

were both headed to Dillon, MT, for Boys State. They were both Boys State delegates. In fact, the keynote speaker that year was a newly elected U.S. Senator. He had been elected in the fall of 1978. This was June of 1979, at Boys State, and this Senator was named Max Baucus.

So 38 years later, that kid from Bozeman was serving on the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and that kid from Whitefish was testifying before that very same committee to be the next Secretary of the Interior.

You see, RYAN ZINKE was also captain of the soon-to-be undefeated State champion Whitefish Bulldogs football team. He was also president of his class.

After high school RYAN went on to the University of Oregon, where he was a full-scholarship, starting athlete for the Oregon Ducks football team, where he won numerous awards for both outstanding academic and athletic performance. He majored in geology, a subject matter that I know has served him well in serving the people of Montana.

RYAN ZINKE was a U.S. Navy SEAL commander whose assignments included the elite SEAL Team Six. In fact, part of that tenure was serving under General Mattis—now Secretary Mattis—as the commander of Joint Special Forces in Iraq at the very height of insurgent activity.

During his 23 years as a U.S. Navy SEAL, RYAN conducted special oper-

ations on four continents. RYAN ZINKE earned two Bronze Stars and many other awards for his service to our Nation. We should all be thankful to him, to his wife Lola, and their children for his service.

Following his retirement from the Navy, after more than two decades of honorable service to our Nation, RYAN came back home to Montana, and he continued to serve again, this time in our State government. RYAN ran for and won a seat in the State senate and then as Montana's sole Representative in the U.S. House.

For the past couple of years, RYAN has been a strong supporter of conservation, of responsible natural resources development, of LWCF, as well as increased recreational access to our public lands.

RYAN grew up 30 minutes from Glacier National Park. I grew up about 60 minutes from Yellowstone National Park. We both understand the importance of our national parks.

RYAN is intimately familiar with the vast jurisdiction of the Department of Interior because he has lived it. He has seen his own hometown suffer due to bad government policies that hurt rural communities like Libby, where the logging industry has been decimated; like Malta, like Colstrip, which depend on our public lands for access.

Above all, RYAN is a Montanan who grew up on our public lands. He knows that we must strike the right balance between conservation and responsible energy development, and he under-

stands more than most that these one-size-fits-all policies from Washington, DC, never work for real America. The bureaucrats in Washington, DC, often-times can't even find Montana on a map.

RYAN ZINKE is whip smart. He is a guy you want in your corner while you are fighting in the streets of Fallujah for your life or you are fighting on the floor of Congress for your livelihood. He listens. He fights for what he believes in. I have absolutely no doubt he will be a fighter for America; he will be a fighter for our public lands as the next Secretary of the Interior. So I look forward to confirming RYAN ZINKE within the next day and a half.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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 8 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, February 28, 2017, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate February 27, 2017:

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

WILBUR L. ROSS, JR., OF FLORIDA, TO BE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE.