

with drill rigs to go explore all on ice. They do that for about 4 months during the winter, then they leave. When the spring comes, there is literally zero impact on the tundra—zero impact.

Yet some of my colleagues, particularly my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, have been coming down here for weeks talking about issues with regard to Alaska and the environment and energy. With all due respect, they are using talking points that are about 40 years old.

When we had the hearing recently, the ranking member of the ENR Committee said nothing has changed. Well, everything has changed—the technology, the high standards. The only thing that has not changed are some of the talking points the other side has been using for the last 40 years.

Let me just give you one example. On the bill the Energy and Natural Resources Committee recently put up with regard to exploration in the 1002 area—this is all of ANWR, I believe about the size of Wyoming. This is the wilderness area of ANWR. This is the 1002 area, the coastal area of ANWR that was set aside by Congress to look at the possibility of exploring a very resource-rich area of the country. This red dot—you can barely see it—is a surface area of 2,000 acres—2,000 acres. That is what the bill would say. It would limit development of this area to 2,000 acres.

For a little perspective, Dulles airport is 12,000 acres. This would be about 10 percent of Dulles airport. That is it. That is the surface footprint. Yet my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have been coming out and talking about millions and millions of acres, so it is important that we push back.

Here is the big issue for those in Congress who want to continually shut down resource development in Alaska that they never acknowledge: When you disallow investment in Alaska, which has the highest standards in the world on the environment, you don't end up protecting the environment. You just drive capital investment, exploration, and development activities to jurisdictions in the world with little to no environmental protection—countries like Nigeria, Venezuela, Iran, Russia, many of which are our geopolitical foes.

In conclusion, what we are looking to do on the Senate floor with regard to producing more energy for this country is going to help with regard to jobs, it is going to help with regard to energy security, it is going to help with regard to national security, and, yes, it is going to help with regard to protecting the global environment because we have the highest standards in the world, and we do it right in Alaska.

If we are not doing it here, there will be activities in other countries, other jurisdictions where they don't care about the environment the way we do. So we need to move forward on this important element of the energy and natural resource bill that was introduced

today in the committee. I encourage all of my colleagues to support that bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I was listening carefully to the remarks of my friend from Alaska, and I am very much supportive of the effort to open up this small footprint in the Alaskan wilderness. It struck me that my friend from Alaska is right on point when he said the only talking points that haven't changed are the ones on the other side from 40 years ago. The advances in technology are truly impressive, and the opportunity not only for Alaska but for America to realize these natural resources is something very important to the country. I thank my friend for pointing that out.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 373, 374, 375, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 440, 441, 442, 459, and 460.

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

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Robert M. Duncan, Jr., of Kentucky, to be United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky for the term of four years; Charles E. Peeler, of Georgia, to be United States Attorney for the Middle District of Georgia for the term of four years; Bryan D. Schroder, of Alaska, to be United States Attorney for the District of Alaska for the term of four years; Scott C. Blader, of Wisconsin, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin for the term of four years; John R. Lausch, Jr., of Illinois, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois for the term of four years; J. Douglas Overbey, of Tennessee, to be United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Tennessee for the term of four years; Mark A. Klaassen, of Wyoming, to be United States Attorney for the District of Wyoming for the term of four years; William C. Lamar, of Mississippi, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Mississippi for the term of four years; John F. Bash, of Texas, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Texas for the term of four years; Erin Angela Nealy Cox, of Texas, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Texas for the term of four years; R. Andrew Murray, of North Carolina, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina for the term of four years; Matthew G. T. Martin, of North Carolina, to be United States Attorney for the Middle District of North Carolina for the term of four years; and

Christina E. Nolan, of Vermont, to be United States Attorney for the District of Vermont for the term of four years.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Duncan, Peeler, Schroder, Blader, Lausch, Overbey, Klaassen, Lamar, Bash, Nealy Cox, Murray, Martin, and Nolan nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 412.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Peter Hoekstra, of Michigan, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Hoekstra nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.