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It is the year 2060. You and your grandchildren are watching the charred Earth slowly recede from view within your space capsule. "What happened?" they ask. You breathe a deep sigh fraught with regret and anger as you reluctantly tell the story of the Earth's demise. "It all began in the 1970s . . ."

When Exxon researchers learned that the burning of fossil fuels influences climate, they hid their findings from the public. Other fossil fuel companies were complicit in denying the existence of the greenhouse effect for decades. Today, the oil and coal industries are still the main drivers of carbon emissions, and \$20 billion in annual U.S. government subsidies perpetuates our dependence on them.

"Our hunger for oil and coal was insatiable. We ate and ate, but it poisoned us. We loved our cars and our plastics, but they killed us . . ."

The use of fossil fuels for transportation, electricity, and plastic production releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, trapping heat. Rising global temperatures and more severe and frequent natural disasters have already devastated human lives. In as few as twelve years, rising sea levels and droughts will lead to severe food shortages, heightened political instability, and widespread poverty. A recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report found that limiting global temperature increase to 1.5°C, the target of the Paris Agreement, will still cause \$54 trillion in damage.

"Back in Vermont, I was a teenager when I first noticed the unbearable summer heat that made breathing difficult and forgot what a white Christmas felt like. These were merely inconveniences, but that all change in a few years. The searing wildfires and crippling hurricanes that made headlines in California and the Carolinas soon became commonplace. Entire cities vanished from the map because they were submerged underwater. Could we have avoided this?"

The efforts of individuals—taking shorter showers, using public transit, going vegetarian—can only do so much, but it's large companies that wield influence over our government and society. A carbon tax that fines businesses for pollution is an effective method of keeping them in check. It's a regenerative economic measure that could fund renewable energy research and implementation.

However, ordinary citizens still must help avoid catastrophe. In the end, our politicians and business leaders have a say in our nation's energy infrastructure, but it is our duty to convince them to adopt necessary changes. We must write to our members of Congress and tell them to resist corporate power. We must elect officials who will champion a carbon tax, and we must fulfill our end of the deal in giving up

fossil fuels for renewable energy sources. So, what story will we tell our grandchildren? A lament of despair and regret, or a tale of teamwork and hope? The decisions we make today will provide the answer. Breaking our fossil fuel addiction and investing in renewables are drastic yet necessary efforts. The best time for action was forty years ago, but the next best time is now.●

#### TRIBUTE TO HARDY MCCOLLUM

● Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Judge Hardy McCollum, probate judge and chairman of the Tuscaloosa County Commission, who retired earlier this month after 42 years of honorable service. Judge McCollum will be long remembered for his remarkable career and his dedication to the rule of law.

A native of Tuscaloosa, Hardy grew up selling peanuts, popcorn, and programs at Denny Stadium, which is now known as Bryant-Denny Stadium. Following graduation from Tuscaloosa High School, Hardy married his high school sweetheart, Juanita. They both went on to earn their degrees from the University of Alabama.

Following college, Hardy began working in Tuscaloosa and serving as an active member of the the U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce, commonly known as the Jaycees. He has always told me that his first political experience was campaigning for me in the 1970 Alabama State Senate race.

In his first run for office in 1976, Hardy was elected to the position of probate judge. Following his initial election, he was reelected to six more 6-year terms, serving in the esteemed role from 1977 to 2019, a total of 42 years.

During his time as probate judge and chairman of the Tuscaloosa County Commission, Hardy also served as president of the Association of County Commissions of Alabama, the National Association of Counties Transportation Steering Committee, and the National College of Probate Judges. Additionally, he held the role of chairman of the West Alabama Planning and Development Council, the Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, and the University of Alabama Commerce and Business Administration Executive Society.

Outside of his professional career, Hardy has volunteered over the years with the Boys and Girls Club of America, Boy Scouts of America, and United Way. He also served as chairman of the Heart Association and the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Foundation.

Another noteworthy accomplishment in Hardy's career is that he has been the longest serving probate judge in the State of Alabama, and at the time of his first election in 1976, he was the youngest probate judge in the State. His dedication and service have been immensely valued in the State and will be greatly missed.

It is with great pleasure that I join Hardy's family and friends in recognizing his accomplishments. Our State and community have been fortunate to have a leader like Hardy McCollum, and I wish Hardy the very best as he transitions into the next chapter of his life.●

#### 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF COLSTRIP, MONTANA

● Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize an important anniversary in Montana's history: the city of Colstrip is celebrating its 20th anniversary this month.

For decades, Colstrip has been the engine that powers Montana and the Pacific Northwest, carrying on a long and proud tradition of energy production in our State and employing thousands of Montanans.

Colstrip represents the very best of our State. The hard-working folks here are unafraid to get their hands dirty, working each day to provide power—and the economic opportunity that comes with it—to people in Montana and across the region.

In this transition, Colstrip has boldly looked to the future, working to strengthen the local economy so its citizens' children and grandchildren can have the same opportunities afforded to the older generations. The city motto, "Tomorrow's Town, Today," befits a community working once again to define itself for the decades to come.

I am proud of Colstrip and its citizens, led by Mayor John Williams. Their civic passion, their dedication to each other, and their resilience in the face of change will ensure this community remains strong for years to come.●

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:05 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 790. An act to provide for a pay increase in 2019 for certain civilian employees of the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

#### MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 311. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives and abortion or attempted abortion.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated: