

about his dealings with his polluter patrons. But we should know. It is our job to know. The public should know—but not when it is fossil fuels.

President Trump also nominated Senator SESSIONS of Alabama as Attorney General, the position responsible for enforcing Federal environmental laws, like the Clean Air Act. He has invented the notion that the sky is not right in Alabama for solar power, saying, “In my home State of Alabama, one would think we have a good bit of sunshine, but in truth, we have a lot of clouds, and solar is not effective in our area.”

In a 2015 interview with the Family Research Council, Senator SESSIONS said he was not even sure that global warming exists. That same year in a hearing with the EPA Administrator, Senator SESSIONS claimed that “carbon pollution is CO<sub>2</sub>, and that’s not really a pollutant; that’s a plant food, and it doesn’t harm anybody except that it might include temperature increases.”

This is the man who wants to be Attorney General of the United States, who says he is going to follow the law. There is a Supreme Court case on point that says carbon is a pollutant. What does he say? Carbon pollution is CO<sub>2</sub>, and it is not really a pollutant. That is just plain not the law.

By the way, try telling my Rhode Island fishermen, whose stocks are disappearing from the warming waters off our coast, that CO<sub>2</sub> does not harm anybody. Trying telling it to Senator MERKLEY’s shell fishermen in Oregon who have had shellfish hatcheries wiped out by acidified seas coming in.

I asked Senator SESSIONS at the confirmation hearing whether, as Attorney General, he would make decisions in environmental cases based on scientifically accepted facts. Senator SESSIONS, to his credit, responded that he would and said that the “theory” of global warming “always struck me as plausible.”

Well, if he is confirmed, he will have to hold a lot of these fossil fuel companies accountable under our environmental laws, and I hope he will familiarize himself with the science that he committed to follow because I intend to hold him to his pledge.

Last, over at the Department of Energy, Trump chose former Governor Rick Perry of Texas, a one-time Presidential candidate who campaigned on eliminating altogether the Department

he now hopes to lead. Perry also does not accept the scientific consensus on climate change.

He has said:

Historically in Texas we’ve always had substantial periods of drought. World temperatures have also been changing for millennia. I truly believe the science is not settled on the issue of man-made global warming.

Well, he had not checked with Texas universities when he said that. He was the Governor of Texas. He has not even checked with his own universities.

I went down to Texas. I had a hearing with climate scientists from the major Texas universities. They came in and said what they knew: It is real. It is coming. We are already seeing it. It is important. We have to get ahead of it. It is caused by CO<sub>2</sub>. We can solve that. Let’s get to work.

It is not a complicated message. It is coming from his home-State universities.

Why would a Governor not follow the message of science developed and propagated by his own home-State universities? Why? Because the fossil fuel industry is so powerful that it will not let people recognize the truth. In the confirmation, Perry continued to hedge his bets. He said:

I believe the climate is changing. I believe some of it is naturally occurring, but some of it is also caused by man-made activity. The question is how do we address it in a thoughtful way that does not compromise economic growth, the affordability of energy or American jobs.

Well, if Governor Perry were actually being thoughtful about it, he would heed economic analyses like the Risky Business Project that show if we don’t address climate change in a serious way, worsening storms, rising seas, warmer temperatures, and other extreme weather events will cost the United States billions of dollars. Just ask the insurance industry. In fact, ask our own CBO who testified today that these are concerns we need to look at.

President Trump’s Cabinet nominees should be working for the American people. But their public records show that they are more likely to listen to the Koch brothers, to ExxonMobil, to Devon Energy, to Murray Energy, to the special interests and the fossil fuel industry, and that they will not listen to our military, they will not listen to our national labs, they will not listen to NASA, even though they have that

rover driving around on Mars and presumably know a little something about science. They are more likely to protect the profits of polluters than protect the health of Americans.

Mr. President, there is too much at stake here to let Washington sink into the polluters’ swamp. This whole scenario is an embarrassment to our country. It is going to be a lasting stain on our national reputation.

Bringing us back to this Congressional Review Act, here we go again. The Congressional Review Act action was brought to benefit coal company polluters at the expense of our natural heritage, our children, and our common good, just so they don’t have to clean up the mess they left behind, just so they don’t have to clean up ruined public streams. It is just the latest demonstration that in this Congress, fossil fuel is king, doesn’t care for our future, doesn’t care for anything but what goes into its own pockets, and it is a disgrace.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 11 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 9:25 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 2, 2017, at 11 a.m.

#### NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

##### SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

NEIL M. GORSUCH, OF COLORADO, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES, VICE ANTONIN SCALIA, DECEASED.

##### DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

ROD J. ROSENSTEIN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL, VICE SALLY QUILLIAN YATES, RESIGNED.

RACHEL L. BRAND, OF IOWA, TO BE ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY GENERAL, VICE DEREK ANTHONY WEST, RESIGNED.  
STEVEN ANDREW ENGEL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, VICE VIRGINIA A. SEITZ, RESIGNED.

#### CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate February 1, 2017:

##### DEPARTMENT OF STATE

REX W. TILLERSON, OF TEXAS, TO BE SECRETARY OF STATE.