

hear a case, to get a verdict, and so many other parts of the judicial process.

So I call upon our colleagues in the House to move this bill through their Chamber, because the result will be a better functioning judiciary. Right now, people have to wait far too long to hear their cases in court. This should reduce that wait.

Thank you to Senator COONS and Senator YOUNG again for their excellent work in getting this bipartisan bill done.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I want to file the No Kings Act, which deals with the horrible Supreme Court decision which gave immunity to future Presidents, and so I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 4973

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, as I said, this is just putting on the calendar, rule XIV'ing the No Kings Act, which deals with the awful Supreme Court decision that basically allows Presidents to do what they want as long as they can call it official.

I understand that there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4973) to reassert the constitutional authority of Congress to determine the general applicability of the criminal laws of the United States, and for other purposes.

Mr. SCHUMER. I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent to resume executive session.

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

The Senate will resume executive session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I am here for the 34th scheme speech on the right-wing billionaires' covert scheme to capture and control our Supreme Court.

And I am here to report real progress in our work to restore the integrity of

the Court, and wrest it from special-interest control.

This Court, captured and corrupted by right-wing special interests, has imposed deeply unpopular and harmful policies on the American people. It needs reform. And—good news—commonsense reforms to take back the Supreme Court received a significant boost from the President and the Vice President this week.

The right-wing "Fed Soc" Justices have done unprecedented damage to America's democratic institutions and to our government's ability to protect ordinary Americans' health, safety, and well-being.

The right-wing Fed SOC Justices also took away women's right to an abortion, leaving millions of women unable to make basic decisions about their own reproductive health and endangering women experiencing troubled pregnancies.

They overturned longstanding and overwhelmingly popular gun safety laws leaving our communities exposed to the epidemic of gun violence.

They eviscerated the government's ability to fight climate change and to protect consumers from corporate profiteering, and they invented, out of thin air, the idea that former Presidents are absolutely immune from being held accountable for using their office to break the law, to commit crimes, even to commit treason.

On top of all of this, the Court has done its best to prevent the American people from fighting back through the democratic process. It has made it harder for ordinary people to vote, while making it easier for billionaires and deep-pocketed special interests to impose their will on the American people with unlimited amounts of dark money.

How did we get here? A decades-long scheme led by creepy billionaires and backed by a deluge of dark money captured the Court like some crooked 19th-century railroad commission. This Court-capture operation was not cheap. The latest estimate put it at more than \$580 million, and that is a minimum. That money flowed in from creepy billionaires, laundered through rightwing front groups like the Federalist Society and Judicial Crisis Network, where the donors—the real donors—could hide their identities behind the front groups doing their dirty work.

This dark money funded full-scale campaigns to stack the Supreme Court with Justices who would deliver for the billionaires. The scheme's major victory came when Senate Republicans blocked Merrick Garland's confirmation to the Supreme Court. That set the stage for Donald Trump to fill that seat through a process outsourced almost entirely to the billionaires' operative Leonard Leo and his array of rightwing, dark money front groups.

Once these handpicked nominees landed on the Court, the dark money network tells them how to rule, supplying them with extremist legal argu-

ments through so-called friend-of-the-court briefs designed to reach their desired results. The parallel between what the friend-of-the-court brief flotillas recommend and what the FedSoc Justices do is nearly perfect.

Leo and his cronies also orchestrated a secret gifts program for their amenable Justices, keeping them happy with lavish gifts of luxury vacations and other high-value freebies. Despite a clear Federal ethics law requiring Supreme Court Justices to disclose even small gifts, these Justices kept hidden years of free private jet travel, free yacht trips, free tickets to sporting events, and even, for one Justice, \$260,000 of loan forgiveness for a luxury motor coach.

Justices have flouted the Federal law requiring recusal from cases where they have a conflict of interest. Justice Thomas sat on cases involving efforts to overturn the 2020 election despite his wife's involvement in efforts to overturn the 2020 election.

