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Senate

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Chad A. Readler, of Ohio, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute as in morning business.

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

THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, yesterday, I came to the floor to speak about the Green New Deal. I compared it to the New Deal of the 1930s.

I mentioned before that the New Deal of the 1930s is not something that we ought to be emulating.

The National Recovery Administration of the 1930s was a key feature of that New Deal. It was designed to eliminate competition, with industry, government, and labor all working together.

The National Recovery Administration turned out hundreds of codes, regulating every aspect of business. Small businesses struggled to comply, job creation stalled, and prices stayed high.

When big business and big government get together to write regulations, hard-working Americans suffer. You don't create jobs.

So I hope you will take a look at how complicated the Green New Deal is, besides costing \$93 trillion in the future.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate confirmed one of President Trump's well-qualified nominees to the Federal bench and advanced the nomination of another.

That is what we will do today. With Allison Rushing's nomination confirmed, we will vote later today on the nomination of Chad Readler and then turn to consideration of Eric Murphy to join him on the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Mr. Murphy is a graduate of Miami University and the University of Chicago Law School and now serves as the State solicitor of Ohio. He has held two prestigious clerkships on our Federal courts, including for Justice Anthony Kennedy on the U.S. Supreme Court.

So I hope our colleagues will join me in advancing another wise choice for our Nation's judiciary.

THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Mr. President, on another matter, in recent months our Nation has watched the Democratic Party take a sharp and abrupt left turn toward socialism.

A flawed ideology that has been rejected time and again across the world is now driving the marquee policy proposals of the new House Democratic majority, and nothing encapsulates this as clearly as the huge, self-inflicted, national wound the Democrats are agitating for called the Green New Deal.

Let's review a few of the greatest hits in this particular proposal.

Democrats have decided that every building in America needs to be either overhauled or replaced altogether. They are putting homeowners and small business owners on alert. The all-

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God our shield, the giver of victory and honor, shine on us with Your kindness that brings a rich harvest of joy.

Today, guide our lawmakers with Your spirit and lead them by the power of Your prevailing Providence. May they trust You completely and permit You to remove obstacles from the road ahead.

Lord, train them in Your school of humility so they will walk safely and never stumble. Help them to remember that all efforts to defend themselves will fail without Your grace and mercy. May they not trust in their own strength and ingenuity but instead lean on You the God of might and miracles.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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knowing central planners here in the Nation's capital are raring to remodel the entire country.

Up next: ending all fossil fuel and nuclear energy production. Forget about coal and all of the jobs it supports in my State of Kentucky and around the country. Forget about the oil and natural gas industry and all of those jobs as well. The list goes on.

Oh, by the way, forget about nuclear, too—proving that this proposal doesn't even pretend to be a serious effort to reduce carbon emissions. It is just a statement of what sounds trendy in New York and San Francisco.

Anyone seriously concerned about carbon would know that nuclear power generates a majority of America's carbon-free electricity. You would think the carbon police would be glad that from 1995 to 2016, American nuclear power met the emissions equivalent of keeping 3 billion cars off the road.

Let me say that again. You would think the carbon police would be glad that from 1995 to 2016, American nuclear power met the emissions equivalent of keeping 3 billion cars off the road.

Oh, but alas, these Democrats will not let facts get in the way of what is fashionable.

Besides, why should America bother being a net exporter of energy when we could leave all of that economic potential to competitors like China?

Naturally, as background documents explained, this means eliminating all combustion engines—cars, lawn mowers, commercial airliners. Everything must go. Everything must go.

By the way, that background really helps clarify another goal behind all of this. It is providing "economic security," even those who are "unwilling to work."

All of this and more can be ours for the low, low price of a staggering expansion of centralized government and—wait for it—upward of a mere \$93 trillion. Ninety-three trillion is more than every dollar our Federal Government has spent in its entire history to date—combined. It is more than the combined annual GDP of every nation on Earth.

As our colleague Senator BLUNT and the policy committee have pointed out, this amount of money could rebuild the entire Interstate Highway System every single year—just for the heck of it—for 250 years, and you would still have a little left over—a little left over.

Or maybe Americans would rather have something nicer to drive on the roads we already have. For the comparatively cheap price of just \$66 trillion, I am told the government could buy every American a Ferrari. What a great idea. For the comparatively cheap price of just \$66 trillion, the government could buy every American a Ferrari. But, of course, everyone would have to get their driving in before Democrats ban the internal combustion engine.

To be clear, \$93 trillion is just one number and one attempt to estimate the pricetag of this fantasy novel. The proposal is so lacking in details and math that it is almost impossible for analysts to even know where to begin trying to connect it to the real world.

Let's talk about where this money would come from. That is always a question worth asking.

If we spread that \$93 trillion out over 10 years and over every American household, we get about \$65,000 per household—\$65,000 every year for every household. The median income in this country is around \$60,000. So, like any good socialist plan, I am sure we would hear a lot about soaking the rich.

We always do. We would hear that wealthy Americans could pay for this whole thing, if only they were sufficiently civic-minded, but, of course, that is not even close to accurate. A huge share of the bill would land at the feet of the American middle class. There are not enough billionaires—there are not enough billionaires to pay the trillions needed for this massive government plan.

Even if Washington decided the IRS should grab every single cent of adjusted gross income above \$1 million, all of it taken, it would only bring in a little over one-tenth—one-tenth—of what the Green New Deal is estimated to cost every year. Take all the money away from the millionaires, it would only bring in a little over one-tenth of what the Green New Deal is estimated to cost every year.

In fact, in order to break even on this proposal alone, the Federal Government would have to take \$9 of every \$10 that every single American earns. The Federal Government would have to take \$9 out of \$10 of everything every American earns.

You had better believe that families' last dollar would need to go toward keeping the lights on. By one analysis, middle-class families could see their power bills jump by more than \$300 a month under the Green New Deal. That would take up the last dollar they had left.

I know Senator ERNST and several of our colleagues will be speaking at greater length on this issue later today, and I am sure each of them will point out that there certainly is one green thing about this sprawling proposal, one green thing: the huge, unprecedented pile of middle-class families' money that Democrats are itching—itching—to grab.

RESOLUTION CONDEMNING ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. President, on one final matter, I want to discuss something that will be happening on the floor of the House perhaps as soon as today.

Remarkably, for the second time in just the last 3 weeks, Speaker PELOSI apparently feels compelled to have her Members vote on a resolution that will reportedly condemn anti-Semitism—a resolution that will purportedly condemn anti-Semitism.

Unfortunately, again, for the second time in just the last 3 weeks, this

seems to be in response to the invocation of crude, hateful, and backward anti-Semitic stereotypes by one specific freshman member of the House Democratic majority.

This Democratic Congresswoman already stoked controversy in mid-February, having publicly proclaimed that Israel's supporters are only in it for the money. Apparently, she believes the only reason leaders would stand with the Jewish people and the State of Israel is Jewish money. Well, I think we have all heard that kind of talk before, and we must not tolerate it.

During my time in the Senate, I have had the honor of traveling all over America. I know I speak for colleagues on both sides of the aisle when I say that support for the State of Israel and the U.S.-Israel relationship is deeply felt—deeply felt—all across America. Our relationship is built on common values and democratic principles, our shared interests, close partnerships, and deep friendships. The support for Israel that you see in this Chamber is not the work of some shadow conspiracy. The Members of this body support Israel because so many Americans support Israel.

I had hoped this regrettable episode might have caused this lawmaker to be more careful with her language, but, alas, just a few weeks later, here we are again: more anti-Semitic tropes. This time, she claims that supporters of Israel actually have "an allegiance to a foreign country." That is that old, ugly, dual loyalty smear, plain as day.

We should also not overlook that in a few cases, these anti-Semitic statements have provoked offensive, anti-Muslim comments in response. That is hateful and completely inexcusable as well.

So now the House of Representatives seeks to distance itself from this Member's remarks and will apparently soon vote to condemn anti-Semitism for the second time in just a few weeks. I hope this time the message is clear.

Support for Israel isn't about the "Benjamins," it is about the hearts and minds of the American people. It is unconscionable for any Member of the U.S. Congress, even less a Member of the House Foreign Relations Committee, to repeatedly traffic in base stereotypes.

The long, bloody legacy of anti-Semitism is spread out over the pages of history, but, regrettably, this scourge is not confined to history.

Long common across the Middle East, violent, hateful acts of anti-Semitism have been increasing throughout Europe. Less than a lifetime after the Holocaust, 9 out of 10 European Jews say anti-Semitism has increased—in increased—in the past 5 years.

Eighty-eight percent of French Jews say they actively worry about targeted vandalism. That country alone saw 541 anti-Semitic incidents in 2018, a massive 74-percent increase from just the prior year.

In France, in 2006, a Jewish man was kidnapped for ransom because criminals assumed his Jewish family had to be rich. When their plan failed, they tortured and killed him. A memorial tree was planted in his honor. Earlier this month, that tree was found chopped down—anti-Semitism on top of anti-Semitism.

Trends here in America are troubling too. Every year, hundreds and hundreds of anti-Semitic incidents take place in America, everything from vandalism to harassment, to threats in schools, college campuses, and other public places, to targeting Jewish institutions.

This racial and religious hate-mongering deserves swift condemnation—swift condemnation. So I am glad the House is at least taking up this short, symbolic resolution and rejecting the anti-Semitic tropes this Democratic Congresswoman keeps peddling, but at the end of the day, it is just a symbolic resolution.

If House Democrats wanted to, they could pass real legislation to take action against anti-Semitism and shore up America's relationship with Israel. I know they could because last month the Senate did just that. We did that in the Senate last month. The House should take up and pass S. 1, the bipartisan foreign policy legislation that the Senate passed last month, 77 to 23. That legislation walks the walk. It supports Israel and gives local communities the flexibility to combat the so-called BDS movement, which is a kind of anti-Semitic economic warfare that opponents of Israel are trying to wage against the Jewish State.

The bill also attends to other critical priorities, such as renewing U.S. commitments to Jordan's security and providing for the Assad regime's butchers to be brought to justice.

S. 1 is not just about combating anti-Semitism or bolstering the U.S.-Israel relationship; it is about standing with an Arab partner like Jordan and providing justice for the Syrian people. So my point is this: Resolutions are fine, but the House could do something that mattered by taking up S. 1 that we sent them last month that deals with the BDS boycott against Israel.

Words are one thing. Meaningful action is another. House Democrats should walk the walk and pass S. 1 without any further pointless delay.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

(The remarks of Senator SCHUMER pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 97 are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

NOMINATION OF CHAD L. READLER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on Readler, later this afternoon, the Senate will vote on the confirmation of Chad Readler to the Sixth Circuit. As this Chamber by now is no doubt aware, Mr. Readler was the chief cook and bottle washer of the Trump administration's decision not to defend the healthcare law in court. In a brief submitted to the court on behalf of the Department of Justice, Mr. Readler said that protections for the 130 million Americans with preexisting conditions are unconstitutional.

I say to my Republican friends: Do you want to vote for a judge who says that protecting preexisting conditions, which affect 130 million Americans, is unconstitutional?

Well, that is what you are going to do if you vote for Readler.

Even my Republican colleague Senator ALEXANDER, who oversees the committee that created these protections, calls his arguments "as far-fetched as I have ever heard."

Can you imagine the lack of compassion it takes to argue that 130 million Americans with cancers, respiratory ailments, and all the way down to asthma don't deserve the guarantee of affordable healthcare? Can you imagine voting for a man who is so cold-hearted that he doesn't protect a mother who has a daughter or a son with cancer and the insurance company cuts them off, and they have to watch their child suffer?

Can our Republican colleagues actually vote for a nominee who feels that way not just in his words but in his action? This vote is going to be remembered for a long time—a long, long time.

Can you imagine sitting at your desk on an average workday and arguing for a policy with such catastrophic consequences for a third of our country? I, for one, cannot. That is what Readler did.

The very next day, after he wrote that brief, he was nominated for this lifetime appointment on the bench. Go figure. Only in the Trump administration could a person be rewarded for efforts to take healthcare away from average Americans. That is exactly what happened.

Yesterday, regrettably, the Senate proceeded to Readler's nomination over the objections of one of his home State Senators, Senator SHERRON BROWN. Republican leaders are so eager to confirm judges that they are willing to break the blue-slip tradition even when the nominee is the literal encapsulation of their party's most heartless policy, I might add—a policy that helped them lose the House and could help them lose future elections, if they only care about that.

Republican Senators still have a chance to reject the cynicism behind Mr. Readler's nomination. They have a chance to stand up for healthcare. I would ask my colleagues, is the confirmation of one circuit judge really

worth endorsing the position that our healthcare law should be repealed and Americans with preexisting conditions should not be protected? The answer to that question ought to be obvious.

I urge my Republican colleagues to vote no on Mr. Readler's nomination this afternoon.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the more you look at the Green New Deal, the worse it looks. Last week, one think tank released a first estimate of what the Green New Deal would cost. Here is the answer: between \$51 trillion and \$93 trillion over 10 years. Between \$51 trillion and \$93 trillion. That is an unfathomable amount of money. The 2017 gross domestic product for the entire world, for the whole planet, came to \$80.7 trillion—more than \$10 trillion less than what Democrats are proposing to spend on the Green New Deal.

Mr. President, \$93 trillion is more than the amount of money the U.S. Government has spent in its entire history. Since 1789, when the Constitution went into effect, the Federal Government has spent a total of \$83.2 trillion. That is right—it has taken us 230 years of American history to spend the amount of money the Democrats want to spend in 10 years. Look at it this way: \$93 trillion is enough money to buy more than 7,000 Ford-class aircraft carriers. To put that in perspective, guess how many aircraft carriers the Navy currently has in its entire fleet. Eleven.

It is like the Democrats are playing pretend. It is like they are on a road trip, and they are trying to pass the time, and they say, "What would you do if you won the lottery?" or "What would you do if you had all the money in the world?" It is a fun game to play for a few minutes, but this is not a game. The government doesn't have all the money in the world. That \$93 trillion is going to have to come from somewhere.

