, we have had moments when we have come together to rein in the ticker tape parade of Washington's excesses. For instance, we passed my SQUEAL Act, which was signed into law as part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. I am proud of that effort because there is no reason Members of Congress should enjoy tax perks that don't get enjoyed by everyone else.

My bipartisan Program Management Improvement and Accountability Act was signed into law, creating more efficiency and oversight in the Federal Government.

I certainly have not stopped fighting to rein in Presidential perks.

I have also worked with colleagues who couldn't be more different from me politically, and we have actually accomplished really important things for the American people. I will name a few of those. We have fought against abuse in the Olympics. We have worked to stop prison rape. We have expanded telehealth and mental health services for our veterans. We have fought against opioids in our communities, and so much more.

Working across the aisle really does take humility. It takes honesty, and it takes a firm belief in America and her people. But we can do this. I would urge all of my colleagues to support my bill and move it through the Senate.

Living in Iowa, I am so blessed to be around the best people America has to offer. I am lucky not just to call these people farmers but also friends and neighbors. Iowans are strong. Iowans are resilient. And Iowans are brave. I have long said we need more of Iowa in Washington. I will keep fighting to make sure that happens.

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.

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

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

REMEMBERING JUSTICE RUTH BADER GINSBURG

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, a 5-foot-1-inch giant, Ruth Bader Ginsburg changed this Nation—and the potential of my own life—time and again, seeing no challenge too big and finding no cause too small to fight for. A woman with the softest voice, yet the most powerful words one could ever imagine, she made it her life's work to lift up the voices of others who all too often had been silenced or ignored.

With every case she argued, with every ruling she issued, with every dissent she penned, Justice Ginsburg helped push our country toward that more perfect Union our Founders once

wrote of in the Constitution she believed in so fiercely.

Our democracy may have been founded in the 18th century, but it wasn't fully built when the ink dried on the Declaration of Independence. It was shaped and strengthened, forged and formed, not just by those whose faces loom large on Mount Rushmore but by someone who was often the smallest, quietest person in nearly every room she ever walked into. It is because of Ruth Bader Ginsburg's brilliance and resilience that so many of us have the rights we too often take for granted, and it is because of her that who I am today is possible.

Long before she was a Supreme Court Justice, she was a relatively unknown law school professor who altered the course of history when she argued that the equal protection promised under the 14th Amendment didn't just mean equal protection for men. Her legal genius was captured in her first landmark victory and reflected in her choice of a male plaintiff to demonstrate that discrimination on the basis of sex harms every American, male and female alike.

Suddenly, thanks to this idealistic, young lawyer who spent her own law school years having her place questioned because of her sex, it became illegal to discriminate against women because they happened to be women. That same tenacity, that same trail-blazing intellect, that same woman also helped pave the way for me to succeed in my career as a woman in the military.

In 1973, she made sure that the equal rights for women she had helped to secure extended to the women who were seeking to defend our Nation, arguing and winning her first case in front of the Supreme Court—getting the Justices to rule in an 8-to-1 fashion that the military could not give a female servicemember fewer benefits than her male counterparts.

Her life, her position, and her title changed over the next couple of decades, as we all well know, but her convictions did not. It was 23 years after standing in front of the bench of the highest Court in the land to argue that our Armed Forces could not discriminate against a woman in their ranks that Ruth Bader Ginsburg herself sat on that very same bench and issued a ruling that changed everything for countless women who dreamed of serving their country in uniform. She struck down the State-funded Virginia Military Institute's male-only acceptance policy, granting women the ability to learn and train alongside men at one of the top military academies in the Nation.

In a ruling I plan to read out loud to my little girls some nights instead of their usual bedtime stories, she wrote of potential female VMI students, arguing: "Generalizations about 'the way women are,' estimates of what is appropriate for most women, no longer justify denying opportunity to women

whose talent and capacity place them outside the average description."

I can't begin to imagine the number of women generals and flag officers and servicemembers she paved the way for with those rulings, but I do know the story of one, not a flag officer—just me, myself.

As I was a couple years into the Army when she wrote that decision, Ruth Bader Ginsburg helped make my career in the military possible. She helped make my hope of one day serving in a combat role regardless of my gender, of one day commanding a unit—despite most of my crew being men—achievable. It was because of her that my dreams had the opportunity to become a reality.

You know, yesterday, I told my 5-year-old, Abigail—named for Abigail Adams, another feminist—that we were taking a field trip instead of our usual homeschooling routine, and I took her and her younger sister, Maile, to the steps of the highest Court in the land. I didn't expect to get emotional, and I didn't expect to tear up, but with Maile in my lap and Abigail by my side, I started to cry. I was crying because it was not just my military career Ruth Bader Ginsburg helped to make possible but my family too.

I may never have been able to become a mom if it were not for Justice Ginsburg. Without her, without what she did to safeguard healthcare and reproductive freedoms, I might never have been able to get pregnant through IVF. I might never have been able to have my two little girls; never would have been able to watch Abigail place a bouquet of white roses on the steps of the Supreme Court if Ruth Bader Ginsburg hadn't spent decades in that very same building, defending my rights. She changed—no, she gave me the opportunity to achieve my life as it is today.

Her passing isn't just heartbreaking for me and for countless other women across this country; it is a loss for our entire Nation. It is a loss for justice, a loss for equality.

While today I will continue to mourn everything we lost when she passed last Friday, I promise that tomorrow I am going to roll up my sleeves and honor her in the way I believe to be most true to how she lived her life—by fighting like hell for what is right and for all of our rights.

My daughters might be too young to remember going to the Supreme Court to pay our respects to RBG, but they will know her legacy, and already, every day, they are living proof of its power.

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

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

HOUSING REPORT

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, the coronavirus has been the great revealer in our country. This crisis, of course, isn't happening in a vacuum. It is layered atop a system that already was not working for a whole lot of people and that had centuries of racism built into it.

Few places is that more true than in our housing system. When it comes to housing, like so many problems in this country, we have a President who makes things worse, not better. For 4 years now, President Trump and his administration have systematically undermined fair housing.

I would add, since the Senator from Utah is in the Presiding Officer's chair, that I would do a shout-out for his father and what he did as Secretary of HUD in the late sixties, early seventies in trying to move this country forward.

That was obviously not in my prepared remarks. I didn't know that you would be presiding, but thank you.

The Trump agenda—very different from the agenda in the Romney HUD administration—turned back the clock on civil rights protections that leave communities of color, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ people behind.

This week I released a comprehensive report from the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, detailing the ways that President Trump has made inequality and segregation in housing worse and the work we have to do to undo the damage.

More than 50 years after Congress passed the Fair Housing Act, access to housing remains not just unequal but separate and unequal.

The contours of our country are too often still defined by Black, Latino, Asian or White neighborhoods, all with very different levels of access to resources—schools, grocery stores, healthcare, clean air and water, public safety.

This is not an accident; it has been done by design. For decades, the Federal Government not only condoned housing segregation and discrimination—perhaps unbelievably, perhaps not—it actively promoted it.

We all know about Black codes. We know about Jim Crow, even if too many want to deny we are still living with this Jim Crow legacy today. It wasn't just the most blatant racist laws; discrimination was woven into the creation of our modern housing system from the beginning.

After the Great Depression, President Roosevelt created the government-sponsored Home Owners' Loan Corporation, the HOLC, and the Federal Housing Administration, the FHA.

These could have been tools for expanding opportunity for everyone. They did that for White Americans, but for Black Americans they did the opposite. HOLC partnered with local real estate agents and appraisers to make what they called residential security maps. These maps used color coding to differentiate between supposedly high-