

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 44) recognizing the sunflower as the flower for military caregivers.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 44) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2016

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, July 12; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the conference report to accompany S. 524, with the time until 12:30 p.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; finally, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings.

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

#### PROGRAM

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, we can expect the first rollcall votes to occur after the conference lunches tomorrow.

#### ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senators MERKLEY and WHITEHOUSE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oregon.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I have risen on several occasions to bring attention to the challenges confronting our "we the people" system of government that President Abraham Lincoln so eloquently described all

those years ago as one "of the people, by the people, and for the people."

I have talked about the powerful special interests working to corrupt the nature of our Republic, thanks to the unchecked wealth flowing into our political system because of the Supreme Court's series of misguided decisions in *Buckley v. Valeo*, *Citizens United*, and *SpeechNow.org*.

Today, I am honored to join with my colleagues from Minnesota, New Hampshire, and Connecticut—organized by my colleague from Rhode Island, who will be speaking in a moment—to show how these same special interests are using their vast wealth and resources to sway national policies and public debate to benefit their interests at the expense of the American people and turn our government into one of, by, and for a powerful special interest. There is no better example of what I mean than the debate surrounding one of the most critical issues facing our Nation and the world today: climate change.

Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan once famously stated that "everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not to his own facts." Well, manmade climate change is a fact. Scientists, universities, and government agencies across the world have all said that manmade climate change is real, that it endangers our planet, and that we need to address it quickly if there is any hope for our future.

Back in 2005, 11 science academies from around the world—including Brazil, Italy, Japan, and Russia—signed a joint letter stating that "there is now strong evidence that significant global warming is occurring" and that "it is likely that most of the warming in recent decades can be attributed to human activities." Five years later, the Pentagon stated very directly that "the danger from climate change is real, urgent, and severe."

Fast-forward 5 more years to 2015, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science warned that "we face risks of abrupt, unpredictable and potentially irreversible changes" with potentially "massively disruptive consequences to societies and ecosystems."

The fact is, we don't really need to turn to our scientists or studies to know that climate change is real; we simply have to look at the world around us. We can see and feel it for ourselves. We saw it when 2014 became the hottest year on record, and then we saw it again in 2015 when 2015 became the hottest year on record. We see it as our forests come under assault from longer fire seasons and insect infestations because the winters are not cold enough to kill the pine beetles. We see it in our waters, our loss of snowpacks, as fishermen fish in ever smaller and warmer streams for trout and salmon, and our farmers face less water for irrigation. We see it in the oceans—oceans that are 30 percent more acidic today than they were before we started burn-

ing coal at the dawn of the Industrial Revolution. The acidic ocean is endangering our sea life, killing coral, and causing a real challenge for our shellfish. We see it in the droughts that hurt our farms and the increasingly powerful storms that regularly devastate communities, businesses, and people's lives.

Why, with all of this proof from the scientific community and with all of the proof and facts directly before our eyes, does such strong opposition remain to the effects of climate change? We know the answer. It is because a powerful, moneyed interest has spun a web of deceit, working for years and continuing to work to undermine mainstream, scientific research and deceive the American people about the dangers and causes of climate change.

These members are part of a special interest that have made their fortunes from fossil fuels. If they acknowledge the realities of climate change, it would suggest that their industry would have to dramatically change in a very short period of time. In fact, according to conventional science, we have to keep 80 percent of fossil fuels in the ground if we are to have any hope of keeping carbon emissions within a range that does not trigger catastrophic consequences. That is why, in the minds of this industry, it is better to lie to the American people than to risk their businesses and fortunes.

We have seen this movie before, when the tobacco industry lied to the American people for decades to discredit the emerging science and evidence that tobacco was killing millions of Americans. And now the fossil industrial complex is lying to the American people, but this time it is not just the health of Americans at risk, it is the health of the entire planet.