Democrats like to suggest that we can pay for it and pay for just about anything simply by taxing the wealthy, but the truth is, taxing the wealthy or even the merely well-off isn't going to pay for this proposal. Taxing all the millionaires in the United States at a 100-percent tax rate for 10 years wouldn't add up anywhere close to \$93 trillion. Taxing every household making more than \$200,000 a year at a 100-percent tax rate for 10 years wouldn't get Democrats anywhere close to \$93 trillion. Let's take it a step further. Taxing every family making more than \$100,000 a year at a

100-percent tax rate for 10 years would still leave Democrats far short of \$93 trillion.

The Green New Deal is not a plan that can be paid for merely by taxing the rich. Actually implementing the Green New Deal would involve taking money not just from the well-off but from working families—and not a little bit of money either. Ninety-three trillion dollars breaks down to over \$650,000 per household over 10 years. That is more than \$65,000 per household, per year—more than the median household income in the United States. In other words, the cost per household for just 1 year of the Green New Deal is more than the yearly income of 50 percent of American households.

Let's leave aside the stratospheric cost for just a minute and talk about the other consequences of the Green New Deal.

Democrats' Green New Deal would put the government in charge of a large portion of the economy and significantly shrink Americans' freedom. Under this bill, the government will impose new and stringent regulations on your appliances, your car, your house, and your place of business. It will limit your electricity options. It will put the government in charge of your healthcare. I know that is not really energy-related, but the Green New Deal's authors went beyond energy to include a full socialist wish list.

Your options for travel may be limited. A fact sheet released—and later deleted—by one of the authors of the Green New Deal called for a plan to “build out high-speed rail at a scale where air travel stops becoming necessary.” Well, that might work between DC and Boston, but it is not going to work so well if you have family in Hawaii. I don't think the high-speed rail is going to reach that far. I would say that you could make the trip by passenger ship, but, of course, we don't know whether ships as we know them would exist under the Green New Deal. After all, the plan's authors want to eliminate fossil fuels, which power ships, as well as your car and your home.

Incidentally, while we are on the subject, it is worth mentioning that the Governor of California recently scaled back California's high-speed rail project. Why? Because it was costing too much money.

Under the Green New Deal, if you like your car, you probably won't be able to keep it. If you like your healthcare, you probably won't be able to keep it. If you like your house, you may not be able to keep that either. That same fact sheet from one of the Green New Deal's authors says that we need to “upgrade or replace every building in [the] U.S.”

There is no question that we need to protect our environment. There is no question that we should be developing clean energy sources and building on our existing clean energy technologies.

I would tell the Chair that my home State of South Dakota is leading the way on this issue. In fact, my colleagues may be surprised to know that according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, South Dakota generates an average of two-fifths to half of its electricity from hydroelectric facilities along the Missouri River. Combined with our abundant wind generation, which provides roughly 30 percent of our electricity, South Dakota's net utility-scale energy generation is over 75 percent renewables.

I am proud of South Dakota's renewable energy achievements, and I think we should be encouraging improved domestic energy production, increasing America's renewable energy supply, and reducing consumption through improved efficiencies. What we should not be doing is adopting a wildly irresponsible, completely unworkable, and utterly unrealistic proposal that would drive taxes through the roof, reduce Americans' standard of living, and permanently damage our economy.

We are going to be voting on the Democrat's Green New Deal proposal in the coming weeks, and it will be interesting to see where all of my colleagues stand on this socialist fantasy.

You just heard the Democratic leader, the Senator from New York, say that it is a gimmick and we shouldn't be voting on this. It is the first time I think I have ever heard a leader of one of the parties here in the Senate come forward and say that we shouldn't vote on something that 11 of his Democratic colleagues have cosponsored. He doesn't want to vote on a piece of legislation that is put forward by 11 Democrats here in the Senate.

Well, I think it is important for the American people to know. I think it is important for Members of the Senate to go on record on whether they think this is a good idea or whether they think, as I think most Americans would believe, this is a crazy idea that would wreck the economy, cost Americans' jobs, and punish working families in this country with higher costs for literally everything they face in their daily lives.

For the sake of our economy and for working families, I hope that when this vote comes, at least some Democrats will slow their party's headlong rush to become the Socialist Party and not what we have historically known as the Democratic Party in this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from Ohio.

NOMINATION OF CHAD A. READLER

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, judges are making decisions around the country right now on voting rights, on civil rights, on women's rights, on LGBTQ rights, decisions that could limit those rights not just for a year or for a decade but for a generation. They make decisions on healthcare; they make decisions on sentencing; and they make decisions on corporate power. We have seen judge after judge, especially on

the Supreme Court, put their thumbs on the scales of justice by favoring corporations over workers, by favoring Wall Street over consumers, and by favoring health insurance companies over patients. That is, fundamentally, why we in Ohio cannot afford to have Chad Readler on the bench.

Look at an op-ed he took upon himself to write as a private citizen, which reads we should allow the execution of 16-year-olds—kids, children who are 16 years old.

This is at a time when we are taking important, bipartisan steps forward on sentencing reform, and this Senate doesn't come together very often. This Senate, under Senator McCONNELL's leadership, actually came together in a bipartisan way. After all of the mostly unworkable pieces of legislation he has written that always help the rich, the President of the United States signed a bill, in this case, in which we did the right thing by taking bipartisan steps forward on sentencing reform.

How do you turn around and put someone on the bench for life who supports executing children? That is what a 16-year-old is—still a teenager, still a child under the law. Yet he thinks it is something we should do—execute children who are found guilty.

During his nomination hearing, it was pretty unbelievable that Readler stood by his op-ed and refused to disavow his support for using the death penalty on high schoolers and, possibly, on even younger children. I guess I give him credit for consistency.

His record on voting rights is equally despicable. He worked on behalf of a far-right group and argued for the elimination of Golden Week, something passed by Republicans that had been in effect for more than a decade, which means he was limiting the amount of time people can vote early, and he defended restrictive voter ID and provisional ballot laws. We know exactly whom those laws target—people of color, the elderly, young voters. They are the same people, in many cases, who face literacy tests and poll taxes. They are the people JOHN LEWIS and the foot soldiers of Selma were marching for 54 years ago tomorrow across the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

It is shameful that, half a century later, we are fighting that same fight. Chad Readler again is on the wrong side. We can't afford another judge on the bench who works to undo Selma's legacy.

We can't afford another judge who has made it his mission to take away Americans' healthcare. Chad Readler's work threatens the healthcare coverage of 20 million Americans who have preexisting conditions. Last summer, Readler did what three career attorneys with the Department of Justice refused to do. He filed a brief that challenged the law that protects Americans with preexisting conditions. He filed a brief nobody else was willing to file. They all recused themselves. They all refused to do it. They thought it was

something improper and unconstitutional. One of them, I believe, resigned.

Do you know what happened then? The next day, he was nominated for this very judgeship.

So the message is loud and clear from the administration: If you go after pre-existing conditions under consumer protections, if you attack workers' rights, if you attack voters' rights within any job you hold—and there is a real incentive to do this from this administration—you may get a good, lifetime Federal judgeship. The arguments he made in his brief were unprecedented. As I said, three attorneys withdrew from the case. One resigned altogether in his objections to the Department of Justice's unprecedented actions.

One of our Republican colleagues, Senator ALEXANDER, who works with Senator MURRAY to run the HELP Committee, called Readler's argument as farfetched—Senator ALEXANDER's words, who is a conservative Republican from Tennessee—as he had ever seen. Yet, in December, a partisan Texas judge decided to go along with Readler's opinion, and he handed down the decision that undermines pre-existing condition protections for all Americans.

Right now, judges are deciding the future of Americans' healthcare every day. We can't afford to put another extremist—and he is way out of the mainstream—in my increasingly conservative, Republican State. He is way out of the mainstream among lawyers, way out of the mainstream among judges, and way out of the mainstream as a citizen. We can't afford to put another extreme judge on the court who will not defend Americans' right to healthcare.

We know there have been a number of times this body has refused to take away the consumer protections for pre-existing conditions. We remember the vote late at night when we defeated the repeal of the Affordable Care Act. We know that all kinds of Republican candidates who were victorious went on television and said they were going to defend the consumer protections for pre-existing conditions. We heard that over and over.

Why did we hear that? Even though that was not their position a few months earlier, in the cases of a lot of them, we heard it because they knew how popular it was and how much the public cared about the consumer protections for pre-existing conditions. In a moment, I am going to share some letters from Ohioans who make the point that even though, this year, Republican candidates thought it was all OK to say we are going to preserve pre-existing conditions, a vote for Judge Readler is exactly the opposite.

Don't go home and say you support consumer protections for pre-existing conditions and then vote for a judge who has a history of wanting to take that right away and who will now have a lifetime appointment and get another

chance to likely take away the protections for pre-existing conditions.

Let me share a few letters from people.

A man from Sandusky wrote to me about how the marketplaces that were created by the Affordable Care Act helped him to start his own business because he had a way to purchase insurance. He was later diagnosed with lung cancer. He wrote: "I am watching the dismantling of the only program available to me with a pre-existing condition that I can afford. I am devastated."

I don't know what Mr. Readler thinks when he reads something like that, but let me give another example.

A woman from Cleveland writes:

Protect real health care coverage for all people with pre-existing conditions. Real people's lives depend on it. My husband's life depends on it.

Chad Readler wants to be a judge. Chad Readler did the President's bidding and the insurance industry's bidding at the Department of Justice. I don't know if he knows these people exist, like the woman from Cleveland or the man from Sandusky. I hope Chad Readler would have gone out and, as President Lincoln said, gotten his public opinion badge by actually listening to how the decisions he makes affect real people.

A woman from Chagrin Falls, which is a fairly wealthy suburb of Cleveland, wrote:

I've been a cancer patient since 2011. If pre-existing conditions are no longer covered, I—along with countless others—will probably be screwed.

A mother from Waynesville, OH, wrote:

My family has lived every day worrying about the ACA being dismantled. We have a son who was born with a neurological condition before the ACA.

We lived in constant fear of medical caps and pre-existing conditions.

Just putting Chad Readler on the bench increases people's anxiety. Is Congress going to take away the Affordable Care Act? Is Congress going to wipe away those protections for pre-existing conditions? If Congress isn't, are judges going to do that? No wonder people are so anxious about that.

A woman from Fairborn writes:

I previously lost health insurance from a possible preexisting condition and now, being a 2-time cancer survivor, I'm scared of losing coverage again.

The security of having insurance since the ACA allowed me to sleep at night and focus on my health.

My editorial comment on her comments is to focus on her health, not on whether she loses her coverage.

It is unimaginable that politicians want to deny so many Americans access to health insurance and quality of life.

Senator MURRAY and I sat and watched a bunch of mostly men on the other side of the aisle cast their votes—all who had good health insurance—to take away insurance for millions of Americans and for hundreds of

thousands in my State and to take away their consumer protections for pre-existing conditions.

A mother from New Albany writes:

My daughter had two autoimmune diseases by the age of 6—SIX. That means her entire life she will be a "preexisting condition." But she isn't just a label. She is a person. Please protect my baby. She already deals with enough.

I mean, hear the passion in that letter, the strong feelings in that letter, the cries for help in that letter. Yet this body may be about to put on the Sixth Circuit, in a lifetime appointment, someone who clearly doesn't care about people like them.

Another woman from Hillsboro writes:

We are a family of pre-existing conditions and survive because we have insurance that we can afford. My husband works long, hard hours and has to work 60 hours a week for us to make it. I'm a teacher. I work about 18 out of 24 hours a day but make \$40,000 a year. We can't work any more than we already do.

Again, these are people who are working hard and who are doing everything right. They didn't ask to be sick. They didn't ask for their healthcare costs to go up. Are we going to put somebody on the court who wants to take away the consumer protections for people like this lady from Hillsboro?

These Americans work hard. They pay their premiums. Many of them deal with all that comes with caring for a child or a family member who has a chronic condition. How can Members of Congress and how can this President—all who have good insurance paid for by the taxpayers—stand by and allow activist, partisan judges to dismantle these protections that Americans rely on?

It is bad enough that so many Members of Congress want to take away these consumer protections. Now it is unelected judges the American public really doesn't know, and this body is about to put one more of them on the court, even more extreme and younger than so many other of these judges.

We can't afford another judge on the courts who will vote to take away Americans' healthcare, who will vote to take away Americans' voting rights, who will vote to take away Americans' civil rights.

I ask my colleagues to vote no on Chad Readler for the Sixth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Ohio for his statement and his concerns, and I am here today to join him on the floor to oppose Chad Readler's nomination to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

I call on every Republican who said they were going to fight for families' healthcare coverage, protections for people with preexisting conditions, to prove they meant it by joining us.

I have heard my Republican colleagues claim time and again that they care about protections for people with preexisting conditions. I have heard

them say they want to tackle those skyrocketing healthcare costs. I have heard them say they want to help people get the care they need, but when push comes to shove, I have yet to see them join Democrats and actually vote to make that happen. In fact, they do have a long track record of working to move us in exactly the opposite direction.

People across the country have not forgotten how they had to speak up and stop Republicans from jamming through that awful TrumpCare bill, which would have spiked premiums and gutted Medicaid and put families back at the mercy of big insurance companies that could jack up prices for people with preexisting conditions.

Those people also will not forget if Republicans decide to ignore them again and rally around this judicial nominee, who wants to do the same damage.

Let's be clear. Chad Readler's nomination is the latest test of whether Republicans are serious about fighting for people's healthcare, and every Republican who supports him is failing yet again.

Make no mistake—Chad Readler has not only championed some of President Trump's most alarming steps, such as his travel ban, his family separation policy, his efforts to undermine protections for LGBTQ people and more; he has also been President Trump's right-hand man when it comes to undermining healthcare for people in this country.

When the Trump administration decided to abandon protections for people with preexisting conditions in court and throw its weight behind a lawsuit that would strike them down, Chad Readler signed on to the brief defending the decision. It is a brief that three other Justice Department officials refused to sign, and one even resigned over it. But Chad Readler led the Trump administration's legal argument for striking down protections for people with preexisting conditions, which will increase costs and throw healthcare for millions of people into utter chaos.

It was an argument one of my Republican colleagues, as you just heard, called "as far-fetched as any I've ever heard." I agree. It is farfetched, which is why it is also farfetched for any Republican who votes to confirm Readler to continue pretending they care about protections for people with preexisting conditions or helping families get affordable healthcare.

The choice, to me, is pretty simple and straightforward. You cannot be for protections for people with preexisting conditions and for making someone who wants to strike them down a circuit judge. You cannot fight for families' healthcare and vote to empower the very people who have been leading the charge to undermine it. You can't vote for Readler and stand with those families.

People across the country are watching this vote closely. They know, de-

spite Republicans' promises to fight for their healthcare, when it matters as it does here, when the care they need is truly on the line, Republicans have not come through for them.

I hope that changes today. I hope, instead of breaking their word and voting once more for President Trump's agenda of chaos and healthcare sabotage, they will live up to the promises and join us and people across the country and oppose Readler's nomination.

Before I wrap up, I want to talk about the larger issue here because Readler is not the only alarming judicial nominee from President Trump.

Just this week, in fact, Republicans jammed through Allison Rushing. She is an incredibly inexperienced circuit court nominee who has voiced some incredibly alarming ideological views, especially for women and the LGBTQ community.

Later this week we expect a vote on Eric Murphy. He is another nominee who has taken extreme positions on women's healthcare, from endorsing misinformation by signing on to briefs that cite false—false—claims about women's health to standing in support of laws that were found to unconstitutionally infringe on women's reproductive rights and against laws to increase access to contraceptive care.

People across the country have been absolutely clear that they do not want to see our courts lurch to the far right. They know this is a threat. It is a threat to women. It is a threat to our workers and our families and our environment and so much more.

So Democrats are here. We are going to keep standing up and fighting back every time President Trump and Senate Republican leaders try to move us in that direction, and I hope some Republicans will do the right thing and stand with us.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WYDEN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today, the Senate considers the nomination of yet another unqualified, far-right nominee—Chad Readler, who is up for consideration for a seat on the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Let me just say at the outset that any whiff of credibility this nominee might have had as a judicial nominee disappears the minute he puts his name on the Trump administration's absurd legal argument that protections for preexisting conditions are unconstitutional.

To get a sense of how ridiculous this argument is, you have to look at a bit of recent history.

In 2012, the Supreme Court ruled that the individual mandate was a tax, that

it was constitutional, and that the Affordable Care Act would stand. For millions of Americans, particularly the ones who wouldn't have to go to bed at night fearing that when they woke up, they could get discriminated against for a preexisting condition, just as in the old days—under the ACA, they wouldn't have to worry about that anymore—it was a joyful day when the court ruled that the Affordable Care Act would stand, but it was a tough day for the Republican strategists who had been so desperate to bring down the law at any cost.

Next, in the process of jamming the Trump tax law through Congress, in late 2017, many Republicans said: Let's bring out our old attacks on the Affordable Care Act. They passed an amendment that said there would be no penalty for those who failed to sign up for health insurance, even though everybody understands that those who have coverage often pick up the bills for those who don't.

Then, in 2018, Republican Governors and attorneys general in 20 States made what was really the silliest legal challenge to the Affordable Care Act yet, and that was in the case of Texas v. United States.

Here, they said they were going to stipulate that the Supreme Court upheld the Affordable Care Act's individual mandate only because it was a tax. Then they said: We establish that the Trump tax law dialed the penalty associated with violating the individual mandate down to zero. At least that had a kernel of accuracy.

Let me describe how they got into the backbreaking legal acrobatics next. They argued that because there is no penalty associated with violating the individual mandate, it is no longer a tax and somehow it has become unconstitutional. Finally, they argued that since the individual mandate is unconstitutional, the whole Affordable Care Act is unconstitutional and ought to be thrown out the window.

My own take is that if you were a first-year law student, you would get a failing grade for that kind of work on constitutional law, but let's stick to the history.

The Justice Department has an obligation to defend the laws of the United States. It is a quaint idea, but that is the role of the Justice Department—defending the laws of the United States in court.

The Trump administration, however, said: Who cares? It doesn't matter. And they sided with officials who shared their view.

In fact, the Trump Justice Department focused this attack specifically on the Affordable Care Act protections for preexisting conditions. It said that the mandate was inseparable from two key protections in the law, which therefore ought to be struck down: the rule that bars insurance companies from denying coverage due to preexisting conditions and the rule that bars insurance companies from jacking

up premiums based on preexisting conditions.

Here is a little bit of a recap. A group of officials on the far right, who were out of good cases to bring against the Affordable Care Act, said: Hey, let's try bringing a bad case. At the President's direction, the Trump Justice Department decided not to fight but, rather, to take part in this preposterous attack on the law of the land.

To the incredible distress of millions of Americans who walk an economic tightrope because they have a pre-existing condition, somehow the Trump people got a Texas judge to rule in their favor. Fortunately, the ACA protections remained in place while the case worked its way through the courts.

There are colleagues here in the Senate, on the other side of the aisle, who have objected to what the Justice Department did. Our friend Senator ALEXANDER, a Republican from Tennessee, who knows a little bit about healthcare, said: "The Justice Department argument in the Texas case is as far-fetched as any I've ever heard."

Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER is a Republican from Tennessee, chair of a key committee, and works with us on the Finance Committee. The Justice Department's argument, according to Senator ALEXANDER, is just light years from a reasonable and rational position.

Then the Trump administration went ahead and threw out centuries of Justice Department tradition—honored by Republicans and Democrats—of defending laws as long as there is a nonfrivolous argument in their favor. They didn't decide to throw out that vital legal tradition in a case involving some obscure, out-of-date statute. In effect, they chose to debase the Justice Department and undermine the rule of law in order to attack protections for preexisting conditions.

Chad Readler is the Trump appointee who stepped up and said: Sure, you can put my name on that legal brief. So what Chad Readler was essentially saying is that it was just fine with him to go back to the days in America when healthcare was for the healthy and wealthy. That is really what you had if you allowed discrimination against those with preexisting conditions again. If you are healthy, there is nothing to worry about. If you are wealthy, you can write out a check and cover the payments for a preexisting condition and the health services you need.

Make no mistake about it—by putting his name on that legal brief, what Chad Readler was interested in doing was taking America back to yesteryear when the insurance companies could beat the stuffing out of somebody with a preexisting condition and find every manner of reason not to get them affordable care.

People were stuck in their jobs because of something called job lock, where they couldn't move to another company, even when they got a pro-

motion, because they wouldn't be able to get coverage. That is what Chad Readler wanted to inflict on Americans.

The case he worked on was so obviously political and meritless that three career Justice Department attorneys withdrew from it. One senior official, an individual who had been praised for 20 years of extraordinary service, actually resigned. Mr. Readler said that was OK with him too.

He said: We will take America back to the days when healthcare was for the healthy and wealthy. I don't really much care that senior officials—non-political officials in the Department—are leaving because this was such an extreme way to handle this case. Mr. Readler said that all of this was OK and that he would be the public face of attacking basic protections for 133 million Americans with preexisting conditions.

On the very same day, the President announced his nomination to sit on the powerful Sixth Circuit. That is a lifetime appointment on the Federal bench, an extraordinarily important position.

If there is somebody following the nomination at home, you just might ask yourself: Doesn't that sound look a quid pro quo?

I am the ranking Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, where we pay for much of American healthcare—Medicare, Medicaid, the children's health program, tax credits available under the Affordable Care Act, and we have the tax exclusions available to employers. On that committee, on which the Presiding Officer is a new member, you get a chance to review the credentials of lots of individuals who are involved in these decisions in which the Finance Committee is really faced with the question of how to make the best use of what is really \$2 trillion, or thereabouts, of healthcare spending, and I will tell you, in this area, it is so important to protect people with preexisting conditions.

The Trump administration just seems to have, with one nominee after another, an inexhaustible supply of far-right pretenders—persons who claim they will be for protections for preexisting conditions, only to turn around quickly and fight to take them away. So it ought to be clear that this isn't a routine nomination. Chad Readler thinks insurance companies should be able to deny care with people with preexisting conditions.

Colleagues, if you vote for Chad Readler, you are casting a vote to endorse the position of turning back the clock and rolling back time to the days when insurance companies could discriminate against those with a preexisting condition.

If Mr. Readler's history began and ended with the legal brief attacking preexisting protections, in my view, that would be disqualifying, but there is more.

He signed the Trump Justice Department legal brief green-lighting dis-

crimination against LGBTQ Americans in the Masterpiece Cakeshop case. He defended the transgender military ban. He defended the Muslim ban. He defended family separation at the border.

I am just going to close by way of saying that I think this nomination is a byproduct of what happens when the Senate abandons a long-held practice of consulting with home State Senators on nominees.

Since the early 1900s, it has been a tradition for the Judiciary Committee to seek input from Senators on judicial nominees from their home States. Lower court nominees traditionally don't move forward until those home State Senators give the green light. They do so with what are called blue slips.

In this case, the nominee is from Ohio, and the majority leader, MITCH MCCONNELL, is in the process of blowing up that tradition and moving this nominee over Senator BROWN's objection.

In 2009, when Republicans were in the minority, MITCH MCCONNELL and all of his colleagues fought to protect the blue-slip tradition. They wrote everybody in sight to protect it—President Obama, Senator LEAHY.

They wrote: "We hope your administration will consult with us as it considers possible nominations to the Federal courts from our states."

So they made it very clear a few years ago that they strongly supported this, but here they are blowing up a century-old tradition of bipartisanship on judicial nominees after defending it.

This issue came to a head last year, when the Senate took up the nomination of Ryan Bounds to the Ninth Circuit, despite objections from my Oregon colleague, Senator MERKLEY, and me.

We were able to block that nomination. It was the right thing to do. This was a nominee who we felt had not been straight with our judicial selection committee. As Oregon's senior Senator, I had been dealing with these nominees—Democrats and Republicans—for years, but our judicial selection commission had never felt so misled. Senator MERKLEY and I led the fight, and we were successful in defeating that nominee.

Now the White House still wants, apparently, this body to act as a rubberstamp and just approve one nominee after another without any questions.

I want my colleagues to understand that by moving this nomination forward, they are going to be responsible for creating a new reality—in effect hot-wiring the process for considering judicial nominees in a way that will take us back again to a more partisan approach.

The bipartisan blue-slip process has worked for over a century. What is going on now would end it. This is a breach of bipartisan protocol that has further driven the judiciary to a partisan extreme.

Following these actions by the Trump administration and the majority, I seriously question, if you continue this, whether the current structure of the courts is going to survive.

Colleagues, Chad Readler does not deserve a lifetime appointment to the Sixth Circuit. The moment he put his name on the Trump administration's absurd legal attack on protections for preexisting conditions, he revealed that he was going to be partisan all the way and, on top of that, that he was going to exercise poor judgment. He has been a defender of discrimination in multiple forms. He has defended the indefensible abuse of vulnerable migrant families at our border. At this point, he cannot claim to be close to the standard of impartiality and evenhandedness that a Senator ought to expect from any judicial nominee.

I intend to vote against Chad Readler. I urge my colleagues to join me.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, today I rise to oppose the nomination of Chad Readler to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

I remember the 2018 campaign season, when so many Republicans suddenly became the world's most passionate defenders of patients with preexisting conditions. They told voters that never ever could they even imagine doing anything that would weaken the protections that stop health insurance companies from discriminating against people with preexisting conditions.

Whether they be breast cancer survivors or children born with birth defects or any of the tens of millions of Americans who manage chronic conditions like diabetes or depression or high blood pressure, well, Americans are about to find out whether my American colleagues meant a word of what they said on the campaign trail. Americans will soon see whether Republicans stand up for patients with preexisting conditions or vote to confirm Chad Readler to the Ohio Sixth Circuit Court.

This nominee's record of threatening patients with preexisting conditions is not up for debate. Chad Readler was the mastermind behind the Trump administration's effort to strip away the core of the Affordable Care Act—the principle that health insurance companies cannot deny coverage or kick a patient off their policy just because of their medical history.

On the campaign trail, President Trump spoke of protecting Americans with preexisting conditions, but we now know that was just another lie.

Apparently, it wasn't enough for this administration to stop defending the Affordable Care Act in court; the President sought to attack it in court. Initially, the Trump administration struggled to find someone at the De-

partment of Justice willing to take on this cause. In fact, three separate career attorneys at the Justice Department refused to argue the administration's position in court. One employee even resigned.

Chad Readler, the nominee we are voting on today, was more than happy to take on this cruel and unjust cause. He became the chief architect of the Trump administration's legal brief, challenging the very constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act's protections for people with preexisting conditions. In other words, Chad Readler's legal brief took the administration's effort to sabotage the Affordable Care Act to a whole new level, threatening to bring us back to a time when health insurance companies didn't have to cover cancer survivors, or individuals with substance abuse disorder, or anyone who has ever faced, ever confronted a health challenge in their life. How does President Trump reward Chad Readler for leading this assault on patients and their families? Well, the day after he filed this reckless and morally repugnant legal brief, the President nominated him to serve on the Sixth Circuit.

Now, let me tell you, I spent a lot of time crisscrossing New Jersey over the past year, and I don't think I met a single constituent who came up to me and said: Senator, what my family really needs you to do is once again let health insurance companies deny us care. On the contrary, I heard from and continue to hear from New Jerseyans who depend on these protections. They can't even believe this is still an issue.

Last summer, I spoke with a woman from Highland Park named Ann Vardeman who told me she was diagnosed with PTSD after surviving a sexual assault. Ann told me that health insurers shouldn't be able to "charge me more for something that is a horrible thing that happens to millions of people in this country through absolutely no fault of their own." Indeed, without the Affordable Care Act, there would be no Federal health protections for survivors of sexual violence like her.

Perhaps one of my constituents—Anne Zavalick of Middlesex, NJ—said it best when she wrote about her battle against bladder cancer. She wrote:

It is crucial that I continue to receive scans to make sure there is no recurrence of the cancer. . . . If I don't have coverage for preexisting conditions, I will go bankrupt. . . . Then I will probably die. So, yeah, this is kinda super important to me, personally.

It should be personal to all of us. Everyone in this body should take it personally when this administration attacks protections that 130 million Americans rely on for their health and financial security.

People remember what it was like before the Affordable Care Act, and they don't want to go backward. They remember how a woman could be denied coverage for maternity care or charged higher premiums simply for being a

woman. Today, being a woman is no longer a preexisting condition. They remember how infants born with heart deformities could hit lifetime caps within days of being born. Today, families don't have to worry about lifetime caps. They remember how cancer survivors and Americans with chronic conditions like diabetes or asthma lived in fear of being denied coverage or dropped from their policies at a moment's notice.

