Mr. Frederick, who practiced law with Judge Gorsuch, states: 

Over the course of his career, [Neil Gorsuch] has represented both plaintiffs and defendants. He has defended large corporations, but also sued them. He has advocated for the Chamber of Commerce, but also filed (and prevailed with) class actions on behalf of consumers. We should applaud such independence of mind and spirit in Supreme Court nominees.

And Mr. Frederick observes: 

As a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, Gorsuch has not been the reflexive, hard-edged conservative as many depict him as having ruled for plaintiffs and for defendants; for those accused of crimes as well as for law enforcement; for those who entered the country illegally; and for those harmed by environmental damage.

As this self-proclaimed “longtime supporter of Democratic candidates and progressive causes” points out, Judge Gorsuch will be the type of Justice each of us should want on the High Court. And though he knows he may not always agree with Neil Gorsuch’s rulings as a jurist on the Supreme Court, Frederick says we need judges like Neil Gorsuch “who approach cases with fairness and intellectual rigor, and who care about precedent and the limits of their roles as judges.”

The bottom line is this: “The Senate should confirm him because there is no principled reason to vote no.” Let me repeat that. “The Senate should confirm [Gorsuch].” Frederick said, “because there is no principled reason to vote no.” This is a board member of the left’s flagship legal group in America, and on this point, he happens to be absolutely right.

So as colleagues on both sides will continue to find at next week’s hearings, “there is [simply] no principled reason to vote no” when Judge Gorsuch’s nomination comes before the full Senate.

REPUBLICAN HEALTHCARE BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, one final matter: Last year, President Obama said his signature healthcare law had “real problems.” He recognized that there are “people who are hurt by premium increases or a lack of competition and choice.” President Clinton called it “the craziest thing in the world.” And the Democratic Governor of Minnesota said that “the Affordable Care Act is a disaster, affordable for increasing numbers of people.” So even Democrats recognize that the ObamaCare status quo is unacceptable.

Costs have continued to climb higher. Insurers have dropped out of the marketplace, ObamaCare is a disaster, and it is going to keep getting worse. ObamaCare is a disaster, and it is going to keep getting worse.

The legislation the House introduced is already moving to repeal and replace is already moving to repeal and replace.

Mr. President, next week the Senate Judiciary Committee will begin its hearing on President Trump’s nominee to the Supreme Court, Judge Neil Gorsuch. As I have said before, we in the Senate have a special responsibility to judge whether this nominee, Judge Gorsuch, will tip the scales on the Court in favor of Big Business and powerful special interests over average Americans. The Court has steadily been moving in that direction.

My colleague SHELDON WHITEHOUSE and the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, have documented in 5-to-4 cases that the Court, over the last decade, has almost always tilted in favor of the powerful and against those who are average Americans. In fact, the Court has repeatedly upheld corporate, special interest agenda. In today’s New York Times, this morning we learned that Judge Gorsuch’s career
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has been nurtured by a far-right billionaire and corporate titan, Philip Anschutz, who has gone out of his way to fund hard-right judicial causes, including the Federalist Society and the Heritage Foundation. President Trump outsourced his choice of a Supreme Court justice to these organizations, and they recommended Judge Gorsuch.

Neil Gorsuch represented Mr. Anschutz’s firm as a young lawyer. He has earned his favor and patronage ever since. It was Anschutz’s top lawyer, someone who represented Anschutz here on the Hill, who lobbied for Gorsuch to get the spot on the Federal appeals court. Judge Gorsuch has been partners in an LLC with two of Anschutz’s top advisers, building a vacation home together. Of course, there is no problem with that. Anyone can be partners. But it goes to show the longstanding intertwined ties between one of the leading advocates for a hard-right pro-corporate agenda, Mr. Anschutz, and Judge Gorsuch. The long history of ties between Judge Gorsuch and Mr. Anschutz suggests a judge whose fundamental economic and judicial philosophy is favorable to the wealthy and the powerful and the far right.

Judge Gorsuch may sometimes express sympathy for the less powerful verbally, but when it comes time to rule, when the chips are down, he has far too often sided with the powerful few over average people, even more decisively to special interests and away from the individual citizen, we need a nominee who would reverse that trend, not exacerbate it.

Donald Trump campaigned on helping average people. His nominee sided with corporate interests against average people like Mr. Maddin, Ms. Caplinger, and the Hwang family over and over again. From all indications, Judge Gorsuch is not the kind of nominee who has sympathy and helps average Americans when it comes to judging and the law.

I yield the floor.

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 resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Daniel Coats, of Indiana, to be Director of National Intelligence.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 10 a.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from North Carolina. Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise today to support Senator Dan Coats, our former colleague and a friend, as the President’s nominee to be the next Director of National Intelligence. Dan Coats has been asked to lead our Nation’s intelligence community of over 100,000 individuals during, I think, the most profound period of threats and change. Let me say to my colleagues, it is a job that Dan Coats is well prepared to do.

After graduating from Wheaton College, Dan served honorably in the U.S. Army before serving the State of Indiana as a House Member, as a Senator, and for not only Indiana but this country as Ambassador to Germany.

While in the Senate, Dan was engaged and was a valuable member of the Senate Intelligence Committee. He dedicated countless hours to understanding and overseeing the intelligence community—in essence, one of 15 people who certified for 85 others and for the American people that we do everything we can to keep America safe but we do it within the parameters of the rule of law. He is well versed in the operational capabilities and authorities. He understands the threat we are facing at home and abroad. He understands that we need to improve our ability to collect against our adversaries, and Dan will be an advocate for intelligence collection but, again, never jeopardizing that line of what is legal and what is not.

Dan’s legislative experience also translates to his understanding and his appreciation of the need for transparency with the appropriate oversight committees and, more importantly, with the Congress and the American people.

Dan’s intellect, his judgment, his honorable service, and his commitment to the workforce make him a natural fit as Director of National Intelligence. I have absolute trust that he will lead the community with integrity, and he will ensure that the intelligence enterprise operates lawfully, ethically, and morally.

So today I rise in this austere body to urge my colleagues to support the President’s nominee for Director of National Intelligence, Dan Coats, in March. We have gone from January until March with one of the most important posts of this administration unfilled. Congress must act quickly, and it is my hope that Members, before the end of this day, will make sure we have a Director of National Intelligence in place.

I urge my colleagues to support this nomination.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

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