The Union of Concerned Scientists published a report last summer which showed that for decades the "fossil-industrial complex" knowingly worked to deceive the American public about the realities and risks of climate change. One of the main ways they do this is by funding third-party organizations like think tanks, advocacy groups that produce counter-climate research and make people question which facts and information they can trust. We know this is happening because various studies have revealed the incredible level of coordination between different groups and researchers who always see corporate funding and who all seem to work off the same scripts.

Justin Farrell, a sociologist at Yale University, authored a study last November that examined 20 years' worth of articles, policy papers, and transcripts from 4,500 individuals associated with 164 different groups known to be skeptical of climate change science. Comparing the work of those who had received this special interest corporate funding and those that had not, he found a clear, coordinated effort among the corporate-backed groups that cast

doubt on the idea that greater amounts of manmade carbon dioxide endangered our planet. Talking about his study, Farrell said that “this counter-movement produced messages aimed, at the very least, at creating ideological polarization through politicized tactics, and at the very most, at overtly refuting current scientific consensus with scientific findings of their own.”

We know these groups are backed by special interests. All we have to do is follow the money. That is how we know, for example, that between 1998 and 2015 ExxonMobil donated at least \$30 million to groups and organizations whose main purpose was to spread misleading information about climate change. It was discovered in paperwork connected to his paper between 2014 and 2015 alone that Peabody Energy funded at least \$332,000 through a subsidiary to groups and organizations involved in attacking climate science and clean energy policies.

As much as the fossil fuel companies have contributed to these efforts over the years, the titles of the masterminds and the kingpins of climate science denial rests with Charles and David Koch. These oil and coal baron brothers, whose estimated \$80 billion fortune comes from oil refineries and coal reserves in Texas, Alaska, Minnesota, and elsewhere, control roughly over 4,000 miles of pipeline. These are the same businessmen who have pledged that they and their network of contributors will have spent the better part of \$1 billion by the time the polls close on November 8 to try to influence the outcome of this year’s Presidential and congressional elections.

Since 1997, the Koch brothers have directly funneled \$88 million to think tanks and trade associations, advocacy groups, foundations, and academic and legal programs which deny the existence of climate change.

According to a 2013 study from Drexel University, they are effective at getting their friends to give their money as well. The study showed that most of the other largest contributors to the anti-climate science movement were associated with the Koch brothers. The foundation run by the DeVos family and Art Pope, a retail magnate from North Carolina, are a regular part of the Koch brothers’ donor network.

That same Drexel study also shows that as the public opinion about climate change has shifted in recent years, the sources of funding for many of these organizations has become untraceable. On paper, for instance, Koch affiliated foundations have pulled back significantly on visibly funding organizations that deny climate change. It just so happens that funding from other sources, such as Donors Trust, a donor-directed foundation where funders cannot be traced, has risen dramatically at the same time. The traceable funding of this network in DC has decreased, and the untraceable funding has increased. According to its Web site, Donors Trust

specializes in being untraceable. Our trust is for those “who wish to keep their charitable giving private, especially gifts funding sensitive or controversial issues. Know that your contributions to your DonorTrust account that have to be reported to the IRS will not become public information.”

In 2003, only about 3 percent of the denial movement came from Donors Trust, but by 2010, as the Drexel study shows, the foundation responsible for providing a quarter of “all traceable foundation funding used by organizations engaged in promoting systemic denial of climate change.”

The sources of the denial movement are being laundered so the American people do not have a direct vision of those responsible, but we know from all of this evidence who is responsible. Could it just be coincidence that at the same time the Koch brothers reduce their traceable donations to climate-denying science groups, the amount of untraceable money going to them increases dramatically? Yes, I suppose it is possible, but it would be a very large coincidence.

So we know that the Koch brothers have been prolific contributors to the climate change countermovement over the years, and it is very safe to say that they are continuing to contribute anonymously to the cause of organizations like Donors Trust.

But what is the result of all of this? What has been the return on their investment?

We have seen report after report from groups like the Koch-founded and Koch-funded Cato Institute with titles like “Apocalypse Not: Science, Economics, and Environmentalism.” Or how about this one: “Climate of Fear: Why We Shouldn’t Worry About Global Warming.”