Worst of all, the Court has refused to take any real steps to clean up this mess. After substantial public pressure, it first wrote a useless letter about ethics, and then it adopted a toothless ethics code with no mechanism for either investigation or determination or enforcement.

The Supreme Court now stands alone in all of government free from any factfinding about ethical misconduct. As a result, the Court's legitimacy in the eyes of the American people is now at an alltime low and falling.

Well, against all that mess, earlier this week, something big happened. On Monday, President Biden and Vice President HARRIS endorsed two commonsense proposals to help restore the Court's legitimacy. Happily, I have bills that perfectly align with both.

First, the Supreme Court needs a binding, enforceable code of conduct. The Supreme Court should not violate one of the most basic principles of the law: "Nemo iudex in causa sua"—"No one should be a judge in their own cause." Yes, that is a principle so old and so venerated that it is in Latin, and they violate it nonstop.

The Justices of the Supreme Court should have ethics rules at least as strict as the other branches of government, with a real process for finding out what happened and holding miscreants accountable. Overwhelmingly, Americans agree.

Last week, Justice Kagan suggested that a panel of experienced lower court judges could review ethics complaints, compile a report, and then make recommendations to the Supreme Court. That is exactly what my Supreme Court Ethics, Recusal, and Transparency Act would do.

By the way, that is also what most all State supreme courts do. They all face the same problem of being the top supreme court in their sovereign entity, and they all face ethics review by other judges or panels. This is a solvable problem.

My bill would also impose stricter disclosure of gifts Justices receive, enhance existing recusal laws, and require the flotillas of phony front groups who lobby the Court through friend-of-the-court briefs to disclose their actual funders and connections.

My bill passed the Senate Judiciary Committee last summer, with the warm and welcome support of the Presiding Officer, and is now awaiting a vote on the Senate floor. Democrats stand ready and willing to deliver on President Biden's and Vice President HARRIS's goal of bringing real transparency and accountability to the Supreme Court.

President Biden and Vice President HARRIS also announced their support for 18-year term limits for Supreme Court Justices, with new appointments to the Court occurring every 2 years. That would counter the Republican Supreme Court Justices' penchant for strategically timed retirements that tip the Court into Republican hands.

Term limits are a commonsense proposal with long bipartisan support. Supreme Court Justices, including Chief Justice Roberts, have expressed support for term limits. Even some of our Republican colleagues have endorsed the idea. A Fox NEWS poll earlier this month showed that this idea had support from more than 75 percent of Americans.

Fortunately, Democrats stand ready to deliver on this idea too. My Supreme Court Biennial Appointments and Term Limits Act, which the distinguished Presiding Officer is a cosponsor of, would make the Court more representative of the American people and lower the political stakes of Supreme Court nominations.

Under our bill, the President would appoint a new Justice every 2 years. Justices would serve full time on the Court for 18 years, after which they would acquire a form of senior status—something familiar to anybody who knows Federal courts, where, in district courts and circuit courts of appeal, judges go on senior status regularly.

These Justices on senior status would remain on the Court to hear the original jurisdiction cases that are required by the Constitution for the Supreme Court to entertain. The nine most recently appointed Justices would hear what the Constitution calls appellate jurisdiction cases, which the Constitution expressly gives Congress the power to regulate.

So Congress can pass this long-overdue reform while preserving judicial independence and without a constitutional amendment.

President Biden noted that he has overseen more Supreme Court nominations as Senator, Vice President, and President than anyone living today. Vice President HARRIS, a former member of the Senate Judiciary Committee herself, has echoed the President's calls for reform. Both the President and the Vice President have immense

respect for our Supreme Court and for a strong and independent judiciary. They have demonstrated it through their lifetimes. That is exactly why we should listen to them when they tell us that the time has come for reform at the Supreme Court.

This has been a long and often lonely fight in the Senate. The big-money, rightwing apparatus has tried over and over to shut me up. I think I may have a record for hostile Wall Street Journal editorials, and may I tell the Wall Street Journal editorial board: Thank you. That is a badge of honor.