Today, patients are protected from discrimination, but they will not be if the courts side with Chad Readler's shameful arguments on behalf of this administration.

This issue is personal for millions of Americans across our country—from 3.8 million in New Jersey, to 4.3 million in Georgia, to 4.8 million in Ohio, Mr. Readler's home State. All told, 130 million Americans with preexisting conditions may suffer the consequences of Mr. Readler's assault on the Affordable Care Act. These Americans are not Democrats or Republicans or Independents; they are human beings with a right to access affordable, quality healthcare.

Does this Senate really want to reward someone largely responsible for endangering the coverage our constituents depend on with a lifetime appointment to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals? I sure hope not. That is not the kind of judgement we want on any court.

Last fall, we heard a lot of talk from Republicans about protecting people with preexisting conditions. We know that actions speak louder than words, and it is action that we need right now. We need every Member of this body to stand up for the right of all Americans to get quality healthcare coverage. We need every Member of this body to stand up for the proposition that Americans cannot be discriminated against in their healthcare coverage because of a preexisting condition. We need every Member of this body to vote against the nomination of Chad Readler for the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DECLARATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if you ask the Trump administration about their highest spending priority in terms of their budget, it is pretty clear—national defense. Over and over, the President has asked and Congress has voted for more money for America's military for operations, readiness, and investment across the board. I don't think there is any question that the votes reflect the bipartisan commitment to our military and the belief

that spending dollars today to train our men and women, to equip them properly, and to make sure they live in the best circumstances is in the best interests of America's future. We have done that year in and year out, but this year we are facing quite a challenge from the Trump administration.

This notion of building a \$5.7 billion wall is going to be paid for at the expense of the U.S. military. It is the military that will end up surrendering projects that are underway and investments in our troops that are underway so that the President can build this almighty wall of his that was supposed to be paid for by the Mexicans, right? I heard him say that—only 100 times, but I heard him say it. Now he is off of that. It will not be the Mexicans paying for the President's wall. It will be our military.

So we ought to be very honest about the vote that is coming up. President Trump has decided to declare an emergency and to say that regardless of the Constitution's giving authority to Congress to appropriate funds, he wants to take on that responsibility to decide where funds will be spent. That will be challenged in court, I am sure, as it should be. But for those Members of the Senate who in a few days will be asked to vote, I would like them to reflect on two things. Their vote supporting the President's approach is basically giving the authority of this branch of the government away to the Executive. Make no mistake, that is at the heart of it, and a number of Republican Senators—a handful—have stood up and said: We wouldn't have allowed this under a Democratic President; why would we allow it under a Republican President?

Yet others have said they are prepared to look the other way. If this President is popular back in their home States, the Constitution comes in second. I think that is a mistake.

Secondly, though, Members of the Senate, before they cast this vote giving this President the authority to take money out of our military to build this wall, ought to stop and take a look at where the money is coming from within our military.

I am in the fortunate position to be the ranking member on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. It is the biggest appropriations job on Capitol Hill, and I am happy to have Senator SHELBY, a Republican from Alabama, as my chairman of the subcommittee. I am the ranking Democrat on that committee. We have the biggest appropriation bill when it comes to discretionary spending—some 60 percent of the Federal discretionary budget, and we know how important it is to get it right. America never wants to come in second in a war, and we certainly never want to be in a position where we are mistreating or ignoring the needs of our men and women in uniform.

Each year we go through their requests and try to make sure the most important things are funded. The mili-

tary will tell us: There are certain things that are essential and timely, and we need you to spend money on them. And we have responded, not just in the subcommittee and in the full committee but in the Senate and in the House.

Now comes the President and says: Not so, we are going to take the money that we told you was so critically important this year and spend it on the Mexican border to extend the wall—\$5.7 billion worth of it.

As I have met with the heads of the branches of our military service, we have asked basic questions. I did that yesterday to several generals and Secretaries who came before me. I said: Has the administration sat down with you in terms of your branch of the military and told you where they are going to take the money to build the wall?

Consistently, the answer is no, they don't know. We are days or weeks away from that money being taken.

What we have done is to prepare a chart through the Military Construction Subcommittee, which is chaired by Senator BOOZMAN, the Republican from Arkansas, and Senator SCHATZ, a Democrat from Hawaii. I asked them: Where are the unobligated projects? These are projects that have been authorized but haven't been started. They may have had basic engineering and preliminary estimates done and so forth. They are ready to let a contract. The money is sitting there ready to move forward, and these are the projects that are on the target list for President Trump when it comes to cutting the military to pay for his border wall.

We have a long list here. The list includes almost every State—certainly, every State that has anything near a military facility. The State of Illinois has several key projects that we consider to be essential. There is one in Peoria, IL. It is a fire crash and rescue station that needs to be upgraded for the safety of the men and women who work there and those who use that important airport, and there are other things within our State.

As I said, hardly any State is omitted from this list. Any Senator who is voting to give this President the authority to cut military projects and to stop the spending on military projects should realize that it may come home and require an explanation.

The Presiding Officer is from the State of Oklahoma. I tell him that four of the projects are in Oklahoma that are on the target list—the hit list—for cuts if the President decides to cut those projects or Illinois projects to fund this wall.

I have two or three specific ones that I would like to highlight today because they came to my attention. I thought it would be a shame—in fact, it would be just plain wrong—for us to cut the spending on these projects. Let me tell you about one of them that struck me first.

The Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps came to see me. He is a no-nonsense man. You can understand that if you come to be a four-star general in the Marine Corps, you get down to business in a hurry. We talked about some of the damage done at the premier training facilities for the U.S. Marine Corps. Last year, Hurricane Florence tore through the State of North Carolina. The Marine Corps happened to be one of the victims of that violent storm. The hurricane damaged roughly 800 buildings on base at Camp Lejeune, New River, and Cherry Point.

Here is an overhead shot that is not as graphic because it was taken after the hurricane, but the blue coverings on the tops of these roofs are an indication of the structural damage that was done to these buildings.

As I mentioned, 800 buildings on these bases were impacted and damaged by this hurricane. This overhead shot taken last month indicates the work that needs to be done before these buildings can be successfully inhabited by the Marine Corps and their families.

I have a photo of the Camp Lejeune chapel, too. There is not much left of it. That is an indication of the damage that was done there. This is a worker walking outside of the chapel. That is what is left of the chapel. Insulation is falling from the ceiling. There is no good reason to prolong the cleanup.

The Marine Corps said they want to get down to work as quickly as possible and restore this training facility for the good of the Marine Corps and for our Nation, but this is on the hit list for the President for the wall at the border.

What else needs attention this year? The U.S. Air Force needs \$750 million to begin cleaning up Tyndall Air Force Base, which was leveled by Hurricane Michael. The Army leaders need \$1 billion for everything from more training to jump-starting new technology to keep our troops safe and effective in the battlefield. The Navy has asked for hundreds of millions of additional dollars for unexpected ship maintenance. We can't afford to shortchange the men and women in the Navy. We saw what happened not that long ago with the fatal accidents involving Navy maneuvers and exercises. We never want that to happen again.

The National Guard has 2,100 personnel on the border, but it is starting to run low in its pay account. So it was hoping some of these unobligated funds, at least a small part of them, might be used so they can continue their border mission.

Unless the Department of Defense finds \$150 to \$300 million this year, the National Guard will have to cut short its summer trainings in all 50 States.

My subcommittee has identified almost \$5 billion in military priorities that need attention today, but after President Trump takes half of that—\$2.5 billion to pay for his border wall—which priorities will get cut?

The President has also decided to cut or delay \$3.6 billion in military construction projects. The President might not think these projects are timely or important, but it was just weeks or months ago when the administration said just the opposite and asked Congress to appropriate money—examples: \$800 million for essential training facilities like the National Guard readiness centers, simulators and firing ranges in the States of Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, and Montana, to name a few; \$1.4 billion worth of maintenance-related projects such as aircraft hangars and vehicle maintenance shops in Arkansas, Indiana, Missouri, and Oklahoma, not to mention many other States affected; \$1 billion worth of projects for medical and dental care facilities for the men and women in uniform; schools for military families, military barracks, and other essential facilities in Arizona, Missouri, Texas, and beyond.

Fort Campbell, KY, needs a new middle school for military children. The current building dates back to 1967 and is in serious disrepair. We were told that was a priority, but it could be stopped, cut, and eliminated if we are not careful to build this wall.

Also on this list is a new rifle range at Parris Island, SC, a training base for 20,000 new Marines every single year.

There is a new training center at Fort Bragg, NC, to provide top-notch training and prevent injuries among our Special Forces. They are using an old warehouse right now, and they want a modern facility. If it were your son or daughter serving our military at Fort Bragg, you would give them nothing less. The list goes on and on.

Are we really going to tell our military—the very people who are protecting and defending this Nation—that the needs they have identified and we have appropriated money for are going to be put on hold because President Trump made a campaign promise that he can't keep—that the Mexicans were going to build the wall?

Republicans and Democrats in the Senate should join the House in rejecting the President's emergency declaration. The Senate should reject any effort by the President to take money from our troops, from the military—from the Marines, from the Air Force, the Navy, the Army, the National Guard units—to build this wall. We may not agree on much, but we used to agree on fundamental things. The Department of Defense was a priority. The men and women serving there deserve not only our gratitude but the investment in their training, operations, readiness, and a way of life that shows our respect for what they are doing in service to this country. We can do nothing less.

When we face the vote—quite likely a week from today or tomorrow—on whether we agree with the House, I hope that the Senate, Democrats and Republicans, will put the national defense of our Nation first and our mili-

tary first and vote no on President Trump's effort to extend this emergency designation and to try to assume constitutional responsibilities beyond what is already written.

We are a branch of government—article I of the Constitution. Our responsibility is to appropriate funds. When we give away that responsibility, we walk away from the reason we were elected. I hope that Members on both sides of the aisle will consider that as we face this historic vote.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

NOMINATION OF CHAD A. READLER

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the nomination of Mr. Chad Readler to the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court.

There are certainly many reasons to oppose Mr. Readler's nomination. His track record paints a very clear picture of what he values and what he does not. Mr. Readler fought to uphold President Trump's travel ban that targets people because of their religion. He has argued in favor of a business turning away customers simply because they are LGBT. He worked to unravel programs made during the past administration that would ensure low-income workers would actually receive their hard-earned benefits. Of the things that Mr. Readler values, protecting Americans from wrongful acts of discrimination is clearly not among them.

Yet it still remains difficult for me to understand why Mr. Readler—and any of my colleagues who choose to advance his nomination today—would support going back to an era when health insurance companies are allowed to discriminate against people with preexisting health conditions. I have heard plenty of my colleagues from across the aisle make public statements in favor of preexisting coverage protections. That is probably because they hear, like I do, from people all across my State who fear losing coverage as a result of having that pre-existing condition.

What are preexisting conditions? Well, it is things like diabetes, asthma, or even high blood pressure, and they are a reality for over 4 million Michiganders. This range of fairly common to fairly complex conditions is experienced by one in every four children, over half of the female population, and 84 percent of adults in their late fifties and in their sixties.

Today, there is a broad consensus that we need a Federal law in place that prevents insurance companies from denying coverage or jacking up prices based on someone's health status, their age, or their gender. We have a law on the books right now that protects people with preexisting conditions, but this law must be defended, not undermined.

I worked hard to pass this important coverage during my first term in the Congress, and I have fought to preserve it every day since then. Although this

fight has been successful so far, it is based on the premise that the laws passed and upheld by Congress will be defended in court. Yet the Department of Justice Civil Division, under Mr. Readler's leadership, decided not to do so. His actions fit into the story of the Trump administration's ongoing partisan efforts to sabotage our healthcare system and dismantle strategies that would lower premiums and expand quality, affordability, and coverage, generally. The President is constantly looking for ways that he can sidestep Congress and attack legislation that has brought health insurance to over 20 million Americans and cut Michigan's uninsured rate in half.

We should not be advancing a Federal court nominee whose disregard for the rule of law comes at the expense of the health and the financial stability of millions of Americans. I urge my colleagues to vote no on Mr. Readler's nomination and his track record of promoting discrimination.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I appreciate my colleague from Iowa, Senator ERNST, for organizing this opportunity for several of us in the Senate to discuss the Green New Deal and to do it this week.

To put it mildly, the Green New Deal is ambitious. To frame it more accurately, it is an unworkable, pie-in-the-sky attempt to reshape every aspect of everyday Americans' lives.

First, let me say that I am proud of my record in successfully advancing the availability and affordability of renewable energy. Many have called me the father of the Wind Energy Incentives Act. I suppose after—what?—probably 26 years, that makes me the grandfather of the Wind Energy Incentives Act. My legislation sought to give this alternative energy source the ability to compete against traditional, finite energy sources. At that time, we never knew about fracking for natural gas and for oil. We thought we were going to be completely dependent upon Saudi Arabia for our energy. Now we know that is not true, but back in 1992 and before, we did everything to think up every alternative energy we could in order to be less dependent upon the Saudis. One of those acts that I was involved in was wind energy.

The wind energy bill—now law—has been extremely successful. Iowa supplies more than 35 percent of its own electricity from wind. We were the first State in the country to generate more

than one-third of its electricity from wind. Wind energy employs approximately 7,000 Iowans, and the nearly 3,000 wind turbines in Iowa generate millions of dollars in economic activity. So I want to make it very clear that I am speaking as someone who has a very successful track record of advancing clean energy.

Think about what the Green New Deal is about. Presumably, they don't know we have been this successful because the Green New Deal, on the other hand, is nothing more than a grab bag of vague aspirations. In fact, the Green New Deal was initially introduced in the House and Senate by its authors as a nonbinding, symbolic resolution—in other words, a lot of hot air. That means that even if it were to pass as introduced, it would not become law. I am glad that Senate Majority Leader MCCONNELL reintroduced the text in a format that could become law so we Senators could go on record as to whether we would want to make this the policy of the United States.

It would be one thing if the policy and goals remained on topic—namely, reducing pollution and cutting our Nation's carbon emissions. Those are worthy goals. Yet the resolution reads like a utopian manifesto that seeks to implement every liberal policy priority from the past many decades.