We know that a grant from the Charles G. Koch Charitable Foundation helped fund a nonpeer-reviewed study which claimed climate change doesn’t endanger polar bears.

Now, I do a tremendous number of townhalls—one in every county every year, 36 a year in Oregon—approaching 300 townhalls since I was elected into office. Many of these are in rural areas where people get a lot of their information—well, to put it simply—from web sources and emails and lists that are often directly driven through a right-wing propaganda machine. These are the types of things that the Koch brothers try to spread in order to undermine what is happening before our very eyes. When I talk to my rural townhalls about the challenge, I say: You know what; climate change is impacting you all most of all. It is attacking our forests and our fishing. It is attacking our farming.

I go through the evidence on the ground in the State of Oregon, and people start shaking their head. Yes, they are aware of the pine beetle. They are aware of the longer forest fire season. They have heard about the oyster industry in trouble because of the in-

creasing acidity of the Pacific Ocean. They are aware of how the Klamath Basin has suffered the three worst ever droughts in a 15-year period because the snowpack in the Cascades has changed so much over the last few decades, reducing the amount of irrigation water flowing in to the region and the amount of rain that is falling. They are aware of these things. So then they understand it, and they see the reality. Then there is a glimmer of understanding that the messages spun out by this vast web of denial is false and that they are on the front line. Rural America is on the front line.

Reports and studies funded by the Koch brothers muddy the waters of scientific fact, making it much harder for the average person to sort through and sift through the information that is available and to know what the real story is.

But where we see the Koch brothers’ and friends’ money paying off the most is the influence they are able to manifest here in Washington, DC. As we work to take on this challenge—the equivalent of an approaching meteor bent on destroying a good portion of the planet—as we work to take it on, they work to make sure we don’t take it on, undermining the legislation that is being put forward to incentivize a rapid transition from a fossil fuel economy to a renewable energy economy.

Obviously, an emphasis of pivoting from fossil fuels to renewable energy would undermine the value of the Koch brothers’ holdings. It would undermine the value of the fossil industrial complex. So they lie to the American people.

We see one substantial strategy after another. We know that the summer that cap and trade was being debated in 2009 and climate change started to become a focus of tea party rallies, a lot of that was organized by Americans for Prosperity—yet again a Koch-founded and Koch-funded organization.

The issue seeped into townhalls and public forums, with some members of the audiences planted at various events by groups like Americans for Prosperity to raise the issue. Anti-cap-and-trade members of Congress regularly quoted from a study by the Heritage Foundation, another Koch-funded organization. They predicted that the bill would add thousands of dollars to Americans’ energy bills and lead to devastating unemployment—claims thoroughly debunked by the Congressional Budget Office. But in the Koch brothers’ climate-denier, fossil-industrial complex world, facts don’t matter and that our planet is at risk doesn’t matter.

They even use piles of letters sent to Members of Congress that falsely claim to come from actual constituents. They worked to build pressure from outside groups, and eventually the Koch brothers and their allies won. The cap-and-trade bill never came up for a vote here in the Senate, even though it had passed the House. That was the

type of return on investment the Koch brothers sought. They wanted to use their money and their resources to stop legislation that could have helped the American people and the world begin to reverse recourse on the tragic direction we are headed.

That is not a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. That is a government against the people. That is, instead, a government of, by, and for a powerful special interest.

Every one of us here has a public responsibility to act on behalf of our Nation's national interests. We are stewards of the public trust. We are responsible for helping to guide the United States and helping the United States guide the entire community of nations into a future of greater well-being. To do that, we must take back our Republic from the special interests like the Koch brothers who are determined to corrupt our public bodies and our public debates for their own greedy self-interests. We must work together to restore the "we the people" government our Founding Fathers envisioned.

I am proud to come here to the floor to join my colleagues from Rhode Island, Minnesota, New Hampshire, and Connecticut. I particularly appreciate my colleague from Rhode Island for organizing this series of speeches to expose the special interests behind the anti-climate science forces and to ensure that, as President Lincoln so eloquently declared on those hallowed fields of Gettysburg, "Government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from this Earth."

