

Senate, this is at least the third occasion when members of the Capitol Police have given their lives to protect me, and Brian Sicknick will not be forgotten.

For those who want to take this insurrectionist mob and the incitement of this mob as just another political protest, I ask them to reflect for a moment, please, on the graphic video evidence of what happened on that day, as people who were part of this mob took baseball bats, sticks, everything they could get their hands on, and beat up against those law enforcement agents. It was a sad moment.

Yesterday's New York Times spelled out what led up to it: a big lie that the former President of the United States actually won the November 3 election.

He did not. The votes were counted and he lost, but he has never been able to accept that reality, and what he has done in the meantime is to foment a revolt against our government at the grassroots level across America.

That is the reason why a new Attorney General brought to the position of leadership as quickly as possible is so important. I regret that, once again, I need to come to the floor to call on the Senate Republicans to stop blocking Merrick Garland from receiving a hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

We all remember the way Merrick Garland, a judge in the Circuit Court of the DC Circuit, was treated by Senate Republicans in 2016 when he was nominated by President Obama to the Supreme Court. I am not going to recount the entire history today, but I will tell you, it was not a proud moment for the U.S. Senate when Senate leaders on the other side of the aisle announced they would not give him a hearing. They literally would not even meet with him to give him the dignity of such an opportunity to discuss his nomination for the Supreme Court.

But I do want to talk about the urgency of putting President Biden's national security team in place, including Merrick Garland, the President's nominee for Attorney General. Our country faces, as we learned on January 6, challenges of great importance at this moment in our history.

As we faced that mob assault on the Capitol Building for the first time since the War of 1812, our Capitol was breached by attackers, domestic terrorists. Domestic terrorists were part of a coordinated, comprehensive effort to stop the Government of the United States. That situation needs to be carefully reviewed and examined by the Department of Justice and the Attorney General as quickly as possible.

There is no person better qualified to lead this investigation, to bring these perpetrators to justice, and to prevent future domestic terror attacks than Merrick Garland. When he previously served at the Justice Department, Judge Garland oversaw the investigation and prosecution of the largest domestic terrorism attack in recent his-

tory—the Oklahoma City bombing. His qualifications and experience are well suited for the moment we face.

As our Nation's top law enforcement officer, the Attorney General is a key part of the President's national security team. The Attorney General oversees our Nation's law enforcement response to threats both foreign and domestic.

My Republican colleagues frequently talked about letting the new President get his national security team in place at the start of his administration. Despite the unresolved nature of the Senate's organizing resolution, other subcommittees have come together on a bipartisan basis to schedule prompt hearings and votes for nominees, including the Secretary of Defense, Director of National Intelligence, Secretary of Homeland Security, and Secretary of State. We need to do the same when it comes to the nomination of Merrick Garland to serve as Attorney General.

Why would we allow partisanship to get in the way of national security?

I have urged my Republican colleagues on the Judiciary Committee—current Chairman GRAHAM and incoming Ranking Member GRASSLEY—to consent to start the hearing for Merrick Garland as soon as possible.

I proposed February 8, next Monday, as a hearing date, in part to accommodate Senator GRAHAM's request to avoid holding a hearing during the impeachment trial. A February 8 hearing date gives the committee sufficient time to review Judge Garland's record. It would follow the same timeline—the very same timeline—that Senator GRAHAM used for Judge Amy Coney Barrett's nomination to the Supreme Court last year.

Remember, the committee has already received the vast majority of Judge Garland's record, including his speeches, interviews, and publications, that less than 5 years ago was presented when he was nominated to the Supreme Court. We have had this material in the committee for years. Senator GRAHAM claims that important paperwork for Judge Garland is still missing. The only thing that has not been filed is Judge Garland's FBI background investigation. As important as it is, the Judiciary Committee has scheduled hearings for previous Attorney General nominees before the FBI background investigations had been submitted. For example, the committee received then-Senator Jeff Sessions' FBI background investigation just 5 days before his hearing, and we are still 6 days away from a proposed hearing date. So what we are asking is not unprecedented or unrealistic.

Senator GRAHAM points out that Attorney General nominees typically have 2-day hearings—1 day to question the nominee and the other day to question outside witnesses. This isn't always the case. For example, the Republicans held a 1-day hearing to consider Alberto Gonzales's nomination to be

Attorney General. Yet, if the goal is to ensure there is sufficient time to question the nominee and to hear from outside witnesses, I am willing to do just that—allow for two rounds of questions of the nominee and an outside witness panel.

