

habitat for bald eagles, white-tailed deer, and striped bass. The future of our coastal economy depends on recreational access, fishing, and tourism, which are now potentially at risk because of this ill-advised decision to open the coastline off of Delaware and the rest of the mid-Atlantic to potential oil and gas exploration and production.

My colleagues know that I make an effort to promote pragmatic and bipartisan ideas. It is one of my top priorities, day in and day out, to work across the aisle and do what is right for our constituents and for the United States.

Let me be clear. My view is not based on an anti-oil or anti-natural gas message. I support an “all of the above” energy strategy and have advanced legislation that will embrace an “all of the above” energy strategy, and I acknowledge there are many places in the United States where we can, and do, safely produce these resources, both onshore and offshore. But what if we happen to face a spill of the scale and size of Deepwater Horizon?

This is an overlay of the footprint of the 2010 oil disaster of the Deepwater Horizon and how it spread to impact the gulf coastline. It is perhaps a little hard to see here, but the State of Delaware and New Jersey and its fragile coastline are underneath that footprint. It suggests how we might end up facing dramatic impacts, negative impacts on tourism and fishing that depend on clean coastlines to support tens of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars of economic activity in my home State.

If we are going to think seriously about doing this, we need to think about the impacts. We need to ask whether the costs outweigh the benefits. When it comes to the Trump-Zinke plan to drill off the coast of Delaware, I am here to tell you that the potential costs dramatically outweigh the benefits. As you can see in this graphic, a spill the size of the Deepwater Horizon could devastate all of our beach communities and protected wildlife areas in Delaware and the region.

Again, protecting our coastlines, an idea supported by scientists and coastal residents alike, should not be a partisan issue. In Delaware alone, multiple city councils, all up and down our coast, have openly opposed offshore drilling through letters and resolutions they have sent to me and the rest of our congressional delegation.

Coastal lawmakers from both parties have opposed offshore drilling. I know for a fact the same is happening in virtually every other coastal State potentially impacted by this unwise decision. These are the people we should be listening to—the people who don’t just visit the coast for a week in the summer but who live on it, who rely on it, who have built their lives and their local economy around it.

Instead, as this decision shows, the Trump administration is prioritizing

the oil and gas industry and partisan politics over those of independent scientists, coastal residents, and the elected officials who speak for our coastal communities. That was made painfully clear when the Republican Governor of Florida, a close ally of the President, petitioned to shield just Florida from potential oil and gas exploration and production.

Sure enough, Florida promptly got a public promise from Secretary Zinke that its coastlines would be spared. I am sure Florida’s coastline is beautiful. In fact, I visited Florida’s coastline, and I can tell you it is beautiful. But guess what; so is Delaware’s. We deserve to be able to protect our coastline just as much as Floridians do. I invite Secretary Zinke to once again come to Delaware but to instead see the coastline and see these fragile resources and see what they have to offer for wildlife, for conservation, for fishing, for hunting, and for tourism.

Secretary Zinke promising to exempt Florida is the Trump administration deciding which States have to deal with oil and gas drilling based purely on partisan, political considerations. I think the state of our coastal communities and local economies shouldn’t be auctioned off to the highest bidder and shouldn’t be subject to partisan politics. Instead, they should be protected based on science and based on the views of coastal communities.

I am here today to voice my profound disappointment in this blatant neglect of local voices and the well-being of individual States and coastal communities. I came to the floor to fight for my State and to raise the local voices I have heard from our coastal communities. Our coastlines are just too fragile and too vital and too important to let partisan politics get in the way of their future.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:29 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

#### CHILD PROTECTION IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2017—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

(The remarks of Mr. GRASSLEY pertaining to the introduction of S. 2386 are printed in today’s RECORD under

“Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, it is no secret that our country faces a major healthcare crisis and, in fact, a dysfunctional healthcare system.

We have some 30 million people who have no health insurance, and that number is going to go up in the coming year. We have even more people who are underinsured, with high deductibles and copayments. Our people pay the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs, which means that millions of people who go to the doctor to get a prescription are simply unable to afford the bill. In fact, the description of that is the definition of a dysfunctional, failing healthcare system.

In the midst of all of that, there is another particular crisis dealing with primary healthcare, and that is that even when people do have health insurance in many parts of our country, they are finding it very hard to go to a doctor and to get in to a doctor to treat the ailments that they have. We fall behind many other countries in terms of our lack of emphasis on primary healthcare, which should be the heart and soul of any strong healthcare system. The bottom line is that when you get sick, you should be able to get to the doctor when you need to and not have to wait weeks and months in order to do so.

In the midst of a failing primary healthcare system, there is one very strong bright spot, and that is that for many decades now, in every State in this country, we have had community health centers run by the people themselves—democratically run—addressing the healthcare needs of those given communities. Today, in America, we have about 27 million people—27 million men, women, and children—who are accessing community health centers. In my own State of Vermont, one out of four Vermonters gets their primary healthcare through a community health center.

These centers do more than provide primary healthcare. They also provide dental care, an issue that is too often ignored when we talk about the healthcare crisis. They provide mental health counseling, which is more important now than perhaps it has ever been because of the opioid and heroin epidemic our country is experiencing. Equally important, they provide low-cost prescription drugs at a time when so many Americans cannot afford the medicines they need. That is what community health centers do, and they