

part of a major effort to integrate the hospitality and entertainment industry. Later, Reverend Scott was selected to serve as executive director of the Nevada Equal Rights Commission and authored an autobiography, "Pioneer for Social Justice."

Today, Reverend Scott is the assistant pastor at Second Baptist Church of Las Vegas and is the former pastor of Second Christian Church in Las Vegas. He is still carrying out his life's mission of social advocacy by working with Nevada's nonviolent ex-offenders to provide job training and employment. He also promotes education for children and is aligned with initiatives that help students graduate from high school and provide scholarships to college-bound young men and women.

Madam President, I ask the Senate to join me in paying tribute to Reverend Jesse Scott for his lifetime of service to Nevada and our Nation.

NOMINATION OF BARBARA KEENAN

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, today the Senate confirmed Justice Barbara Keenan to be a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit by a vote of 99-0. But the vote took place only after an unsuccessful Republican filibuster of her nomination.

This is just the latest example of the new low to which Republicans have sunk when it comes to the treatment of judicial nominations.

When the Democrats were in the minority under President Bush, we voted against cloture on a handful of his judicial nominees, but only the most controversial and only those for appellate court positions.

Under President Obama, Senate Republicans have filibustered and stalled almost every judicial nominee sent forward, regardless of the court and regardless of the controversy.

Take the case of Virginia State Supreme Court Justice Barbara Keenan. You would be hard pressed to come up with someone less controversial for this Fourth Circuit vacancy.

Justice Keenan had the strong support of her home State Senators, JIM WEBB and MARK WARNER. She sailed through the Senate Judiciary Committee without a single vote of opposition. She received the highest possible rating from the American Bar Association. And she will be the first woman from Virginia to sit on the Fourth Circuit.

Yet here we are—over 4 months after Justice Keenan was reported unanimously out of the Judiciary Committee—and the Republicans refused to agree to have an up-or-down vote on the Keenan nominee and forced the Democratic majority to waste time filing and voting on a cloture motion. They have used similar tactics with other judicial nominees.

Why are the Republicans making us jump through all these procedural hoops?

It is simple: the Republicans are trying to make us burn precious Senate floor time so we are unable able to work on pressing legislative business for the American people like job creation.

Justice Keenan had to wait 124 days between her Senate Judiciary Committee vote and her floor vote. Some other circuit court nominees of President Obama had to wait even longer than that. Fourth Circuit Judge Andre Davis was forced to wait 158 days—over five months—between his committee vote and his floor vote. Seventh Circuit Judge David Hamilton was forced to wait 168 days.

How does this compare with the treatment of President Bush's circuit court nominees?

Under President Bush, 61 judges were confirmed to the appellate courts. Their average wait time from committee vote to floor vote was a mere 29 days, according to statistics from the Congressional Research Service.

Justice Keenan was forced to wait over four times longer than the average Bush circuit court nominee who was confirmed.

This is part of a larger pattern of obstruction on judicial nominations. During President Obama's first year in office, due to Republican filibusters and holds, the Senate confirmed only 12 lower court judges. Only 12.

You have to go back to President Eisenhower to find a President who had so few judicial confirmations. President Eisenhower only had nine judicial confirmations during his first year in office. But President Eisenhower only made nine judicial nominations that year.

Every other President in the modern era had more judicial confirmations than President Obama during their first year in office.

President George W. Bush had 28, and that was with a Democratic Senate majority. President Clinton had 27, President George H.W. Bush had 15, President Reagan had 41, President Carter had 31, President Ford had 22, President Nixon had 25, President Johnson had 18, and President Kennedy had 56. But President Obama had only 12, due to unprecedented Republican obstruction.

Today is March 2. By this time in his Presidency, President George W. Bush had 39 judicial confirmations. And, it bears repeating, that was with a Democratic Senate majority. By contrast, President Obama has only 16 judicial confirmations, less than half as many as his predecessor.

There are 15 judicial nominations pending on the Senate floor. Most of them were approved in committee without a single vote of opposition. Yet, due to anonymous Republican holds, many have been waiting months and months for a vote.

This Republican obstructionism is unacceptable and it must be exposed.

WHEN DEFICITS BECOME DANGEROUS

Mr. KYL. Madam President, I recommend to my colleagues a February 11 Wall Street Journal column by Stanford economist Michael Boskin, entitled, "When Deficits Become Dangerous."

Boskin's premise is that the new taxes and "enormous deficits and endless accumulation of debt" in President Obama's budget will create a ripple effect of problems through our economy.

He explains that the debt will eventually force additional growth-smothering taxes: "Such vast debt implies immense future tax increases. . . . It's hard to imagine a worse detriment to economic growth."

Boskin also notes that "so worrisome is this debt outlook that Moody's warns of a downgrade on U.S. Treasury bonds, and major global finance powers talk of ending the dollar's reign as the global reserve currency." He describes President Obama's budget as "the most risky fiscal strategy in history."

I ask unanimous consent that this article be printed in the RECORD, and urge my colleagues to consider the facts and arguments it contains.

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

WHEN DEFICITS BECOME DANGEROUS—DEBT-TO-GDP RATIOS OVER 90 PERCENT HAVE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE PACE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

(By Michael J. Boskin, Feb. 11, 2010)

President Barack Obama's 2011 budget lays out a stunningly expensive big-government spending agenda, mostly to be paid for years down the road. He proposes to increase capital gains, dividend, payroll, income and energy taxes. But the enormous deficits and endless accumulation of debt will eventually force growth-inhibiting income tax hikes, a national value-added tax similar to those in Europe, or severe inflation.

On average, in the first three years of the 10-year budget plan, federal spending rises by 4.4 percent of GDP. That's more than during President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society and Vietnam War buildup and President Ronald Reagan's defense buildup combined. In those same three years, spending on average hits the highest level in American history (25.1 percent of GDP), save the peak of World War II. The average deficit of \$1.4 trillion (9.6 percent of GDP) is over three times the previous 2008 record.

Remarkably, President Obama will add more red ink in his first two years than President George W. Bush—berated by conservatives for his failure to control domestic spending and by liberals for the explosion of military spending in Iraq and Afghanistan—did in eight. In his first 15 months, Mr. Obama will raise the debt burden—the ratio of the national debt to GDP—by more than Reagan did in eight years.

Some specific proposals are laudable: permanently indexing the Alternative Minimum Tax for inflation, part of the increased R&D funding, reform of agriculture subsidies, a future freeze on one-sixth of the budget (only after it balloons for two years). But these are swamped by the huge expansion and centralization of government.

True, as he often reminds us, President Obama inherited a recession and fiscal mess. Much of the deficit is the natural and desirable result of the deep recession.