

some of our public lands to give a tax break to millionaires.

It is not that this is the only issue. As I said, there is the notion that the administration is taking our public lands and trying to turn them over to be developed, the notion that they are giving land to coal companies so they can harvest coal off of Federal lands and then not charging them a royalty rate which is compensatory and fair to the American public. We tried to fix that. Obviously, this Secretary of the Interior is trying to roll that back and give coal companies a sweetheart deal.

Now we have an EPA Administrator who, basically, has had a mining company CEO walk into his office and say: By the way, we want to develop a mine at the headwaters of Bristol Bay in Alaska, home of the largest salmon run and probably responsible for 50 percent of sockeye salmon around the world. Immediately after the mining executive left the EPA Administrator's office, the EPA Administrator sent out a letter saying: Let's toss aside Clean Water Act safeguards to protect Bristol Bay, move forward on this idea of allowing the mine application to proceed.

So much for due process, so much for preserving what has taken the American public more than a hundred years to put together so that the public can recreate on public lands—so, yes, hunting, fishing, Native American, and recreational communities are all upset.

What is the latest play? Let's stick in the budget resolution language providing for the opening of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas development—something that has been so precious to the United States of America—basically a Serengeti for wildlife, an intact arctic ecosystem that doesn't exist in other places in the United States. Yet people are trying what I call a sneak attack, just like they did 12 years ago, just as people tried to open up the Arctic refuge for development before and on its own merits couldn't get it enacted into law. They put it in the Defense appropriation bill, thinking that there is no way people could vote against money for the troops—that is how we can get the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge open for mineral development.

But it didn't work then, and it is not going to work now. The American people are not for legislative sneak attacks, backdoor ways to move legislation that could never pass on its own merits. I know the President wants to get a big budget package together, get healthcare in there, throw in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge drilling, hope that people can't vote no, and move forward. I would say, if this is such a wonderful idea, let it stand on its own merits.

This area, as we can see, is a very pristine part of the United States. And now some people are saying: Oh, well, we could do some sort of drilling. Why do you want to have drilling in a pristine wildlife refuge? When people say:

Oh, well, there are refuges that have had drilling—if that was prior to it being declared a refuge, yes, but this is a pristine area that we decided to set aside. Why? Because, as I mentioned, it is a Serengeti, it is an arctic Serengeti of caribou and other wildlife, over 200 different species of birds that come to the area, to say nothing about the population of polar bears in the region. Why do we want to destroy this? It is not that we are somehow thinking that we are going to get oil reserves out of it for our Nation. In fact, the issue is really, with the price of oil and the oil export market that has now been created, oil produced here is going on to the larger world market. So why is it that we think this is going to help us in the United States?

People are trying to use a budget process to increase the deficit by \$1.5 trillion to pay for tax cuts for wealthy people. They are willing to degrade the environment as a way to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy. I don't agree to it. I don't think the American people agree to it. They know that this iconic wildlife refuge has been attacked many times. They know that every time, someone has had to come up with some backdoor way of trying to get the refuge opened. I think my colleagues should understand and take note that these have all failed. They failed in the past because this idea is not the brightest, most brilliant idea in America. It is not the thing that is going to turn the U.S. economy around. It is not the thing that is going to help us get tax reform. It is not an idea that is even going to help us with the bipartisan effort to move forward on an energy package. If you think about it, we passed an energy bill out of here last Congress with 85 votes. If this was something that could be done in that package, it would have been done in that package.

I know that we are going to have more oil and gas exploration in Alaska. I know there is going to be more exploration in many parts of the Arctic. There is going to be a rush of Arctic nations to look at oil drilling off of our coast and in the Arctic Circle. The United States should get ready and participate in those discussions. I am first in line to say that we need a fleet of icebreakers to be prepared and be ready for the advent and the change in the Arctic. There will be many discussions about where responsible drilling should take place. I guarantee you, even if you opened up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, it would not stop this debate about more drilling in Alaska.

Let's remember that we set aside this pristine area for a very specific purpose: to keep the uniqueness that has existed in this part of the world—just a very small piece of it. Continue to have the debate in other parts of Alaska and in the Arctic about what the development of oil resources are going to be.

I encourage my colleagues not to fall prey to another backdoor attempt at

trying to open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Don't fall for a cynical bill where somehow somebody is going to try to cram everything in it and say: You can't vote against it because it has too many things for your State. Let's do the work that it takes to do bipartisan work—work together, agree on the things that we can agree on, and move forward. I guarantee you, our energy policy will be better in America for doing that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). If no one yields time, then time will be charged equally.

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks on October 18, 2017, that it be in order to call up the following amendments; that the time until 3 p.m. be for debate on the amendments, equally divided between the managers or their designees; and that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed, with no second-degree amendments in order prior to the votes: Hatch amendment No. 1144 and Sanders amendment No. 1119.

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

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, Senators should be prepared for additional amendment votes to occur during the series at 3 p.m.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

● Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 218, on the confirmation of David Joel Trachtenberg to be a Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense. Had I been present, I would have voted nay.

Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 219, on the motion to proceed to H. Con. Res. 71. Had I been present, I would have voted nay.●

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.