

after we went through ObamaCare and the Affordable Care Act—that the current Speaker of the House had then said: Well, we have to pass this bill so we can read it and find out what is in it.

They know that this is the way you like to operate.

I am sure many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would dispute my characterization of the bill. So, for the benefit of the record, let's go through a few of the provisions they are absolutely convinced will somehow expand freedom and secure our elections. This is what you will find in their S. 1 election takeover bill:

It would require States to allow ballot harvesting and no-excuse mail-in balloting, which we know from experience will open the door to fraud. We know this. So are they intentionally trying to open the door to fraud? You are right; people are correct in asking that question.

It would also overrule State-level voter ID laws—another great way to guarantee rampant fraud. So, yes, you heard me correctly. They want the Federal Government to tell your State that you cannot require someone to prove his identity, to show an ID in order to—what?—vote in an election. How about that?

It would weaponize the FEC against minority parties, mandate donor disclosure, and require the Federal Government to match private contributions. You heard me right. They want your tax dollars to fund people who are running for office even if you don't agree with their opinions. Your money would be going to them to match the contributions that they are raising. By the way, it is a 6-to-1 match. Pretty convenient, isn't it?

I call it insanity, and anyone who has ever staffed a polling place or has helped to count ballots knows this. Yet here we are, staring down yet another attempt to put this bill on the fast track—taking away the States' authority to run elections in their States.

Here is what I say to my Democratic colleagues: You are not going to get the benefit of a quiet news cycle on this. America is watching and listening, and they are paying attention.

Your attempts to whip the Senate into a state of partisan warfare over a bill you don't have the votes to pass will not go unnoticed.

Your attempts to make another run at the filibuster and invent a mandate the voters refuse to give you will not go unnoticed.

Your attempt to sneak through this unconstitutional, partisan power grab is not going to go unnoticed. People are paying attention, and my Republican colleagues and I are going to stand up against it. Members of your own caucus have said they will not stand for it.

Most importantly, the American people are watching, they are listening, they are paying attention, and they do not stand for what you are seeking to do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

NOMINATION OF JULIEN XAVIER NEALS

Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, I rise today with a lot of joy. I get a chance to speak about someone I have known for decades. I am rising to speak about Julien Neals and my hope that he gets to serve on the U.S. District Court of the great State of New Jersey.

I have spoken to many of my colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee about Julien Neals. He is someone I have not just known for a long time, but even though he is not quite my height, I look up to him. We worked together when I was mayor of the city of Newark. So today what I really want to speak about is not simply his impressive career, his distinguished resume, but I really want to talk a bit about who he is.

I am not sure how many of my colleagues know this about the city of Newark, NJ, but when I became mayor in 2006, we inherited a lot of very complex, very serious challenges, and for the sake of our residents, we needed to make change quickly and very urgently. So I brought in this guy named Julien Neals, whom I didn't quite know that well, but he was so well highly recommended.

He moved from the private sector, where he was with a very prestigious New Jersey law firm, and decided to lead the transformation in New Jersey's largest municipal court. He knew that it was a court system that had to change, and he stepped up. He changed it. He changed the way our court operated. He centered it in common community values and made sure that everyone who came before that court was treated in a way that affirmed their dignity, no matter what the matter was.

He pioneered innovations that the whole State—in fact, many places in our Nation—took notice of. He created the first community court in the State of New Jersey, the first youth court, and the first veterans court. He realized that citizens all have, often, different needs, especially folks like our young people and our veterans, and that there is a different way to achieve a larger standard and a larger ideal of justice.

Well, the problem is, when you do so well in one job, you get pushed to another opportunity. I quickly moved him from being my chief judge of New Jersey's largest municipal court to come in and be my corporation counsel in my mayoral administration.

In the wake of the recession in 2008, he became the business manager, the person who runs the city day to day, and under the most difficult, savage of circumstances, he made challenging changes that helped us get through that very difficult period.

Cities all over New Jersey were being crushed financially, making massive amounts of layoffs, and in those financial times, he was able to get our city

to be dramatically more efficient, to bring in new ideas that helped us to create everything from environmental sustainability to expanding access to municipal services to the public. He brought in innovations that became really par for the course all over New Jersey, but Newark did them first.

Today, now, Julien serves as the counsel for the largest county in New Jersey—a county that is bigger than some of our States.

I have had the privilege of knowing Julien, as I have said, now for the past couple decades, and I have watched him handle challenge after challenge, from a global recession to Hurricane Sandy. He has stood in the saddle and helped with calmness, with coolness, with an equipoise that is enviable to all, including me. I have watched him lead. I have watched him care. I have watched his love of others be reflected in the decisions he made under the most difficult of circumstances. I have seen him in crisis after crisis rise not just to meet the challenge but to, in most circumstances, have us come out better off than we were before.

He, in so many ways, is one of the great leaders I have had the privilege of working with in my life. Julien Neals is brilliant. He is thoughtful. He is deliberate in his decision making. He has all of the ideals that I think we want in a Federal judge.

I have to tell you, most importantly to me, I know him. I know his parents. I know his family. I know his kids. He is one of those people who would make you proud not just in knowing but in ascending to a position like a judge. I know he will make us proud in the way that he leads from the bench.

I want to thank President Biden for nominating him. I want to encourage all of my colleagues in a bipartisan way, as I said in the Judiciary Committee, to consider supporting him.