We have seen extreme leftwing agendas that rely on the power of the State and that usurp the role of individuals. How will those policies turn out? We have plenty examples. Look at the former Soviet Union. Look at Cuba over the last 60 years. Look at what has happened to Venezuela in the last 15 years. It has gone from the richest country in South America to a destitute country in which they die of malnutrition and people can't get medicine. In more instances than in the three I have just given you, these utopian ideas never turn out very well.

Sure, the Green New Deal includes goals that are related to energy and the environment, but for the most part, they are wholly unrealistic. For example, their calling for the upgrading of all existing buildings or, in another statement, their meeting 100 percent of the power demands of the United States through clean, renewable, zero-emission energy sources—all within the next 10 years—is simply not feasible.

Of course, no concrete proposals are put forward on how this is to be achieved. The Green New Deal just leaves us scratching our heads thinking about how all this would work.

There are a lot of questions. Would it require the government to mandate that every building owner in the United States make costly building improvements to meet national standards set here in Washington, DC?

Another question is, would every homeowner have to submit to government inspection to ensure that his or her home meets the standards dictated by the government?

Another question is, what government expenditures would have to be made, assuming all of this is even technologically possible, to go from about 17 percent of U.S. electricity generation coming from renewables today to a total 100 percent in 10 years?

The last question I will raise is, are the backers of the Green New Deal willing to support nuclear energy as a means to reach their goal? On this last point, I would conclude that a summary of the Green New Deal initially put out by the chief author in the House suggests a lack of support for nuclear energy.

As I have said before in my remarks today, I have been a leader on renewable energy production for decades, not just wind, as I have said, but geothermal, solar, biofuels, et cetera. So I am not just talking about being the author of the wind energy production tax credit.

During my leadership of the Senate Finance Committee in the 2000s, when I was chairman there, I oversaw the establishment, the enhancement, and renewal of numerous tax incentives that promote everything from wind and solar to renewable fuels like biodiesel, to energy-efficient homes, buildings, and appliances.

Unlike the unrealistic goals of the Green New Deal, these initiatives I just read are not only law, but they are real, proven, bipartisan actions that I shepherded into law to make the United States more energy independent and also, at the same time, improve our environment. Unfortunately, many of these key energy incentives I just mentioned are currently expired, and some of them have been expired for more than a year.

We had a real opportunity to extend these energy incentives as part of the appropriations deal reached earlier this month, but that was ultimately blocked by House Democrats—probably some of the same people who are promoting the Green New Deal. They seem overly focused on the lofty goals of the Green New Deal or, as Speaker PELOSI called the Green New Deal, “The green dream or whatever they call it, no one knows what it is.”

The House Democrats could not be bothered a month ago with extensions of existing and successful provisions that incentivize the type of investment they claim to have backed and not only tend to incentivize, actually have incentivized alternative energy over the last two and one-half decades—provisions that support millions of jobs for people who are actually willing to work.

Perhaps this just shows that the Green New Deal is less about tackling energy and environmental issues and more about remaking America into a dreamy new progressive paradise.

No sector of the economy is left unchecked by the Green New Deal—make no mistake about thinking otherwise. The authors of the Green New Deal are intent on reshaping every aspect of

American life through a “national, social, industrial, and economic mobilization,” and those last six words are in quotations.

Shaping American life through “national, social, industrial, and economic mobilization” that is eerily reminiscent of the 5-year plans of the former Soviet Union or of the Great Leap Forward under Chairman Mao of China.

Even the family farmer is not spared from its grand plans. The Green New Dealers want to remove what they call pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in agriculture through sustainable farming and building a more sustainable food system that ensures universal access to healthy food. Now, I am not against farmers taking actions to prevent soil erosion and minimizing pollution because we farmers do that already. We have been doing it for decades.

The recently passed farm bill invests more in conservation programs than any farm bill before. I trust that farmers know more and have more common sense about how to take care of their land than some bureaucrat in Washington, DC, or politicians from New York City. We all know Washington, DC, is an island surrounded by reality. So you put forth legislation like this, and it is just like 535 Members of Congress have all the knowledge in the world to tell 310 million other people what they ought to be doing.

I don't believe all those smarts rest in the Congress of the United States or even the bureaucracy of this government. Over the last several years, when it comes to farming, we have seen farmers readily adopt the use of cover crops to prevent nutrient runoff and to sequester carbon in the soil through what we call minimum or no tillage.

Today farmers may go down as the first group in history to leave the land better than they found it for future generations. Moreover, every indication is that these calls for sustainable farming and a sustainable food system go well beyond farmers being good stewards of our natural resources. It appears to be intent on changing everything from how we farm to what we farm.

A fact sheet released by the House author, shortly after introduction, made this perfectly clear. It notes a desire—now, listen to this—it notes a desire to rid the planet of methane gas-emitting cows. In case the authors are unaware, all cows and all people emit methane. It is part of the natural digestive process. The only way to stop these emissions is to ban animal agriculture. That proposal couldn't be more disconnected or out of touch with Americans.

That is what makes the taxpayers feel there is nobody in Washington, DC, who has any common sense, but don't worry. According to the authors of the Green New Deal in the House, “It is not to say you get rid of agriculture or force everybody to go vegan.” This doesn't instill much confidence in the

farmer about the real intentions behind the Green New Deal.

I am amazed by the scope of what the authors would have the government impose on the American people.

I will end by noting that I am interested in working with my colleagues on sensible policies to secure our energy independence and improve our environment, but I fear this will not be possible as long as my Democratic colleagues remain intent on handing over the country to the government to remake it in Washington, DC's, image.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NOMINATION OF CHAD A. READLER

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I rise to speak in opposition to the nomination of Chad Readler to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

This nomination, if confirmed, would be advanced without the support of one of his home State Senators, and it deliberately ignores Senate precedent that has historically respected Senators' ability to identify nominees that best fit the needs of their State.

In his current position at the Department of Justice, Chad Readler led the legal briefs for some of the Department's most extreme positions.

He defended President Trump's travel ban, led efforts to end DACA, supported the inclusion of a citizenship question on the 2020 census, suggested that the structure of the CFPB was unconstitutional, and argued that businesses should be able to refuse services to same-sex couples.

Mr. Readler also led the DOJ's legal brief for the Texas v. U.S. lawsuit, arguing against the Affordable Care Act's protections for people with preexisting conditions, even while three other career attorneys at the DOJ refused to do so.

Think about that for a second. This nominee took up his pen and drafted a legal opinion at the Department of Justice that stated it was fine for his Department not to defend the law—a law that protects millions of Americans' access to the critical healthcare they need.

If that weren't enough to shock the conscience, Mr. Readler's nomination to the Sixth Circuit judgeship was announced the same day the brief was filed.

Is that a coincidence? Maybe, but since three other career lawyers at the Department of Justice resigned rather than draft this brief and violate their duty to the law, I think it is fairly obvious.

This administration has made it crystal clear that Mr. Readler was chosen because of his willingness to dis-

mantle the ACA and completely eliminate critical protections that ensure seniors, kids, and families in Nevada and across this country are able to get health insurance, regardless of whether they have a previous medical condition. For many Americans, denying vital healthcare protections and access to care is truly a matter of life and death.

President Trump and Republican leaders have promised to sabotage our healthcare from day one, and this nomination is another example in a long line of legislation, nominations, and Executive actions aimed at ripping away healthcare coverage from hard-working families in Nevada and across the country.

The Affordable Care Act is, quite simply, the law of the land. Its patient protections have wide bipartisan support, as evidenced by Congress's inability to pass ACA repeal. Since its inception, over 400,000 Nevadans have gained healthcare coverage, including 158,000 children. Tens of million more Americans across the country have gained access to affordable health insurance, prescription drug coverage, mental health services, and preventive care.

The ACA's provisions have also guaranteed that over 1.2 million Nevadans with preexisting conditions will not be denied coverage because insurance companies deem them "too risky" to cover.

We cannot go back to the day when women, veterans, cancer survivors, and children with disabilities were charged more for healthcare or were flatout denied coverage.

Americans need us to work together to defend their access to quality and affordable healthcare, not just in Nevada but across this country. Yet Mr. Readler has shown us that he would instead take us backward, unravelling more than a decade of progress and wreaking potential havoc on our economy.

This nominee has demonstrated that he is willing to carry water for this President's political interests and not serve in the best interest of Americans.

I oppose Mr. Readler's nomination because Americans deserve a judge who respects the rule of law and interprets the law based on statute, not the political needs of this or any administration.

I oppose this nominee because Senate Republican leaders are trying to jam him through without the support of one of his home State Senators, which is a direct attack on our constitutional role as U.S. Senators to advise and consent.

I want my colleagues to know that a vote in support of his nomination is a vote in support of unleashing chaos on the American health system, eliminating preexisting condition protections, and one that would result in millions more uninsured.

Mr. Readler is a dangerous choice, who has a long track record of supporting the most extreme legal posi-

tions, which makes him unfit to sit on any court, much less one whose decisions will impact millions of Americans.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I rise today to join over 10 colleagues to speak in opposition to the so-called Green New Deal.

Merriam-Webster defines a deal as "a bargain" or "an agreement for mutual advantage." By its name, you would think that Americans are going to derive some benefit from it, but this couldn't be further from the truth.

The truth is that this proposal is a raw deal for America, especially our rural communities.

As many of you know, every month I give out a Squeal Award, which draws attention to outrageous examples of wasteful and reckless spending of taxpayer money.

With a \$93 trillion—trillion with a "t"—pricetag, which is roughly \$10 trillion more than the entire recorded spending of the U.S. Government since 1789, this month's Squeal Award goes to the Green New Deal, which, again, I think is kind of a raw deal.

Just think about that number—\$93 trillion. To fund this radical government takeover, every American family would have to pay about \$65,000 annually. Folks, that is more than most Iowa households bring in in a year.

The ideas presented in the Green New Deal used to garner support only from the furthest fringes of the political left—the furthest fringes. Concepts like rebuilding every building in the country, outlawing fossil fuels, and guaranteed jobs would never have made their way into mainstream discourse just a few years ago. Now our Democratic colleagues are trying to make them mainstream.

In fact, 100 of the 282 Democratic Members of the House and Senate have signed on to support this plan. This is the creep of socialism into America.

If you work in a part of the energy industry that has fallen out of favor, your job has no place in the country. That is what is envisioned by the Democrats.

The Green New Deal states that one of its goals is to meet "100 percent of the power demand in the U.S. through clean, renewable, and zero-emission energy sources."

Don't get me wrong, folks—don't get me wrong—increasing our reliance on renewables is a good goal and one that I support, but we have to be realistic about our current energy capabilities and our needs.

Private sector investment and innovation, coupled with government support and incentives, have contributed to significant advances in renewable energy.

I am proud to say that my home State of Iowa is one of the Nation's leaders in renewable energy, with wind providing nearly 40 percent of our electricity. That is more than any other State in the Nation. With more wind coming online, coal went from producing 76 percent of our electricity in 2008 to 45 percent of it in 2017.

I would note that this transition toward renewables happened largely as a result of State policies and community engagement, not heavyhanded government regulation.

Another one of the "goals" I find most interesting in this unrealistic proposal is that of providing "guaranteed jobs." What may be lost on the Democrats is that the best guaranteed jobs program is not housed in a government building; it is a strong economy like the one we are living in right now—not one bogged down by job-killing regulations and punitive tax breaks.

If you want proof of this, look no further than Iowa. Our unemployment sits at a low 2.4 percent, and we have over 63,000 job openings and about 40,000 folks looking for work. That is more job openings than there are people actually looking for jobs.

Lastly, I would point out that as a part of this proposal, our Democratic colleagues want to overhaul transportation systems in the United States. If you live in places like New York City, you can walk to a grocery store, but in rural communities like my hometown of Red Oak, IA, it can take you 30 minutes to drive to a Walmart. I am not talking about 30 minutes of driving to a Walmart in city traffic; I am talking about 30 minutes of driving, probably not meeting any cars at all on the road.

Everything from combines to tractors and to the trucks that transport our grains to market would be impacted. The Green New Deal is unrealistic and would unfairly impact rural communities across this country.

Folks, we have a clear choice. We can continue to support rural America and pro-growth economic policies that boost our economy and create jobs or we can allow socialist fantasies like the Green New Deal to creep in, take hold, bankrupt our Nation, and devastate our rural communities.

I yield the floor to my colleague Senator CORNYN.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, will the Senator from Iowa yield to a question?

I am interested in whether she believes that climate change is real, caused by humans, and requires Federal action.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I will yield.

I do believe that climate change is real, and we have seen climate change for centuries, Senator SCHATZ. So, for my colleague from Hawaii, we have seen climate change; there is no doubt about that.

But what I am debating here today and what we are speaking on is right here: \$93 trillion, and we want to get rid of all fossil fuels within 10 years, folks—10 years. We can't drive a combine. We can't harvest our food. For heaven's sake, we have to be realistic.

My home State of Iowa has taken advantage of ingenuity and innovation and developed a process where wind energy contributes 40 percent of our electricity.

Now, with the new wind energy field that is being put in by MidAmerican Energy in the western part of the State, where I am from, in the next 2 to 3 years, 80 percent of our electricity will come from wind energy, and it didn't take big government or socialism to put it into place.

So thank you very much.

I yield the floor to Senator CORNYN.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President.

Mr. SCHATZ. Excuse me, Mr. President. May I ask a followup question through the Chair?

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, regular order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa has yielded the floor to Senator CORNYN.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President.

Mr. SCHATZ. I just would like to get clarification. She did say climate change is real, but my question is whether—

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, regular order.

Mr. SCHATZ.—manmade climate change is real, and I did not get an answer.

Mr. CORNYN. Regular order.

Mr. SCHATZ. If she's unwilling to answer that question, I understand.

Mr. CORNYN. Regular order, Mr. President.

Mr. SCHATZ. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, last week, I spoke on the Senate floor about the perils of socialism. I never thought in my entire life that I would have to do something like that, but given the rise of democratic socialists, which obviously is a contradiction in terms, I think it is important to remind the American people about the failures of socialism, as well as radical policies like the ones the Democrats are trying to push off on the American people.

If you want to know what command and control economics is and what it would mean to our freedom and our liberty, all you need to do is look at the Green New Deal. This is really nothing more than an attempt to mask this power grab by the Federal Government in feel-good environmental policy by mixing ideas like Medicare for All and guaranteed jobs and unrealistic economic and environmental policies.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. CORNYN. With net zero emissions—

Mr. SCHUMER. Will my colleague from Texas yield for a question instead of just filibustering what he says?

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I will—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas has the floor.

Mr. CORNYN.—yield for a question after I conclude my remarks, not to be interrupted.

Mr. SCHUMER. I simply want to ask the Senator—

Mr. CORNYN. Regular order, Mr. President.

Mr. SCHUMER.—if he believes climate change is real—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas has the floor.

Mr. SCHUMER.—or caused by humans.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President.

Mr. SCHUMER. We know what he is not for. What is he for?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will yield. The Senator from Texas has the floor.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I am not for socialism. I am not for Washington, DC, thinking they know better than what my constituents know about.

Mr. SCHUMER. Will the Senator yield for a question and say what he is for?

Mr. CORNYN. I will not yield.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. SCHUMER. Will he yield for a question stating what he is for, not what he's against but what he is for?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be in order.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas has the floor.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, if the Democratic leader will just be quiet—

Mr. SCHUMER. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CORNYN. If he will be quiet for a minute, I will tell him what I am for, if he will quit interrupting.

So what this is is an attempt—is purely a power grab here in Washington masked as a feel-good environmental policy, mixing ideas like Medicare for All and guaranteed jobs with wildly unrealistic and radical environmental policies like zero net emissions transportation systems and guaranteed green housing.

Since this resolution was proposed, it has gained the ire of people on both sides of the aisle, something we don't see that often, and something that I don't know that I have ever seen. One of this bill's authors refers to the majority leader's intent to bring this resolution to the floor as sabotage.

Ordinarily, when you introduce an idea to the U.S. Congress, you are begging the majority leader to put it on the floor—the committee chairman to put it through committee so you can advance your idea. When the majority

leader said he would do that for the Green New Deal, it was called sabotage.

Since the Green New Deal was rolled out, things in Washington have gotten increasingly wacky and, believe it or not, even crazy.

We recently put a pricetag on the Green New Deal. You heard the Senator from Iowa talk about the \$93 trillion. That is so much money that I doubt most of us can wrap our brains around it. It is kind of like when somebody tells you the Earth is 140 million miles from Mars. How do you conceptualize that? You have no point of reference to understand just how far that really is.

Let me put it this way: If you combine the gross domestic product of every single country in 2017—every single country on the planet in 2017—the price of the Green New Deal would be higher than that.

If you total up how much the United States has spent—the U.S. Government, since the Constitution went into effect in 1789, the price of the Green New Deal would still be higher.

If you total the value of 1 year's worth of oil and gas production in Texas, it would take almost seven centuries of production to pay for the Green New Deal.

Margaret Thatcher, who had a gift for words, said: "The problem with socialism is that you eventually run out of other people's money." Well, in this case, you don't even have the money to begin with, but that is what this is really about.

This is the antithesis of what our Founders believed in when they founded the United States of America. They believed that checks and balances and separated powers were protections of our individual liberty and our right to make decisions for ourselves and our families.

They viewed the concentration of power that would be necessary to do something like the Green New Deal as the opposite—antagonistic to individual liberty.

Mr. President, things like eradicating air travel clearly aren't the answer, and the Senator from Hawaii would say that wouldn't work very well if you tried to get to Hawaii from Washington, DC.

No matter what your perspectives on energy are or the environment, I think every one of us can single out something we can agree on; that is, smarter policies that will not bankrupt our country.

The solution is not the Green New Deal or another government power grab. It is all about innovation—

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President.

Mr. CORNYN.—the creativity of Americans—

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President.

Mr. CORNYN.—doing research and science to come up with—

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President.

Mr. CORNYN.—innovations.

Mr. MARKEY. Will the Senator yield for a second?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas has the floor. He has declined to yield.

Mr. MARKEY. I would just seek to be recognized and just ask the Senator if the—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has not yielded.

Mr. MARKEY.—\$93 trillion number comes from a Koch brothers-funded organization.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts will suspend.

The Senate will be in order.

The Senator from Texas has the floor.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I notice one thing: When people around here—colleagues across the aisle—don't like what they are hearing, they try to suppress or drown out dissenting voices.

I think the American people need to hear this debate because our ability to innovate is critical to the success of our economy and our competitiveness in the global economy.

Investing in science and technology and increasing our ability to innovate is an important part of keeping our economy strong. Rather than the government's seizing control of nearly every industry, overregulating their activities as you would under the Green New Deal, we should harness the power of the private sector to drive real, affordable solutions, and that is how we find cutting-edge solutions to our biggest challenges.

A lot of folks try to paint with broad strokes about energy. You are either on the side of innovation and new technologies or you are in favor of traditional oil and gas development.

Well, I am proud to come from a State that believes truly in an "all of the above" approach. We generate more electricity from wind than any other State in the country, and we believe in all of the above. You don't have to pick one or the other.

Not only do we lead the Nation in oil and gas production, we also lead, as I said, in wind energy production too. We are proof that you can implement policies that get government out of the way and leave industry experts to do their jobs. You can be pro-energy, pro-innovation, and pro-growth.

The Green New Deal is not the answer to our problems. It is a solution in search of a problem, and it is a naked power grab by Washington, DC, seeking to impose on each and every American how we should run our lives.

It is the opposite of the individual liberties and freedoms that our Founders believed our country would be based on. I hope in the coming months we will take steps to promote freedom and not more government control and ideas that lead to innovation, not socialist policies.

With that, I yield to my friend from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, my colleague said he would yield to a question after he finished debating. I would like to ask him a question.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I would like to ask my colleague a question. I appreciate that.

Just three: No. 1, does he believe that climate change is real? Does he believe it is caused by humans? And does he believe this body ought to do something about it?

I would appreciate an answer.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I will say to my friend from New York that I know what their talking points are now, but I don't believe what we ought to do about the environment is impose a travesty like the Green New Deal.

This is a government power grab. It is unaffordable. It is unrealistic. And, really, this reflects the most radical ideology and fringe of the Democratic Party today.

I think we should not have a socialist power grab of our entire economy.

Mr. SCHUMER. Will the Senator—Mr. President, will he yield? He didn't really answer my question.

What will he do about climate change? I ask my colleague to please answer not what he is against but what he is for. We have not heard from the other side of the aisle anything they are for about climate change or whether they believe it is real and caused by humans.

I would ask my colleague, once again, not what he is against. We know what he is against. What is he for?

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, there is a great book called "SuperFreakonomics" written by some Chicago economists who talk about the threat to the environment of horse manure back when we had horse-drawn buggies in our cities because the internal combustion engine had not been created. They point out that that environmental hazard went away almost overnight because the internal combustion engine was created.

Likewise, when I was growing up, a scientist named Paul Ehrlich from Stanford wrote a book called "The Population Bomb." He said that millions of people would starve across our country and across the world unless we basically quit having children. What he miscalculated is the impact of a gentleman by the name of Norman Borlaug and the Green Revolution that he began due to research and development of an innovative plant gene research.

So we were able to basically defeat the population bomb, and we were able to deal with the environmental hazard of horse manure by innovation. That is what I am for, that is what I said, and that is what I would say again to my friend from New York.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana is recognized.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to the so-called Green New Deal. This unaffordable, unattainable, and unrealistic proposal is bad for all Americans, but it is especially bad for the people who live in my home State of Indiana.

Indiana is the most manufacturing-intensive State in the country, and my Hoosiers are rightfully proud of that distinction. We make America's planes, our trucks, our recreational vehicles, our boats, and our pipelines. We produce the aluminum and steel that go into those products. We mine the coal that makes it affordable to power all of those factories.

Indiana is home to those respectable, high-paying jobs because of the highly skilled Hoosier workforce, our world-class infrastructure network, and, yes, our low energy costs. But the Green New Deal would crush Indiana's affordable energy prices, forcing the cost of doing business to skyrocket for Hoosier manufacturers and farmers alike and eliminating jobs in the process.

What would this Green New Deal mean for American families?

Over the next decade, the so-called deal would cost up to \$65,000 per American household per year. That is roughly the 50 percent—47 percent more than the median Hoosier household income.

Yes, America must continue to support an "all of the above" energy strategy, and I look forward to working in a bipartisan way to get that done. We must continue to develop renewable energy sources like wind and solar, but we must also continue to utilize our important baseload energy sources—that is your coal, your natural gas, your nuclear power. We simply cannot afford to eliminate these critical sources from our Nation's energy mix, and that is what the Green New Deal would call for.

In Indiana, approximately 92 percent of our electricity is generated by coal and natural gas—92 percent. Wind and solar account for just 6 percent of Indiana's electricity, and they cannot reliably and affordably produce the electricity Indiana needs.

So instead of turning a blind eye to coal and natural gas—energy sources that power America—let's continue to incentivize research and development. Instead of promoting job-killing legislation like the Green New Deal, we should be promoting proposals like the USE IT Act. This is bipartisan legislation put forward by my colleague from Wyoming that would promote carbon capture research and development.

We agree on the need to incentivize market-based carbon capture systems.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, would the Senator from Indiana yield for a question?

Mr. YOUNG. I would like to continue until I complete my remarks. I thank my colleague.

We really need to incentivize market-based carbon capture systems and ensure America can continue to cleanly and affordably produce baseload energy. By my reckoning, this is just one of many areas in which Republicans and Democrats can find common ground and work together to protect God's green Earth.

Indiana is an environmentally conscientious State. We continue to ex-

pand solar and wind production each year. We love to protect our important natural resources, such as the Indiana Dunes and Hoosier National Forest, but we cannot support a proposal like the Green New Deal that would endanger tens of thousands of Hoosier jobs. The Green New Deal is widely out of touch with Indiana's priorities. Hoosiers know a bad deal when they see one. This is a bad deal.

My fellow Hoosiers are greatly concerned that this radical proposal will cause utility bills to skyrocket and force Indiana factories to shutter. For these reasons, I am a resounding no on the Green New Deal. I stand with Hoosier farmers, I stand with Hoosier manufacturers, and I stand with Hoosier families in opposing this \$93 trillion deal.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, will the Senator from Indiana yield for a question?

Mr. YOUNG. I will.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, does the Senator believe climate change is real, and will he stand with the scientific community, which believes unanimously or almost completely that climate change is real and that human activity caused it?

Mr. YOUNG. Well, that is an easy one. I thank my good colleague. I have publicly said for a long period of time—and you can check my record—that I believe the climate is changing. I believe that all flora, fauna, and human beings have some impact on that. I also fervently believe that we can protect our environment without wrecking our economy. We can do that through energy efficiency initiatives, investment in energy R&D, carbon capture and sequestration, and adoption of free market principles.

I read a very impactful book, in response to my good colleague, early on in my adulthood, and I recommend it to him. It is titled "Ecocide in the USSR," and it explains how centrally planned economies and fatal, conceit-like efforts to engineer a better environment centrally, to plan an economy centrally, end up decimating our natural environment. That continues to have an impact on how I look at these issues. Perhaps we will find an opportunity to work together, though, and find some common ground. It won't be on the Green New Deal.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I come to the floor to join my colleagues in expressing concern over the maybe well-intended but poorly constructed policy in the Green New Deal.

First, I want to start by saying I have no intention of yielding until the end of my remarks, but the one question I would have for people across the aisle is, Do you actually support the Green New Deal? Do you support it in the form it has been proposed? I can't

imagine that you do because you understand the math, you understand the challenges, and you understand the reality that \$65,000 a year is the median household income in North Carolina.

So what we are talking about—the cost of the bill over 10 years is roughly what the average North Carolinian family makes. We know that is not sustainable. We know it is not sustainable to have our electric bills increase by \$3,800 a year. We know it is not sustainable to go beyond just the energy components of the Green New Deal to other aspects of the Green New Deal that just don't make sense.

So \$93 trillion is not something I can get my head wrapped around. I know that is the number we are talking about. But I think we can get to the household impact and recognize that it is not sustainable, right? So why are we having this discussion?

Mr. MARKEY. Would the Senator yield and tell us—

Mr. TILLIS. I do not yield.

Mr. BARRASSO. Regular order.

Mr. MARKEY—where he got that bogus number of \$93 trillion? That is a completely made-up number by the Koch brothers.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The Senator from Massachusetts will suspend. The Senate is out of order.

The Senator from North Carolina has the floor.

Mr. TILLIS. Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina has made it very clear that he will not yield until he is finished.

Mr. TILLIS. I will state for any other Members who come in that I have no intention of yielding. And in my time, in the 4 years I have been here, it has never occurred to me to interrupt in the way that we have been interrupted here, but maybe that actually gets to the point. This bill, as proposed, doesn't work.

I want to go back and tell you, as a Member of the North Carolina House, when I was in the minority as a Republican, I supported the renewable portfolio standard. I went to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and said: What you are proposing is not sustainable. Let's work together and do something different. And we did. That gave rise to almost 13 percent of all the energy generated in North Carolina today being generated from renewable sources. It gave rise to a sustainable electric bill that is one of the most competitive in the country.

What has happened with the Green New Deal is that the people at the extreme are preventing those of us who actually want to make progress from having a reasonable discussion instead of shouting over each other.

I don't care if it is \$93 trillion, \$43 trillion, or \$10 trillion—it is unsustainable. We can sit here and question the sources, but at the end of the day, we all know that this was theater. This was something that people

wanted to pitch. They wanted to win an election. But it was a dishonest promise that could never be fulfilled.

If you take a look at the other provisions of this bill—guaranteed jobs. I mean, it is reading like some sort of a socialist manifesto. As somebody who grew up in a trailer park and who didn't get a degree until I was 36 years old, I want an America that gives me an opportunity, not an America that tells me what my job is and how much money I am going to make.

So we have to have a realistic discussion about the Green New Deal. We are pushing people into corners and not having a good discussion about things we should be making progress on.

By the way, just out of levity, we even had some people go so far as to say that maybe we should reduce the number of cows we have on the planet because they create methane gas. I will not get into the gross reasons as to why. So maybe the chicken caucus is in favor of getting rid of cows or eating more cows.

Why don't we lower the temperature, recognize we have a proposal that doesn't work, and recognize it was generally motivated by politics. And when you take such an extreme stand, you should expect the other side to come to the floor, just as we are doing today, and make it real.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, we had a lot of discussion about the energy parts of the Green New Deal, but it goes into lots of other areas. There are many frequently asked questions.

I would say on the energy costs—and President Obama's energy adviser says you couldn't reach the goal—one thing we need to remember on the energy costs is that families pay those utility bills.

We just avoided a clean power regulation that in my State would have doubled the utility bill in 10 or 12 years. During the 3 years or so we were debating that because the court cases kept saying there really is no authority to do this, I kept reminding the people I work for, the next time you write your utility bill, just write out your check one more time, because if this goes into effect, within a decade, that is what you will be doing. See what happens when you pay that bill by writing your check one more time.

Some of the questions on this have been about other things as well. The fact that we love a challenge—this Green New Deal creates that. It talks about Medicare for all. At least in the talking points, it talks about job guarantees for all, a vacation in every job guaranteed by the government, and I think maybe even a vacation in the government program if you choose not to work.

There are lots of things here for people to be concerned about. There are estimates of cost, but even if they were three times the cost, it would be pretty extraordinary. In fact, \$36 trillion

would rebuild the entire Interstate Highway System every year for 100 years. When you are talking about \$93 trillion, \$80 trillion is the entire gross domestic product of the world. These are big numbers. It is a big bill.

Surprisingly, a dozen Senators are supporting this bill. They have cosponsored the bill. Whether it is the guaranteed jobs number or the universal healthcare number or the all-renewable electric grid system number or the guaranteed green housing number that individuals would have to comply with, this is an amazing step in a different direction. It is one that the country clearly will not take. It is one that I believe even the sponsors have some concerns about.

We will have a chance to vote on it here in the next few days or weeks, and we will see what the American people have to say about it.

I yield my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I understand that the majority has the floor, and so I will be very brief. I have enormous regard for Senator BLUNT and for those who have spoken already. I just want to say that, for the people who say we want to have a discussion about this issue, we are so eager to have a discussion about this issue. I come here every week hoping to have a discussion about this issue, and I would love to have a discussion about this issue. I would love to have hearings in the Environment and Public Works Committee about a climate bill.

I would love to have people working together to solve this problem. I will say that Senator SCHATZ and I have a piece of climate legislation that is not this one, but it does have the support of seven Republican former chairs of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, six current and former Republican Congressmen, four former Republican EPA Administrators and Secretaries of Treasury and State, two former Republican chairs of the Federal Reserve, and one former Republican CBO Director. A Republican congressman referred to that bill as not just an olive branch reaching out to Republicans but an olive limb reaching out to Republicans.

I hope we can emerge from this with a real conversation about real bills, and in the context of that, we will be very interested to know what the Republican proposal is to deal with climate change.

I yield the floor.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I appreciate the courtesy of my distinguished colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I would like to thank my colleague from Iowa for organizing this discussion on the Green New Deal resolution.

The public doesn't usually pay a whole lot of attention to nonbinding resolutions here in the Congress, but

that is not the case with this one. The sponsors of the Green New Deal in the House and the Senate certainly deserve recognition for the profile they managed to create so quickly. Of course, that is a double-edged sword because now people are beginning to pay attention to what is actually in the Green New Deal.

Leader MCCONNELL has proposed bringing the resolution to the floor, which has created, in my view, sort of a baffling response. The planned sponsors are claiming that a vote is "cynical" and meant to "disrupt" their "movement." You and I both know that every Member of this body would clamor to have their bills brought up for floor consideration. Most of us here live in the land of realistic and practical solutions.

The Green New Deal is very vague, but it does include enough detail to know that it proposes radical solutions that, in my view, are neither practical nor realistic. It is a wish list dressed up as environmental policy.

We knew it was going to be expensive. We knew the goal was to eliminate coal and gas industries, along with a lot of other good-paying jobs that they support in energy States like mine. This isn't the first salvo in the war on coal, for sure. We knew all the economic harm they would be proposing, but this is a massive shift to the left that goes far beyond anything the Democrats have proposed before. This plan doesn't stop at eliminating the use of coal and natural gas for electricity. The plan also ends nuclear electricity and severely curtails the commercial air industry.

The environmental and energy components of this proposal are estimated to cost \$8.3 to \$12.3 trillion over the next decade, which averages out to about \$52,000 to \$71,000 for every American household.

We will be left with possibly an energy grid that lacks affordability and reliability to make the American manufacturers competitive around the globe and meet the basic needs of our families. Right now, coal, natural gas, and nuclear energy account for 83 percent of all the electricity produced in the United States. It is neither practical nor realistic to believe that we could phase all of that capacity out without some catastrophic consequences.

Unbelievably, this is just one piece of the Green New Deal. The sticker shock continues with tens of trillions of dollars to fund guaranteed jobs for people unwilling to work, eliminate private healthcare for 170 Americans in favor of a government-run system, replace or retrofit all housing stock for environmental compliance, and guaranteeing it to every American and putting food on everyone's table. Altogether, it could cost possibly \$93 trillion over a 10-year period of time. We could liquidate all the wealth in the entire country and maybe just cover that tab, but we wouldn't have anything left.

The Green New Deal sponsors claim the government will be making investments. They claim that the returns will pay for everything and make a profit for the people. Is this realistic or practical?

I think not. And if it fails, then what do we do?

Some say the Green New Deal, even if it is a disaster of a policy that would destroy our economy, at least has Congress finally talking about climate change. This is what we heard from my colleague. We serve on the EPW Committee together. It is a huge disservice, I think, to us. We have been working in a bipartisan fashion to deliver real solutions since before anyone had ever heard of the Green New Deal.

In the EPW Committee, Senators from coal States, such as Senator BARRASSO from Wyoming, who is here, and Senator WHITEHOUSE from Rhode Island, and Senator CARPER, and myself have been working for market-driven solutions to the challenge of atmospheric CO₂.

Members of both parties have worked and will continue to work on these important policies to meaningfully address carbon challenges while also protecting and creating jobs. We do not need a \$93 trillion turn that fundamentally alters the foundations of this country. We are capable of making investments in technology and infrastructure to address our Nation's challenges in a commonsense and bipartisan way.

The Green New Deal is not practical. It is not realistic, and it is a bit scary that so many Democrats are embracing it. The American people deserve to know where each of us stands on this policy. That is why we are going to have a vote. I am glad that we will have the opportunity to take a vote on this resolution in the coming months, and I hope that all of my colleagues will join me in opposing this utterly unfathomable and unworkable resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. BRAUN. Mr. President, although I had prepared my remarks to address what many of my colleagues have just covered—and that would be the preposterous proposal of the Green New Deal—I want to take a little different angle.

I think there is a point where so often those of us on the conservative side of the ledger, I think, get overwhelmed by the conversation being dominated by the other side. It is a fertile ground to want to try to use a better environment to parlay that incremental way into more government.

I think what we have here is just like addressing healthcare costs. We had ObamaCare—the Affordable Care Act—which turned out to be the “Uncomfortable Care Act,” but there were issues that were valid. In my own company years ago, I was worried about it. I drafted a plan that was proactive, ad-

dressed high healthcare costs, and made the pledge that you should never go broke because you get sick or have a bad accident. I crafted a plan through the real world that cut costs, and my employees have not paid a premium increase in 9 years.

I want to talk about the Green New Deal. I am a conservationist, and I am a member of the Nature Conservancy, as a business and an individual. We cannot let the other side co-opt the issue and preempt it because they think the argument is on their side. I am not going to belabor the point that I think it is preposterous. I want to make the point that if you think any of that can be done—whether it is \$50 trillion or \$93 trillion—keep in mind that we are running nearly trillion-dollar deficits. We are \$22 trillion in debt. Does that sound like anything that the Federal Government could actually solve in a sustainable way when we are in a pickle like we are currently in?

Until we change the dynamic here and get individuals who know how to do things where it works, in States like Indiana and in many States, and maybe let States have a bigger hand in the equation, where their budgets are balanced, where they have cash balances, and where it is not a false hope.

Let's look at the particulars of what the Green New Deal is supposed to do in addition to cleaning up our environment, which we have made great strides with. It is being spun as an economic argument. It is the exact opposite of that. I want to challenge folks on our side of the ledger, from the practical side, to where we generally lose out on the general argument, and, incrementally, things change against us over time.

We just had legislation pass in 2017. I want to tell this little story of what we did in our own special way. I am going to challenge enterprisers and I am going to challenge businesses across the country to think about this as a way to avoid that.

In 2017 we had, in my opinion—for enterprisers, small businesses, and farmers; and I have been involved in both—the biggest opportunity that has come along in years. We are keeping more of our own resources and not sending it here to a broken institution that has given us all of these deficits and debt, but we have to do something with it.

Back in January of 2018, my son, who is one of my three kids now in my business, said: Dad, let's take tax reform and share the benefits with employees.

That is a great idea. I didn't think it would have a bigger political meaning until he said: Hey, let's put it in the company memo that it is due to tax reform. We have taken, in my mind, the biggest thing we could do—whether you want to return the dividends into the environment, into higher wages, or into whatever you want to do—and we have had less than a year to run with it. All I know is that like many companies in Indiana, we lowered healthcare costs and flattened them for 9 years.

We raised 401(k) benefits. We started quarterly bonuses instead of just annual ones.

We are doing what I think this country needs to do—quit looking to the Federal Government to solve all of our problems, even when they have an argument like that we need to further improve our environment, that we need to avoid what could possibly be a catastrophe down the road, where we do stick our head in the sand.

Don't look to this institution to do it because I don't think you can credibly say that you can do anything in the context of the product that has been delivered over the last decade or two. States, individuals, businesses, organizations—but especially businesses, because we have reaped the benefits, in my opinion, of the biggest legislation that has occurred in decades—must put our money where our mouth is, where my company's is. Invest in your employees and change the system from the bottom up, not from the top down.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, first, I want to thank my colleagues for coming down here and having this important discussion. I want to thank my Democratic colleagues, for whom I have a lot of respect, for being here and having this debate. I am sure it is not going to be the first time that we are going to be doing this on the Green New Deal or other elements of proposals coming from the House or the Senate. This is a big issue happening in the House and what is going to happen over here with some of our colleagues.

I think, in many ways, it is an issue that focuses on the future and where the country is going. As the majority leader recently said in an interview, “I can pretty safely say this is the first time in my political career that the essence of America is being debated . . . of socialism and democratic capitalism.”

OK. Let's have that debate. We are having that debate. What is the essence of America? I believe it is freedom and liberty. That is what we are founded on, and that is what I think proposals like the Green New Deal would undermine. To be clear, some people are joking about it—like banning hamburgers or airplanes or returning to the horse and buggy, but I actually think there are many people who are looking at this very seriously, and so we should.

Some of these kinds of ideas can be funny until they are not funny. What we are trying to do here is to talk about this proposal in a serious manner. In my State, the great State of Alaska, this is a deadly serious matter. There is so much that is in this idea, the Green New Deal—government takeover, healthcare, free housing, and free food, and the list goes on and on. The costs, as have been pointed out, are very high.

Today what I want to do is to talk about one aspect that would be particularly detrimental to my State and

to many other States—my colleagues from West Virginia and North Dakota are here on the floor—and that is this proposal to ban hydrocarbons produced in America within a decade. This is not a joke.

There are many Members in this body—some are on the floor right now, and some are in the House—who think this is a serious proposal and would like to do it. I want to talk about that. I want to stipulate that I am certainly somebody who is in favor of “all of the above” energy. The fact that America is now producing more oil, more gas, and more renewables than any other country in the world is good for all of us, Democrats and Republicans.

My colleague from Rhode Island is here. He and I have worked on a whole host of issues together involving oceans. I think the technological advances with regard to hundreds of years of supplies of natural gas with technology and with renewables provide huge opportunities for Democrats and Republicans to work together to bring down greenhouse gas emissions. This is enormous. We are just scratching the surface.

I look forward to working with him and the Senator from Massachusetts on these kinds of ideas because I think they are exciting, and I think, when you are burning natural gas at very high temperatures, you almost have very little greenhouse gas emissions. Combine that with technology and renewables. We have hundreds of years of these supplies. It is a great opportunity, and it is exciting. I want to work with them.

Let me get back to the proposal on the Green New Deal on natural resources.

In my opinion, we do not spend enough time on this floor talking about the positive societal benefits of natural resource development in America—oil, gas, renewables, fisheries. These industries don't just fuel our power generation and transportation and electricity for our homes; these industries literally lift people out of poverty. They lengthen life expectancy. They literally save lives. There is a strong correlation between poverty, the lack of economic opportunity, and the health of our citizens.

I am going to show a few charts here. This correlation is strong in my State, particularly with our Alaska Native population. In 1954, the Interior Department, with the help of the University of Pittsburgh, conducted a study of the health of Alaska Natives.

Here is a quote from 1954: “The indigent people of Native Alaska are the victims of sickness, crippling conditions and premature death to a degree exceeded in very few parts of the world.”

Some of the poorest people on the planet were my constituents in Alaska—in America—in 1954. More than 10 years later, in 1969—just 50 years ago—the situation was still dire.

Here is what Emil Notti, the president of the Alaska Federation of Na-

tives, told Congress 50 years ago, in 1969:

The native people in rural Alaska live in the most miserable homes in the United States. The life expectancy of the average Native Alaskan is 34 years old compared to 69 years old for the rest of the country.

So what happened after that?

We had a big change. We are not there yet, but we had a big change, and I want to explain. This was a chart that was studied just last year in the *Journal of Internal Medicine*. It is a study that was published in 2018 about the life expectancies of Americans.

Where you see blue and purple is where Americans' life expectancy increased the most. The State with the greatest change in the entire country was in my State. By the way, that is a pretty important statistic—life expectancy. It doesn't get more important than that. Are you living longer? Look what happened in Alaska. The North Slope of Alaska, the Aleutian Islands chain, and the southeast all experienced huge increases in life expectancy from these very low levels, some of the lowest in the world.

Why did that happen?

On the North Slope of Alaska, this Congress passed the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act to develop Prudhoe Bay, to develop oil and gas—some of the biggest fields in the world. At the same time, we also had a very large zinc mine that came into production. Because of this body's Magnuson-Stevens Act, we also had a huge increase in our fisheries.