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I will be the final speaker tonight. The point that I want to make is that when we spend this time talking about the web of denial that sabotages America's ability to respond to the climate crisis, we don't just use this word rhetorically. We can go into the academic research and see the web depicted in peer-reviewed scientific research. We can see the means by which it operates—the climate change denial machine in academic research. We can hear about the think tanks that are used in this web of denial.

Constantine Boussalis of Trinity College and Dr. Travis Coan of the University of Exeter have examined more than 16,000 documents published between 1998 and 2013 by these 19 conservative think tanks. Their study demonstrated that in spite of the broken global heat records over the last decade, rising sea levels, and the accelerated melting of our polar ice sheets, these 19 conservative think tanks actually increased their attacks on climate science in recent years. These 19 think tanks, the authors tell us, "provide a multitude of services to the cause of climate change skepticism." These include offering material support and lending credibility to contrarian sci-

entists, sponsoring pseudoscientific climate change conferences, directly communicating contrarian viewpoints to politicians—which is how we get infected with that nonsense here—and disseminating skeptic viewpoints through a lackadaisical media that can be tricked into believing them—all, of course, while keeping the industry's hands hidden.

The American Enterprise Institute, Cato Institute, Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change, Competitive Enterprise Institute, Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow, Citizens for a Sound Economy, Fraser Institute, Foundation for Research on Economics and the Environment, Heartland Institute—remember, they are the classic with the billboard comparing climate scientists to the Unabomber—the Heritage Foundation, Hoover Institution, Hudson Institute, Manhattan Institute, George C. Marshall Institute—it takes a lot of nerve to steal that man's name; George C. Marshall was an American hero—National Center for Policy Analysis, National Center for Public Policy Research, Pacific Research Institute, Reason Foundation, Science and Public Policy Institute are there to "provide a multitude of services to the cause of climate change skepticism."

Well, they are not alone. Harvard Professor Naomi Oreskes and her colleague Erik Conway from NASA and CalTech—no fools—have examined the long history of corporate-financed public relations efforts designed to sow confusion and skepticism about scientific research on topics like tobacco, acid rain, the ozone hole, and climate change. These are the schemes of the "Merchants of Doubt," the title of their book, and also the recent documentary film which, by the way, is playing in the Capitol tonight. Naomi Oreskes is actually here.

Then there is Justin Farrell of Yale University, about whom Senator MERKLEY just spoke. This is his diagram of the "web of denial" as a complex network of think tanks, foundations, public relation firms, trade associations, and other groups that are "overtly producing and promoting skepticism and doubt about scientific consensus on climate change."

Farrell describes the function of the network as, one, "the production of an alternative contrarian discourse," and, two, "to create ideological polarization around climate change."

That is right. The polarization that we see in this building and in this Chamber on this issue is a product created by this web of corporate-funded climate denial front groups. Congressional inaction is the sabotage their product has wrought in our democracy.

Here is how Dr. Farrell describes it: "Well-funded and well-organized contrarian campaigns are especially important for spreading skepticism or denial where scientific consensus exists—such as in the present case of global warming, or in historical

contrarian efforts to create doubt about the link between smoking and cancer."

These researchers and many more help map out an intricate interconnected web of denial that encompasses over 100 organizations, including trade associations, conservative think tanks, foundations, public relations firms, and plain old phony polluter front groups. Each of the front groups my colleagues and I will be calling out this week appear somewhere in the research of these individuals, and I thank them.

There are also groups at work exposing the web of denial. One group is American Bridge 21st Century, founded by David Brock, which has launched RealKochFacts.com to "highlight the truth about the Koch agenda and what it means for working families in states around the country." American Bridge last month reported on the 48 groups that signed a letter attacking the U.S. Virgin Islands attorney general for serving a subpoena on the Koch-funded Competitive Enterprise Institute. According to RealKochFacts, "43 of the . . . groups that signed on the letter defending climate change denial are Koch linked—and 28 of the other organizations are either Koch front groups or the beneficiaries of regular Koch funding," groups such as the James Madison Institute, the John Locke Foundation, and the American Legislative Exchange Council, which we will talk of tomorrow. The Kochs blow their dog whistle and the hounds appear. American Bridge exposed them.