I also find it surprising that Senator GRAHAM objects to committee business on the eve of an impeachment trial. Just remember the history. On January 16, 2020—the same day that the previous impeachment trial of this President started—Senator GRAHAM held a committee markup during which the committee considered 11 judicial nominees. There was nothing sacred about the day before or day of an impeachment trial then, when Senator GRAHAM was chairman.

Judge Garland is a consensus pick. As even Senator GRAHAM has acknowledged, the Senate should generally be deferential to a President's Cabinet nominees, and that is particularly true for national security positions. There is an even greater urgency to move swiftly to confirm Judge Garland, given the events of January 6 and the Justice Department's role in investigating and responding to those events and other national security threats.

I hope Republicans will consent now to notice a hearing for February 8. It would show real bipartisanship and fairness. Under our committee rules, we can still notice the hearing with less than 7 days if my Republican colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee agree to do so. We need to get the Attorney General confirmed, and there is no justification for any further delay.

NOMINATION OF ALEJANDRO NICHOLAS MAYORKAS

Mr. President, while on the subject of confirmation, the Senate has confirmed Mr. Alejandro Mayorkas three different times. When you listen to the Republican Senate leader this morning, you may not catch that fact. He was second in command of the Agency he is nominated by President Biden to lead. Most recently, he served as the DHS Deputy Secretary, the Agency's second in command, and the Chief Operating Officer, handling counterterrorism, cybersecurity, border security, emergency management, and other critical matters. We need Mr. Mayorkas's deep expertise and experience in place at the DHS starting as quickly as possible, maybe even today.

Perhaps Republicans have forgotten about the last 4 years of chaos at the Department of Homeland Security. Here is a reminder: Under President Trump's administration, the DHS experienced an unprecedented leadership vacuum. The DHS lurched from one Secretary or Acting Secretary to the next—six in total—only two of whom were actually confirmed by the Senate. Those are more Agency heads in the last 4 years than in the 13-year history of the Department of Homeland Security before the Trump administration. For over a year, the Agency was led by

unlawfully appointed Acting Secretary Chad Wolf. Nine days before President Trump left office, Mr. Wolf resigned and was replaced by yet another Acting Secretary.

Four former Secretaries of Homeland Security—two Republicans and two Democrats—every person ever to serve as a Senate-confirmed DHS Secretary prior to the Trump administration, recently endorsed Ali Mayorkas. They said he is “a man of character, integrity, experience and compassion” and “a proven leader to right the ship.” You would hardly believe that if you listened to some of the things said about him this morning on the floor.

In their endorsement of Mr. Mayorkas, every former Secretary of Homeland Security before the Trump administration went on to note: The leadership vacuum and turmoil at the Department of Homeland Security may have contributed to the failure to anticipate and adequately prepare for the terrorist attack of January 6 on the Capitol. That is the reality. After 4 years of disorder and disarray at the DHS, the security of America, including this very Capitol Building, suffered because of the lack of leadership under the previous administration.

Mr. Mayorkas is the son of a Holocaust survivor and an immigrant from Cuba. Mr. Mayorkas knows firsthand that America can be a beacon of hope to the world and the promise to those who are facing persecution of a place of safe haven. Mr. Mayorkas is an experienced national security leader who can restore integrity and decency to the Department of Homeland Security.

I, personally, appreciated the skill and dedication Mr. Mayorkas showed as the Director of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. It was in that post of 2012 that he implemented DACA, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, which has allowed more than 800,000 young people to contribute to America’s future. I won’t recount the entire history, but my trek on this particular issue began 20 years ago, when I introduced the DREAM Act. Thanks to my friend, former colleague, and leader of our country, Barack Obama, by Executive order, he created DACA and gave these young people their chance to prove themselves.

As Deputy Secretary, Mr. Mayorkas oversaw a \$60 billion budget and led a workforce of nearly 230,000 individuals. He excelled in that role. He received the Department’s Distinguished Service Award, its highest civilian honor; the U.S. Coast Guard’s Distinguished Service award; and special commendation from the National Security Agency for his achievements in national security and cybersecurity. Among his numerous responsibilities, Mr. Mayorkas led the Department’s response to the Ebola and Zika outbreaks—relevant and timely experience that he will bring to the DHS during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Earlier in his career, Mr. Mayorkas served as the Senate-confirmed U.S. at-

torney in California. The national president of the Fraternal Order of Police enthusiastically endorsed Mr. Mayorkas: “His professionalism, integrity and commitment to just and fair enforcement of the law makes him an ideal candidate to lead the department. Mr. Mayorkas has pursued criminal wrongdoers and has protected the rights of the innocent with indefatigable vigor. His work reflects all that is right in government.”

Mr. Mayorkas is an outstanding nominee to be the Secretary of Homeland Security. His experience, qualifications, deep expertise, and integrity will serve our Nation well in this important and challenging position.

Steady leadership at the Department of Homeland Security is sorely needed today. I urge my colleagues to expeditiously confirm Mr. Mayorkas so that he can serve as the next Secretary of Homeland Security. Today, we will get a chance to vote on Mr. Mayorkas.

I sincerely hope that the Republican members of the Senate Judiciary Committee will allow us to set the stage for a hearing as quickly as possible for our next Attorney General, Merrick Garland. So much is at stake. The national security of the United States should be a higher priority than any partisan consideration.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I want to talk about two topics today. The first topic I want to address is the issue of immigration. My good friend Senator DURBIN is very articulate—he is almost an expert on this issue—and I appreciate his comments. I want to just give you my perspective on immigration because it is so important. Yet this is not why I came down here today.

I love legal immigration. I think most Americans do. Louisianans love legal immigration, and I say that with great confidence because, every year, the American people invite over a million of our world’s neighbors to become American citizens in a legal manner. We are very welcoming in this country. We invite more people to become citizens in America than any other country in the world, and I am flattered that people want to come here. I mean, other than someone living in North Korea, when is the last time you heard of somebody trying to sneak into China? People want to come to America, and I am so proud of that fact.

I don’t believe in illegal immigration. Some of my colleagues—not the Chair and Senator DURBIN—think that vetting people at the border is racist. I don’t. I think it is prudent. Every country does it. We respect the rule of law in this country, and illegal immigration is illegal. Duh. I mean, if you don’t like the immigration laws, one should change them. In the meantime, we have to follow the law. I am not real crazy about traffic cameras. I

think, in many cases, they are designed to just raise money, but I obey them, and when I get fined, I pay the fine. It doesn’t happen often now, but I do it.

Look, this country needs an immigration system that looks like somebody designed it on purpose. It does. I think the American people deserve that. I would love to work with Senator DURBIN. I am not real interested in nibbling around the edges. I am not real interested in piecemealing. I am not real interested in some sort of widespread amnesty. I think we ought to sit down. We all ought to take our meds and sit down as adults and Senators in good faith, as all Senators are, and try to tackle this problem in a global way.

I just wanted to make it clear—this is speaking for me, personally, and I have learned a lot from listening to Senator DURBIN as I always do—I am a steadfast believer in legal immigration, but I adamantly oppose illegal immigration. I think it is dangerous. I think it is unfair, especially to those people across the world who have waited in line patiently and followed the immigration laws of our country.

TRIBUTE TO PAT SHINGLETON

Mr. President, now let me switch topics. One of the good things about politics and government—and the Presiding Officer has probably had this experience—is that you meet so many interesting people, and everybody is interesting in his own way. I have met people who are more famous than wise. I have met people who are more wise than famous, and I have met people who are both famous and wise. One of the latter is what I would like to talk about today. He is a gentleman by the name of Pat Shingleton. His name may not be famous here—it is back in Louisiana—but I can assure you that his virtues are. I want to honor the work of Pat Shingleton today.

Pat is a Baton Rouge meteorologist, but he is also a longtime fixture in our community. He has retired. I think his last broadcast was Friday night. He had worked for 45 years. That is probably older than the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Almost.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, he had been reporting and trying to predict—and had predicted with great accuracy—the weather in the Baton Rouge metropolitan community for 45 years, but Pat’s experience covers a whole lot more than being a meteorologist, though he was one of the best I have ever seen in that regard.

During his nearly half century of reporting the weather, Pat not only covered more than 500 storms and hurricanes but he also hosted “We Play Baton Rouge,” a local game show; “The 5th Quarter,” a sports show; and “Hotline After Dark,” a local talk show, where his guests—and I am going to quote here—“ran the gamut from champion bodybuilders, to beer brewers, to duck callers.” We are a very diverse people in Louisiana.

Pat has a warm heart, and he cares for the State and the Baton Rouge