I have had many privileges as a U.S. Senator. God, this is one of those jobs where you have to, like, give glory to God every day for just having the privilege of standing on this floor and getting to be a part of some things that, as much as we rancor back and forth, we should all be proud of, whether it is a global pandemic or just making sure we are funding critical parts of the government where public servants serve. But of all the privileges I have, I have to say this is one of the great ones, the chance to make a man whom I look up to in every way—make him a Federal judge, to try to encourage my colleagues to make him a Federal judge.

I see that my senior Senator, my friend—another guy I look up to even though I got him by an inch or two—has come to the floor, and if the Presiding Officer would allow me, I would like to yield to the senior Senator of the State of New Jersey—more handsome than I am, but I think we are an equal tag team when it comes to serving our State.

I yield the floor with the fear that he does have the microphone last.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, it is a fear that one should have as to who gets the microphone last, but nonetheless, no need to fear. I think that statement about better looking is a Pinocchio on your part, in any event. But I will stop before I get called out of order.

Madam President, it is with great urgency that I come to the floor to urge support for the confirmation of Julien Xavier Neals to be a U.S. district court judge in New Jersey. My distinguished colleague, who knows Mr. Neals extraordinarily well, can speak to all the elements of him as a human being, as a lawyer, and as someone who was a judge at one level and, in fact, can be and will be an extraordinary district court judge.

We are known in New Jersey as having one of the busiest courts in the entire country. As of last year, more than 46,000 cases were pending before it, many of them among the most complex and challenging cases in the Nation. Yet multiple judicial vacancies on the court have led the Judicial Conference of the United States to declare a judicial emergency. The court is short-staffed by a third, leaving each of our seated judges with a mind-boggling caseload of 2,700 pending cases. That is a caseload more than three times higher than the national average.

Fortunately, this week, the Senate has an opportunity to begin alleviating this judicial emergency by confirming Julien Neals to the U.S. District Court in New Jersey. Mr. Neals is an outstanding nominee who has devoted his entire career to the practice of law in my home State of New Jersey. Throughout his three decades in the legal profession, he has served in many diverse roles. Every step of the way, he has impressed those around him with his integrity, sound judgment, and commitment to equal justice and fair administration of the law.

He clerked on the Superior Court of New Jersey, practiced civil rights, employment discrimination, and intellectual property law as an associate and partner of a Secaucus-based firm. He served the city of Newark during my distinguished colleague Senator BOOKER's time as the mayor of that great city of Newark and since 2015 has worked as counsel for Bergen County, the most populous county in all of New Jersey.

As you heard, my colleague still speaks glowingly of Mr. Neals' achievements during his time as chief judge of the Newark Municipal Court, how he improved the efficiency and the culture of the institution, created the first community court in the State of New Jersey, and in less than 2 years presided over more than 6,000 cases, while supervising 11 full-time judges.

There is no doubt in my mind that Mr. Neals will be an asset to the U.S. District Court in New Jersey as it emerges from this pandemic and works

to reduce its backlog of pending cases. He is qualified, and he was qualified to serve on the Federal bench back in 2015 when President Obama first nominated him to the U.S. District Court in New Jersey. Unfortunately, the politics of the time didn't get him a vote, and he is even more qualified today.

Mr. Neals already commands enormous respect in our legal community. From serving on the Supreme Court of New Jersey's Committee on Character and Fitness to serving as chairman for the Volunteer Lawyers for Justice, he personifies the meaning of public service. His tremendous breadth of experience, even temperament, and sound judgment make him a superb candidate to serve on the Federal bench. Clearly our colleagues on the Judiciary Committee here in the Senate came to the same conclusion when they reported him out of committee by a large bipartisan margin.

New Jerseyans have waited too long for the Senate to fill this vacancy, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to confirm Mr. Julien Neals without further delay. I am thrilled to join my colleague from New Jersey in advocating for him and especially thankful to the junior Senator from New Jersey for advancing his name so that justice can be realized in the State of New Jersey.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, is there a pending vote now on the cloture vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in a quorum call.

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

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

The vote is to occur in 3 minutes.

Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, I appreciate the 180 seconds, and I will be patient and wait.

I am sorry. There is a quorum call, correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No.

The senior Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to waive all existing time and move towards the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BOOKER. Reserving the right to object, I would just like to say that is why he is the senior Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Duly noted.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

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

Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 130, Julien Xavier Neals, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Sherrod Brown, Jon Ossoff, Alex Padilla, Jacky Rosen, Tammy Duckworth, Brian Schatz, Chris Van Hollen, Catherine Cortez Masto, Robert Menendez, Richard Blumenthal, Patty Murray, Martin Heinrich, Michael F. Bennet, Sheldon Whitehouse.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Julien Xavier Neals, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) would have voted "nay."

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 66, nays 28, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 219 Ex.]

YEAS—66

Baldwin	Grassley	Portman
Bennet	Hassan	Reed
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Rosen
Booker	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Brown	Hirono	Sanders
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Capito	Kelly	Shaheen
Cardin	Kennedy	Sinema
Carper	Klobuchar	Smith
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Cassidy	Lujan	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Tillis
Coons	Markey	Toomey
Cornyn	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Feinstein	Murray	Whitehouse
Fischer	Ossoff	Wicker
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Graham	Peters	Young

NAYS—28

Barrasso	Hawley	Paul
Blackburn	Hoeven	Risch
Blunt	Inhofe	Romney
Boozman	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Braun	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lee	Shelby
Cramer	Lummis	Sullivan
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Cruz	McConnell	
Hagerty	Moran	

NOT VOTING—6

Daines	King	Sasse
Ernst	Rubio	Thune

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). On this vote, the yeas are 66, the nays are 28.