

bringing bills to the floor. It means having a free and open amendment process. That is legislating.

I couldn't agree more. We came here to craft legislation. We came here to take tough votes. That process may take more time, more work, and more cooperation, but it would lead to better outcomes for everyone, and, most importantly in this case, it would lead to better outcomes for Indian Country.

Let there be no mistake. Indian Country loses when we give in to partisan rancor. We have seen this play out before. When the trillion-dollar tax cut was rammed through this Chamber without any input from my Democratic colleagues, what happened? Indian Country and Indian Tribes were entirely left out in the cold. There was not a single provision for Indian Tribes in a trillion-dollar package.

On the other hand, we know what happens when bipartisanship prevails. Senator MURKOWSKI, my chairman on the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, and I were able to deliver big wins for Indian Country in the fiscal year 2018 omnibus. We increased funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs by \$204 million, and we increased funding for the Indian health programs by another \$500 million—that is almost three-quarters of a billion dollars—because Democrats and Republicans decided it was better to work for Indian Country instead of against each other.

As anyone in Indian Country will tell you, Indian affairs issues transcend partisan politics. Native policy issues go to the core of the trust responsibility, to the government-to-government relationships enshrined in our Constitution and countless treaties. Sadly, that is not true today.

I wanted a better deal for Indian Country. Indian Country had to wait 10 years for today's vote. We should have had a full opportunity to bring other

issues onto the table and to be added onto the bill in the form of amendments. Housing, public safety, self-determination, and self-governance are equally deserving of the Senate's consideration. We could have considered legislation that would do more to unite us than divide us, like the Native American Housing and Self-Determination Act, which expired in 2013. This important program benefits Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Alaska Natives.

In my home State of New Mexico, as in most of Indian Country, NAHASDA is the primary source of funding for Tribal housing needs and development. For instance, in Isleta Pueblo, 44 percent of households are low-income. Without NAHASDA funding, the Pueblo would be unable to address this crippling need. Reauthorizing NAHASDA would provide Tribes like Isleta the certainty they require to meet current and future housing needs. Instead, we only voted on one Tribal priority, the Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act. I voted yes on cloture. As a longtime advocate for Indian Country, I understand and respect how integral Tribal sovereignty is to Tribal governance, and I am and always will be an unwavering supporter of Tribal sovereignty.

I am also a supporter of strong labor protections and the working families they protect in New Mexico and around the country. I support collective bargaining and am against right-to-work laws that are being pushed around the country.

The tough issue here is that for decades Tribes were treated as States and local governments and not subject to the National Labor Relations Board. Recent Board and court decisions have changed that in some parts of the country but not others, resulting in a patchwork of regulations. The previous administration proposed a compromise

approach, but neither side embraced it. I hope that changes. But no matter the outcome today, I will continue to fight for Indian Country and seek new opportunities to enact longstanding Tribal legislative priorities.

I close with past advice from my colleague, the majority leader: "If you want fewer fights, give the other side a say." I couldn't agree more, and I urge the majority leader to give us and Indian Country a say.

---

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 7:14 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, April 17, 2018, at 10 a.m.

---

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
RONNY LYNN JACKSON, OF TEXAS, TO BE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, VICE DAVID J. SHULKIN.

---

DISCHARGED NOMINATION

The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs was discharged from further consideration of the following nomination under the authority of the order of the Senate of 01/07/2009 and the nomination was placed on the Executive Calendar:

\*HANNIBAL WARE, OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION.

\*Nominee has committed to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.