Realization of what is needed to save the Court from itself has spread—first through the Halls of Congress, then into the national consciousness, and now to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. That is good reason for hope.

So bravo, Mr. President and Madam Vice President.

Now it is up to us in Congress to deliver and repair and redeem this captured Court.

To be continued.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (MR. BOOKER). The Senator from Mississippi.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN EDDIE CROSSMAN

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I rise today to commend a great public servant, CAPT Eddie Crossman of the U.S. Navy, a friend, an outstanding sailor, and a dedicated patriot.

This year, after nearly three decades of service, Captain Crossman is retiring from the Navy. I know I speak on behalf of my colleagues, my staff, and a grateful nation when I say: Thank you for a job very well done.

Since he left the Naval Academy in Annapolis as a young ensign in 1996, Captain Crossman has set the standard for excellence and achievement. Today, on the other side of his Navy career, I want to give Captain Crossman a proper send-off by saying a few words about this remarkable public servant.

This summer, I traveled with Eddie on a congressional delegation trip. As usual, he was a top-notch Navy liaison with superb attention to detail and a winning, positive attitude. We could not have accomplished so much without him. I know my colleagues would be able to share similar stories—very many of my colleagues.

As a member of the Navy Senate Legislative Affairs team, Captain Crossman made sure no Senators' question went unanswered. He has left no delegation unsupported. The relationship between this body and the Navy is better because of his efforts.

This summer's visit to three of our strong allies capped a working relationship between Captain Crossman and me that began in 2009, when I was lucky enough to have him join my office as a defense legislative fellow. In that role, he conducted himself with distinction. He took his job seriously, completing thorough research and staff work, but he didn't take himself too seriously.

I remember one day—Halloween—when the captain entered my office

dressed in full costume, not in a Navy uniform. He had taken on the "Schoolhouse Rock" character Bill from Capitol Hill. He worked in that outfit all day alongside the rest of my staff, who were wearing the usual business attire. I can only attribute his costume to his zeal for the legislative process.

His work in my office clearly benefited the people of Mississippi and the United States, but I would be remiss if I did not mention how the people of Mississippi have supported Captain Crossman, particularly the shipbuilders of Mississippi.

The captain was at sea when COVID-19 hit the United States, extending his deployment to 206 days at sea—the longest consecutive deployment for a warship in U.S. Navy history. He completed that charge as commander of the USS *San Jacinto*. That vessel, the one that carried him on his lengthy deployment—historic deployment—was built on the Mississippi gulf coast. Earlier this year, it was my privilege to pay one final visit to some Mississippi shipyards with Captain Crossman.

I have traveled the country and the world with this fine young man—in some sensitive places and stressful situations. I have come to know the measure of CAPT Eddie Crossman—his industry and talents, his energy and character. I know he will continue to excel in whatever he does next.

I have served with a lot of military liaison people. I seldom come to the floor to do as I am doing this afternoon. But on this occasion, for this fine Navy officer and this great American and great friend, I say: Fair winds and following seas.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CARDIN. Would my colleague yield for a comment?

Mr. WICKER. I would be glad to yield to my friend.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. To Senator WICKER, I am glad that you mentioned Eddie Crossman. As you know, we have had a chance to be together when Eddie Crossman has been our escort.

And I just want to underscore that your comments represent my thoughts as well. He is a true professional. I told him that what he has done in making sure that our representation around the world is done in a professional manner, that we stick to the important reasons for our missions, that he handles all of this with safety and the way it should be done—he is an incredible individual who served our Nation.

And I just really want to join you in thanking him for his service to our country and his service to the U.S. Senate and advancing policies of our country globally that are critically important for our national security.

So I thank you for taking the time. I should have thought about it and done it myself, but thank you for giving me the opportunity to stand with you to thank Eddie for his service.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, reclaiming my time, the distinguished chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations