

I also want to thank Senators CORKER and MENENDEZ for their assistance in advancing this bill through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a litany of saints who I think should all be mentioned: Senator RUBIO, Senator CARDIN, Senator YOUNG, Senator SULLIVAN, Senator PERDUE, Senator GRAHAM, Senator COONS, Senator KAINE, Senator PETERS, Senator WICKER—all cosponsors of this bill, perfectly bipartisan.

I also want to thank Representatives MCCARTHY and HOYER and NEAL and ROYCE and CASTRO and YOHO for their work as well. That list of Members is not only indicative of the level of bipartisanship there is in Congress but also on U.S.-Asia policy. This bill would not have been possible without them, and it would not have been possible without, again, the wonderful staffs we are blessed to have working on these issues, who spent many long hours advocating for key American interests and values in this legislation.

This bill represents a generational policy framework to enhance U.S. leadership in the Indo-Pacific and is a demonstration of American commitment to a free and open region, as well as the rules-based international order.

Zach Hosford and Mark Appleton on my staff dedicated the last year to working and partnering with the Senator. So I am pleased that the Gardner-Markey Asia Reassurance Initiative will pass the Senate today, and I look forward to its being sent on to the President's desk.

I again thank Senator GARDNER for all of his incredible work.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

RECOGNIZING THE EAST MISSISSIPPI LIONS, NJCAA CHAMPS

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I rise for a long overdue floor speech to recognize a school in my home State of Mississippi that continues to win national football championships, five, in fact, over the past 10 years.

I can assure my friends from Alabama that I am not trying to steal the thunder from the Crimson Tide. I am here to recognize the undefeated East Mississippi Community College Lions, who have become their own football dynasty and are the reigning National Junior College Athletic Association champs. NJCAA is commonly known as JUCO.

What makes the East Mississippi Community College football program special is the grit and determination that fuels its success. Some of these players are truly playing for their lives. They are the comeback kids, rising above adversity to get back into the game. The stories of these players are so inspirational that they won over the hearts of Americans in the Netflix documentary series, "Last Chance U."

In the first two seasons of that program, viewers had a prime spot in the

bleachers to watch East Mississippi's 2015 and 2016 football seasons. I will not reveal any spoilers, but the Lions have undeniable star power.

One of the compelling themes throughout the show is the belief in second chances. Past misbehavior or poor grades do not define these players or their futures. They have legions of fans cheering for their success and for the next touchdown. They have introduced to the Nation, if not the world, the small Mississippi town of Scooba, population 700. According to the show's trailer, "One of football's best recruiting grounds is a place you've never heard of," but now the secret is out.

I would like to congratulate the East Mississippi Lions as this year's JUCO champions and recognize the leadership of the head coach, Buddy Stephens, who only this afternoon was named National Coach of the Year for junior college football.

I also want to congratulate East Mississippi's six All-Americans this year, which was the most for any school except Iowa Western, which tied with them. These All-Americans include first team All-American wide receiver Dontario Drummond and second team running back Deon McIntosh, offensive lineman LaQuinston Sharp, and defensive lineman Everitt Cunningham. Honorable mentions went to quarterback Messiah deWeaver and return specialist DJ Clayton. There have been 32 All-Americans during Coach Stephens' 11-season tenure with the Lions.

Many East Mississippi players go on to 4-year universities and even pro football teams. LaGarrette Blount, running back for the Detroit Lions and a three-time Super Bowl champion, was a former East Mississippi Lion, and so was defensive back C.J. Reavis, who plays for the Jacksonville Jaguars. Other alumni currently playing in the NFL are defensive lineman Jarran Reed for the Seattle Seahawks, Za'Darius Smith for the Baltimore Ravens, Denico Autry for the Indianapolis Colts, and D.J. Jones for the San Francisco 49ers.

Although there is no question about East Mississippi's skills on the field, the team also earned the title of being the Football Academic Team of the Year among junior colleges, showing that the work goes far past the end zone.

Our State and Nation are proud of East Mississippi Community College's success. I am confident their football dynasty will continue, and I look forward to cheering them on to other championships in future years.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). The Senator from Delaware.

U.N. FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise today with two of our colleagues, Senator ED MARKEY and Senator JEFF

MERKLEY, to reflect on the 24th session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that concluded just this last weekend in the country of Poland.

This important conference, which is better known as COP24, refers to Conference of Parties 24. I think they have been meeting for 24 years. They met there for 2 weeks as leaders from nearly 200 nations, working to reach an agreement on how our world will actually implement the Paris climate agreement.

The stakes could not be higher. I am not one, as my colleagues know, given to hyperbole, but the future of our planet and the future of our children and grandchildren may well hang in the balance.

Was it a positive step forward that the international community could come together and agree to meaningful action to combat climate change on a global scale by finally getting to implement the Paris Agreement? Yes, it was.

Having said that, this agreement is not perfect, they know it, and we know it. No one is pretending that it is. It falls well short of the steps that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the IPCC, determined just 1 month ago are needed to avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change over the next decade.

The entire world needs to do even more to address this problem. That includes setting much more aggressive emissions reduction targets going forward to address the challenges of climate change in the years ahead. While we certainly can and should be doing more, though, this agreement is cause for hope that bolder future agreements are achievable, but reaching bolder future agreements is going to require real leadership from leaders and from nations across the world. After all, leadership is the biggest key to success for almost any organization or endeavor, and that includes saving this planet.

Unfortunately, our President, along with many in his administration, continue to reject climate science and deny the reality and the magnitude of the challenges we are facing. Well, here is the reality.

According to NOAA, the United States experienced 16 extreme weather-related disasters in 2017 that exceeded \$1 billion apiece. In the past year alone, Americans paid \$306 billion in damages due to storm surges, flooding, wildfires, crop freezes, and droughts—a new record.

Thirteen of our Nation's leading scientific Federal agencies recently reported to us in a National Climate Assessment that if we do nothing to address our climate emissions, today's extreme weather-related events will pale in comparison to what lies ahead.

Here is a sampling of what we can look forward to if we do nothing—if we don't do enough. In the future, we can continue to expect rainfall or precipitation as measured by the foot, not by