Then there is ProPublica, a group founded by Paul Steiger, "an independent nonprofit newsroom that produces investigative journalism in the public interest." Their nonpartisan reporting helped shed light on some of the ways that the "dark money" flows through the Koch brothers network and into politics, providing the elections backstop to this web of denial.

Climate Nexus is an organization "dedicated to highlighting the wide-ranging impacts of climate change and clean energy in the United States." They recently released an analysis of 20 years of the Wall Street Journal's editorial opinion on climate change. They found "a consistent pattern that overwhelmingly ignores the science, champions doubt and denial of both the science and effectiveness of action, and leaves readers misinformed about the consensus of science and of the risks of the threat." Among their findings, of 201 Wall Street Journal editorials related to climate science or policy dating back to 1997, not one explicitly acknowledges that fossil fuels cause climate change; and of the 122 columns published since 1997, just 4 accept as fact that fossil fuels cause climate change or endorse any policy to reduce emissions. Between April 2015 and May 2016, as global heat records were falling every month, the Journal published 100 climate-related op-eds, columns, and

editorials, of which 96 failed “to acknowledge the link between human activity and climate change.”

Their report points out that “the Wall Street Journal consistently highlights voices of those with vested interests in fossil fuels . . . presenting only the dismissive side of the climate discussion,” and calls this “a failure of journalistic responsibility.”

Into this failure of journalistic responsibility by the Wall Street Journal editorial page has stepped in the Partnership for Responsible Growth, which is running a 12-part ad series in the Wall Street Journal right on the editorial page to bring “accurate mainstream climate science to the readers of this publication’s opinion pages.”

The first one reads: “Exxon’s CEO says fossil fuels are raising temperatures and sea levels. Why won’t the Wall Street Journal?”

Their second one: “Carbon dioxide traps heat on Earth. If we can agree on that, we can have a conversation.”

The third says: “The earth has warmed. And we did it.”

The fourth says: “What goes up doesn’t come down. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions stay in the atmosphere for centuries.”

The fifth says: “Your assets are at risk. Beware the carbon bubble. Climate change poses huge financial risks to investors.”

“The free market solution to climate change” was ad No. 6, and the free market solution to climate change is “a market-driven policy that conservatives and liberals can both embrace because it promotes growth, creates jobs, and makes U.S. companies more competitive.” In other words, it is a revenue-neutral carbon fee.

The one after that says: “The Pentagon sees climate change as a serious national security threat.” And they do. It turns up in the Quadrennial Defense Reviews, and it turns up in the speeches of the leaders of the different armed services. It turns up in our intelligence reports. If the Pentagon sees climate change as a serious national security threat, shouldn’t you?

The most recent one says this: “Like any problem, climate change has solutions.”

These straightforward, broadly accepted statements may be the first honest words about climate change on the Wall Street Journal editorial page, so thank you to the partnership for getting them there.

The Union of Concerned Scientists is another group working to expose this web of denial. It has as its mission to put “rigorous, independent science to work to solve our planet’s most pressing problems.” The Union of Concerned Scientists recently signed a letter with 30 other leading national scientific organizations telling us in no uncertain terms that “climate change is occurring, and rigorous scientific research concludes that the greenhouse gases emitted by human activities are the primary driver.”

For over a decade, the Union of Concerned Scientists has worked to defend

science and expose misinformation and manufactured uncertainty. They published articles on how ExxonMobil used the Big Tobacco denial playbook to promote misinformation and doubt on climate science.

The Union for Concerned Scientists also recently published information about how Peabody coal funneled money into climate denial groups from 2014 to 2015. It is the fossil fuel industry that is feeding the web of denial.

