public statements that the thousands in the camp faced immediate expulsion.''

Nobody believes Democrats that this lawlessness, chaos, and human suffering is the fair and compassionate way to govern our country. Nobody buys that. An average of recent surveys shows that only 36 percent—36 percent—of the country approves of President Biden's handling of immigration, while 56 percent disapprove.

Look, Americans know a train wreck when they see one. Our citizens deserve better than this failure—utter failure—of leadership, and so do the people Democrats are luring here with a mirage.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator THUNE and I be allowed to complete our remarks before the vote is taken.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF FLORENCE Y. PAN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this week, the Senate will vote on Florence Pan's nomination to the District Court for the District of Columbia.

She is highly qualified, with more than a decade of experience on the bench. If confirmed, she would be the first Asian-American woman to serve on that court.

She graduated summa cum laude from the University of Pennsylvania and received her law degree with distinction from Stanford.

After clerking on the Southern District of New York in the Second Circuit, she decided to pursue a legal career in public service. In 1995, she was selected for the prestigious Bristow fellowship in the Office of the Solicitor General. After completing her fellowship, she served as attorney in the Appellate Section of the Criminal Division of the Justice Department and senior advisor to the Department of the Treasury.

Beginning in 1999, Judge Pan worked as an assistant U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia for 10 years. In this role, she litigated local and Federal courts at the trial and appellate level.

In 2009, President Obama nominated her to serve on the DC Superior Court. She was confirmed with unanimous support by the Senate.

Years later, President Obama nominated her to serve on the DC district court, and her nomination was reported out of the Republican-controlled Judiciary Committee by a voice vote. Unfortunately, she didn't receive a floor vote in time, though lawmakers on both sides of the aisle recognized that she was eminently qualified.

Since 2009, Judge Pan has presided over more than 650 trials: criminal cases, family court cases, civil cases. She was unanimously rated ''well qualified'' by the American Bar Association. She has the strong support of Congresswoman ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, who submitted a statement for the record and described her as an exceptional nominee.

Last month, she was voted out of the Senate Judiciary Committee on a bipartisan vote of 18 to 4.

What is more, the historic nature of Judge Pan's nomination will help build a Federal bench that reflects full diversity.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting her.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, less than 2 miles from this Capitol, there are 666,000 small white flags stretching across the National Mall like a sea of suffering and loss. Each of these flags represents an American life lost to COVID—666,000. Let me tell but one of them. Her name was Candace Ayers. She lived in my hometown of Springfield, IL.

Early last March, as soon as they could, Candace and her husband Terry received their second coronavirus vaccinations. That was a day of joy and relief for the family because Candace lived with rheumatoid arthritis, which weakened her immune system.

In July, she traveled to Mississippi—a State, sadly, with one of the lowest vaccination rates—to console a friend who had lost her husband. At the time, COVID infections were at a low point, and the Delta variant was just starting, so Candace thought she would be safe, having been vaccinated.

Soon after the trip, she tested positive for COVID. She was hospitalized and moved to an ICU, and she spent the last few weeks of her life on a ventilator.

She died on September 3 at the age of 66, leaving behind her husband, their son and daughter and 5-year-old triplet grandchildren.

In the obituary in my hometown paper, her family wrote: ''She was vaccinated but was infected by others who chose not to be. The cost was her life.''

I read that to my wife the morning it was printed and said I have never seen a sentence or two like that in any obituary.

Experts call what took Candace Ayers' life a ''breakthrough'' COVID infection, meaning an infection that occurs after an individual has been vaccinated. Breakthrough infections are typically mild, but can be devastating for immunocompromised people like Candace.

With the rise of the Delta variant, it is not just the elderly or immunocompromised who are at risk. Children made up only 3 percent of COVID cases at the start of this pandemic. Today, children account for 27 percent of new COVID infections, and the school year is just starting.

We are in the midst of yet another wave of this pandemic. COVID is once again overwhelming America's health system, and the rate of COVID infections and deaths are dramatically higher in the areas of lower vaccination.

An article in last Friday's Chicago Tribune tells the story in Illinois. Last Thursday was the fourth day in a row that every ICU bed in Southern Illinois was filled. In a 20-county area—home to 400,000 people—there were no ICU beds available.

Doctors, nurses, and first responders are working around the clock to care for sick patients, but after 18 grueling months, they are reaching a breaking point. And with our healthcare system pushed to the brink, everyone is feeling it.

If you live in Southern Illinois and you have a heart attack, a stroke, a serious accident, or a life-threatening condition, bad news: There are no ICU beds available for you. Hospital staffs in those areas have to call hospitals sometimes hundreds of miles away in Nashville, TN; St. Louis, MO; Kansas City, MO, to try to find a bed.

Compare the situation to Chicago, some 300 miles away but a world of difference. COVID infection rates are starting to decrease. Public health officials are hopeful they are finally turning a corner.

Why the great disparity between the Chicago regional area and Southern Illinois? One reason: vaccinations. In Chicago, two in three adults are fully vaccinated against COVID. In Southern Illinois, the figure is only one in three.

So much of the suffering and expense could be avoided if we could take the politics out of the COVID debate and stop the spread of misinformation that is literally killing people. As Candace Ayers' family would tell you, the most important thing is that more people get vaccinated. Vaccines are safe, effective, and free—and widely available to anyone over the age of 12.

Here is a statistic that should trouble everyone. The New York Times tracks COVID vaccinations around the world using figures supplied by national governments. Where do you suppose the United States of America ranks globally compared to other countries on vaccination rates? Well, you would guess the top three, right? The top 10 for sure. How about top 20? You would be wrong. Last week, the United States ranked 55th globally for the percentage of people vaccinated. We are just behind Cambodia.

And in the wealthiest Nation on Earth and in the country that led the research and development in finding these vaccines, that is sad; it is inexcusable; and it is deadly.