Greenpeace does great work to expose the web of denial. Last December, Greenpeace UK staff posed as consultants for fossil fuel companies. While pretending to work for fossil fuel companies, they approached climate skeptic professors. Both of the professors agreed to conceal the sources of the funding they were offered and to write reports in support of fossil fuel use in developing countries and the benefits of carbon dioxide. You wonder why I call them payroll scientists.

Greenpeace’s work also exposed Donors Trust’s role as a conduit anonymizing financial donations between fossil fuel companies and climate-denial organizations and other U.S. fossil fuel funding used to hire scientists to testify for hearings, reports, and other public communications on climate science. Greenpeace was the group that released the documents that showed that one of those hired payroll scientists had accepted over \$1.2 million from fossil fuel interests, including the Charles G. Koch Foundation, but didn’t report those sources of his funding.

ExxonSecrets is another Greenpeace project, which visually explains the network—the web of organizations, lobbyists, and paid-for scientists who are part of this web of denial.

The Climate Investigations Center, founded in 2014 by Kert Davies, is another organization that monitors this web of denial—corporations, front groups, trade associations, individuals—that delays or denies the implementation of sound legislative solutions to climate change. Davies is no stranger to the web of denial. He launched two programs at Greenpeace: ExxonSecrets, which I mentioned, and PolluterWatch, which calls out organizations and individuals funded by fossil fuel interests to sow doubt about the validity of climate science and sabotage reasonable climate policies.

I thank all these investigative groups for their work.

There are also authors who are picking apart the web of denial. The executive director of Climate Nexus is Jeff Nesbit. Jeff is the former Director of Legislative and Public Affairs at the National Science Foundation and was a communications official at the White House during the administration of President George H.W. Bush. He recently published an investigative book titled “Poison Tea” that examines, as the title implies, how Big Oil and Big Tobacco invented the tea party and captured the GOP.

As a consultant for the Koch brothers front group Citizens for a Sound Economy, Nesbit was there in the room when Citizens for a Sound Economy, to quote him, “proposed an unholy alliance.” Here is how he describes it:

Philip Morris money commingled with Koch money to create antitax front groups in a handful of states that would battle any tax that moved. It would make no difference what kind of tax—the front groups could battle cigarette excise taxes in the northeast and refined-oil fees at the coasts. Any tax for any purpose was bad—and these front groups would tackle them all, with Philip Morris and the Kochs behind them.

Nesbit’s book shines a spotlight on how Rich Fink, the former president of the Charles G. Koch Charitable Foundation, together with Charles Koch “forged a partnership and created the framework for successful action in the political realm,” with this web of denial at the heart of that framework.

In her recent book, “Dark Money,” Jane Mayer describes in depth the system by which fossil fuel interests use their wealth to sabotage the American political process. First, she describes, they pay intellectuals in universities who come up with ideas friendly to the fossil fuel industry. Then they pay think tanks to transform these ideas into “marketable policies.”

An environmental lawyer, Mayer quotes a 2010 article for the New Yorker:

You take corporate money and give it to a neutral-sounding think tank [which] hires people with pedigrees and academic degrees who put out credible-seeming studies. But they all coincide perfectly with the economy interests of their funders.

Ms. Mayer describes this system as creating what she called the “think tank as disguised political weapon.” From there, they go on to phony grassroots organizations to propagate the message. It is a big web, this web of denial.

Steve Coll is the dean of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. He wrote the investigative book “Private Empire: ExxonMobil and American Power.” He reports Lee Raymond, chief executive of the company from 1993 to 2005, saying about Exxon, “I’m not a U.S. company, and I don’t make decisions based on what’s good for the U.S.” Gee, we hadn’t noticed.

Tellingly, Coll describes the influence environment of this web of denial and the fossil fuel industry role in it. This is a quote from his book:

This, increasingly, was the underlying structure of Washington policy debates: a kaleidoscope of overlapping and competing influence campaigns, some open, some conducted by front organizations, and some entirely clandestine. Strategists created layers of disguise, subtlety, and subterfuge—corporate-funded “grassroots” programs and purpose-built think tanks, as fingerprint-free as possible. In such an opaque and untrustworthy atmosphere, the ultimate advantage lay with any lobbyist whose goal was to manufacture confusion and perpetual controversy. On climate, this happened to be the oil industry’s position.

ExxonMobil, Coll reports, through its public affairs chief, “directed a network of allies and grantees in Washington who created havoc in the climate science debate.”

Which brings us to Inside Climate News’s series “Exxon: The Road Not Taken,” named a finalist for a 2016 Pulitzer Prize. Journalists Neela Banerjee, John Cushman, David Hasemyer, and Lisa Song compared what the fossil fuel giant knew about climate change—including results from its own cutting-edge research—with the falsehoods Exxon chose to sell to the public, usually through this web of denial. The series has surely honored the organization’s purpose “to cover the issues that aren’t being covered by the mainstream.”

On the Internet, Time Magazine recognized “DeSmogBlog,” which I mentioned, as one of the best blogs of 2011, describing it in these terms. Time Magazine said this:

Fossil-fuel companies have spent millions funding anti-global-warming think tanks, purposely creating a climate of doubt around the science. DeSmogBlog is the anecdote to the obfuscation.

In addition to its regular posts highlighting egregious examples of climate denial, DeSmogBlog also maintains a comprehensive disinformation research database to expose this web of denial.

The scholarship of all these academics, all these organizations, and all these authors—the detectives who are exposing the web of denial—has shined a bright light into its dark corners and eliminated its concerted effort to dupe the American public and sabotage climate action in America—all to protect the fossil fuel industry that funds it. It is sickening, but it is big.

The denial web is designed to be big and sophisticated enough that when you see its many parts, you are fooled into thinking it is not all the same beast, but it is—like the mythological Hydra, many heads, same beast. Professor Brulle likens what he called the climate countermovement to a stage

production. Here is how Professor Brulle described it:

Like a play on Broadway, the counter movement has stars in the spotlight—often prominent contrarian scientists or conservative politicians—but behind the stars is an organizational structure of directors, script writers and producers, in the form of conservative foundations. If you want to understand what’s driving this movement, you have to look at what’s going on behind the scenes.

The web of denial is what is behind the scenes. The web is so big because it has so much to protect. Remember, the International Monetary Fund has pegged the “effective subsidy” to the fossil fuel industry every year, just in the United States, at nearly \$700 billion. If you don’t like that number, you can do some math yourself. Just multiply the millions of tons of industry carbon emissions by the government’s own social cost of carbon. You still get to a huge subsidy.

The web is complex. It is organized into multiple levels. First, it cooks up polluter-friendly nonsense among academics that it funds in hundreds of universities. For its money, the web gets a little scholarly imprimatur to the propaganda. Then off that product goes to the think tanks that are the “disguised political weapon[s],” described by “Dark Money” author Jane Mayer, to be turned into policy. Then the AstroTurf organizations get cranked up to retail that polluter-friendly policy.

Let me wrap up with this observation. One thing needs to be absolutely clear about this web of denial. Truth is not their object. Truth is actually their adversary. The web has to mislead to be effective. It has to do what a Koch brothers operative described as the goal when this whole web was being developed. Here is what the Koch operative said:

It would be necessary [to] use ambiguous and misleading names, obscure the true agenda, and conceal the means of control.

Ambiguous and misleading names, obscure the true agenda, and conceal

the means of control that lead back to the fossil fuel industry. Welcome to the web of denial. Thank you to those who are working to expose it. It is a filthy thing in our democracy.

I yield the floor.

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#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:35 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, July 12, 2016, at 10 a.m.

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#### NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

##### IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

##### *To be lieutenant general*

LT. GEN. TIMOTHY M. RAY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

##### *To be lieutenant general*

LT. GEN. MARK C. NOWLAND

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

##### *To be lieutenant general*

MAJ. GEN. JERRY P. MARTINEZ

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

##### *To be lieutenant general*

MAJ. GEN. JERRY D. HARRIS, JR.

##### IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

##### *To be lieutenant general*

MAJ. GEN. PAUL M. NAKASONE