The bottom line is that natural resource development happened in Alaska, in America, and people's lives increased. That is a remarkable thing, and we don't talk about it enough. The average life expectancy increase in Alaska was almost between 8 and 13 years. That is a measure of success because we were developing our resources of oil and gas. That is why I am taking this Green New Deal literally deadly seriously because what we have done in our State and in our country by producing resources is we have created the ability for people to actually live longer, and I challenge my colleagues to come up with a better statistic and a more important statistic than that.

I am going to end with a quote from a gentleman who came down here and testified in front of the Senate, Matthew Rexford—a proud Alaska Native leader from Kaktovik, AK, which is in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. He testified that Congress should give his small community the opportunity to develop the resources near his village. We did that in 2017 after a 40-year debate.

He spoke firsthand about his knowledge as to what resource development did for America, for Alaska, and for his community:

The oil and gas industry supports our communities by providing jobs, business opportunities, infrastructure investment. It has built our schools, hospitals. It has moved our people from Third World living conditions to

what we expect in America. We refuse to go backward in time.

That is what he said. I believe the Green New Deal—certainly, its ban on hydrocarbon production—would take us back in time. For the sake of Matthew and all of these Alaskans who have done so well by responsibly developing our resources, we are not going to allow that to happen.

I yield the floor to my colleague from North Dakota.

Mr. MARKEY. Will the Senator yield?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be in order.

Does the Senator from Alaska yield for a question?

Mr. SULLIVAN. I yield my time to the Senator from North Dakota.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is not possible.

Mr. MARKEY. Would the Senator from Alaska yield for a question?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I believe I still have the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No. The Senator from Alaska yielded the floor.

The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

Mr. MARKEY. I thank the Presiding Officer.

Mr. President, I would pose a question to the Senator from Alaska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts cannot pose a question. He has the floor.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, through the Presiding Officer, I pose a question to the Senator from Alaska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska does not have the floor. Therefore, he cannot respond.

The Senator from Massachusetts has the floor.

Mr. MARKEY. I thank the Presiding Officer.

I will just make this point through the Presiding Officer, which is that the words “fossil fuels” are not in the resolution. No. 2, airplanes are not banned in the resolution. No. 3, there is no guarantee for healthcare for everyone in America in the resolution. No. 4, there is nothing that provides for those who are unwilling to work in the resolution. None of this is true.

We know the Koch brothers paid for this \$93 trillion study, and all we are hearing from the Republican side is of a Koch brothers-produced document that is absolutely inaccurate. There is no banning of airplanes. There is no guarantee of Medicare for all. Neither of those is in the resolution. This entire discussion is based upon a completely fraudulent, bogus report that the Koch brothers produced.

What we are trying to say to the other side is we should have a debate about the science, that we should have a debate about the human activity, that we should have a debate about what the solutions are, and that we should bring it out here as a great deliberative body.

Right now, we are debating the Green New Deal, but the Republicans haven't given us any hearings. They have given us no scientists, no witnesses, and no debate. They are just doing this because the Koch brothers have produced a report at a cost of \$93 trillion that is completely and totally inaccurate. In fact, with regard to the accusation of the banning of airplanes, PolitiFact has looked at it, examined it, and said it is completely and totally inaccurate.

I think it is difficult to have a debate when the facts here are those which we cannot submit to committees, witnesses, debates. Instead, all we are subjected to is a representation of the Green New Deal that is completely inaccurate. For that matter, the words "fossil fuels" don't even appear in the Green New Deal.

This is not right. If the Republicans want to, they should set up a debate. Then we could have it out here on whether the planet is dangerously warming, whether human activity is principally responsible, whether this body should take action in order to deal with that problem, and whether, economically, we can unleash a technological revolution to solve the problem.

That is what we should be debating out here this afternoon, not a whole group of bogus facts that have been produced by the Koch brothers, have been paid for by the Koch brothers, and that are being repeated over and over again on the other side without any Republican saying he actually believes the planet is dangerously warming, that he actually agrees with the U.N.'s scientists who say it is an existential threat to us, that he actually agrees it is largely caused by human activity, and that we, the greatest deliberative body in the world, should have a robust debate. If the Republicans believe it is serious, they should present their own plan for debate on the Senate floor.

Mr. SCHUMER. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. MARKEY. I yield to the leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, we thank our friends on the other side of the aisle for helping to make our case.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is the Senator asking a question?

Mr. SCHUMER. Yes, I am asking a question.

If the Senator from Massachusetts has the floor, I ask a question of the Senator from Massachusetts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator from Massachusetts yield for a question?

Mr. MARKEY. I yield to the leader for a question.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, we have been making the case for the last several weeks that our Republican colleagues love to get up and rant about what they are against even though they exaggerate and tell mistruths about the bill Senator MARKEY has sponsored. Yet we have been asking repeatedly, haven't we, three questions: Do you believe climate change is real? Do you believe it is caused by human

activity? Most importantly, what would you do about it?

Here we have had an hour of debate, haven't we, with our Republican colleagues, and there have been a lot of mistruths and a lot of "here is what we are against" but not one single thing they are for.

So isn't it true, my friend from Massachusetts, that they have helped to make our case? We are glad they are finally talking about climate change, but we have to do something about it. Isn't it true we haven't heard a single positive response about what they would do?

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, the leader has put his finger right on it.

We want a debate. We want to see their plan. We want to know if they agree with the science of the entire United Nations and 13 of our own Federal Agencies that produced an identical report at the end of 2018—that being, it is dangerous and a great threat to our country, and we have to do something about it.

So where is the Republicans' plan? What is their answer? Of course, they don't have one. They want to bring out the Green New Deal with no hearings, no witnesses, and no science when they should be bringing out their own plan.

The leader is right. It is just, basically, a condition they have, and the number they are using—the \$93 trillion in terms of the cost of the Green New Deal—is a Koch brothers-produced number. It is their group that put it together. So how could we possibly be having a serious debate about something the Koch brothers have produced, in terms of dealing with global warming, since they are central players in this dangerous warming of our planet?

I yield to the leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I pose a second question.

Isn't it true that our Republican colleagues have been in the majority for 5 years and that during that time, more and more Americans believe global warming is a serious problem? I think it is above two-thirds. It is at 70 percent. It is a significant percentage of Republicans and a majority of Democrats and Independents. Isn't it true that in those 5 years, the Republican leader, our friend, hasn't brought a single piece of legislation to the floor that would deal with climate change in any way? Is that correct?

Mr. MARKEY. The leader is correct. No solutions, 5 years, and it is more dangerously warm on the planet. Four hundred billion dollars' worth of damage was done to our country in the last 2 years. We had fires out in the West, flooding, \$400 billion worth of damage—and the consensus among scientists is that it is only going to grow worse as each year goes by—and still no answers. Nothing on the floor from the Republicans, nothing that would deal with the problem, and no admission that it is caused by human beings and that we can do something about it.

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, we have not heard a single answer from any of the

Senators on the floor or any who spoke about what their plan is.

So I would ask you to repeat and ask them three questions that they still haven't answered—simple questions with no predisposed answers.

A, do any of our Republican colleagues—this is a question—believe climate change is real?

Mr. MARKEY. We don't know the answer.

Mr. SCHUMER. Second, do any of our Republican colleagues over there believe it is caused by human activity?

Mr. MARKEY. We don't know the answer.

Mr. SCHUMER. And C, do they have any plan, proposal, suggestion as to how we deal with the issue?

Mr. MARKEY. We don't know the answer.

Mr. SCHUMER. And I would ask my colleague to ask our Republican friends—if they have an answer to any of those questions, to yield the floor to them.

Mr. MARKEY. And I would be glad to yield the floor to any of them who would be willing to be recognized, but, through the leader, the problem is that they keep talking about a \$93 trillion cost, which is a report from the American Action Forum, a partisan, right-wing group funded by the Koch Brothers and Karl Rove as a sister group to his Crossroads USA 501(c)(3). That is what we are now debating out here on the floor, and not the science.

Mr. SCHUMER. Can you ask them to not repeat the same talking points about what they are against and finally say something about what they are for?

Mr. MARKEY. I would yield to any of my friends on the other side of the aisle who have concrete, positive proposals for dealing with the crisis of climate change in our country and on the planet.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity to come to the floor to answer those specific questions, and I would point to an op-ed that I wrote for the New York Times last year. Perhaps the Senator from New York doesn't read his hometown newspaper, but there is an editorial in the New York Times of December 18: "Cut Carbon Through Innovation, Not Regulation." It is a plan. Cut carbon through innovation, not regulation.

The question is, Do we believe the climate is changing? Do humans have an impact? The answer is yes to both. As a matter of fact, I wrote:

[The] climate is changing, and we, collectively, have a responsibility to do something about it.

It is right here in the New York Times from December 18.

Second, the United States and the world will continue to rely on affordable and abundant fossil fuels, including coal, to power our economies for decades to come.

We need to also rely on innovation, not new taxes, not punishing global

agreements. That is the ultimate solution.

I will point out that this is something that I had written and submitted and published long before the so-called Green New Deal was ever introduced into Congress either in the House or in the Senate.

I go on to say:

People across the world are rejecting the idea that carbon taxes and raising the cost of energy is the answer to lowering emissions.

Because we know, as I go on:

In France, the government just suspended a planned fuel tax increase after some of its citizens took to the streets in protest.

It was every story on the news.

And in the United States, the results of [the] November elections showed that these plans and other government interventions are just as unpopular.

Voters in Washington State rejected the creation of an expensive tax on carbon emissions. In Colorado, a ballot measure to severely restrict drilling was defeated. And in Arizona, voters rejected a mandate to make the state's utilities much more dependent on renewable energy by 2030—regardless of the cost to consumers.

I would point out that all three of those States elected liberal Democrats to Congress on election night.

In further answer to that question, I would point to USA TODAY, March 4, 2019. Today is the 6th, so we are talking Monday. Today is Wednesday. This is this week's paper, front page:

To a warming planet's rescue: Carbon Capture.

To the rescue of a warming planet.

In the race against climate change, scientists are looking for ways to pull CO₂ out of the Earth's atmosphere and store it away.

And what they point to is bipartisan legislation passed by this body, passed by the House, and signed into law by President Trump focusing on carbon capture and sequestration. It talks about a program called 45Q. That is the FUTURE Act. One of the cosponsors from the other side of the aisle is on the floor right now. His name is mentioned, my name is mentioned in finding the solution.

There are Republican solutions and ideas that are focused on innovation, not regulation, not taxation, focused on freedom and the innovation that we have had.

So I just come to tell you, Mr. President, that there are solutions, and the Republicans will continue to offer them. We had a hearing most recently just last week on something called the USE IT Act—again, to capture carbon and to sequester it. We have been working on new-age nuclear power, working with leaders around the world. We passed that, and it was signed into law—an innovation bill for nuclear power, new-age nuclear power that will be in small reactors, safer reactors, cheaper to use, no carbon whatsoever.

So there are absolute solutions, and Republicans are going to continue to come to the floor, but we are not going to support something that would bankrupt the country, something that

would raise the cost of energy for families, something that would drive people to the point of having to spend money they don't have, having our country borrow money we don't have, all at a time when you say, what is the cause? There are suggestions and numbers that have been raised. I haven't heard any numbers from the other side of the aisle.

So I come to the floor to tell you that Republicans have continued to offer solutions, and I have been offering some of these solutions for 10 years. It took us a while to get these into law, but they are working. They are working and have been identified as working. Even President Obama's former Secretary of Energy, Ernie Moniz, who came and testified to the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, said there are two things that would make a big difference. One is the new-age nuclear work that we are doing, and the other is carbon capture and sequestration. Those are large-scale products that work.

I see other colleagues on the floor. Do I have the floor right now?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming has the floor.

Mr. BARRASSO. Well, as long as I continue to have the floor, I would like to point out that we have a booming economy in this country. In just over a year, tax relief has helped create 3 million new jobs. Manufacturing jobs have increased for 10 straight months. There is the fact that we have more jobs available than there are people looking for jobs. We have a booming economy. I want to do nothing that is going to harm these people all across the country who are working to have an opportunity in such a strong, healthy, growing economy.

This Green New Deal—this Big Government takeover of the economy—it is masked as an environmental proposal. To me, it is radical. The president of the Laborers' International Union of North America calls it a "bad deal."

Take a look at America. We are leading the world in reducing carbon dioxide because of the technological and innovative techniques we have had. We know from what we hear about the Green New Deal that it is prohibitively expensive, with predictions of up to \$93 trillion. The entire net worth of the United States—of all the homes and all the families and everything—is only \$112 trillion, and this alone would cost \$93 trillion. You can go by how much it is going to cost each individual family. It is completely unaffordable. It is not something that is workable. But it is so far outside the America mainstream even if it were affordable.

So what we have seen here is the Democrats take another hard left turn. Under this Green New Deal, in just 10 years, the Nation's energy system would undergo a Washington makeover. The Green New Deal would end the use of energy resources that currently provide power for three out

of five homes and businesses in the United States. Think about the harm that would cause the economy. This Green New Deal mandates the use of expensive power sources that can't keep the lights on. Wind and solar are important. We need more renewable energy in this country. But right now, wind and solar provide less than 8 percent of our electricity.

Should we increase the use of renewables? Absolutely. But eliminating affordable coal and natural gas would be a costly mistake—and not only that, it is impossible to do. The electric grid can't handle it.

Last month, there was an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal titled "The Green New Deal's Impossible Electric Grid," written by Robert Blohm of the North American Electric Reliability Corporation. He writes that if the electric grid relies solely on renewable energy sources, "the grid itself may collapse."

That is not all we lose if the grid collapses. Our transportation system is in the crosshairs. The Green New Deal seeks to transform how Americans travel. It calls for an extensive and expensive national, high-speed rail system to replace air travel.

The State of California attempted to build a high-speed rail line between Los Angeles and San Francisco. It turns out the price was too high even for California. The Governor, Gavin Newsom, just recently canceled the line between San Francisco and Los Angeles. Why? He said because of the massive cost. But it is all part of the Green New Deal. The question is, if California can't afford to build high-speed rail between two major cities, how can we afford to build a system that crisscrosses the country? We can't.

The Green New Deal doesn't stop at energy and travel; it extends to every building in the country. Homeowners are going to be forced to retrofit their houses, and businesses would have to do the same.

This is what massive government overreach looks like.

The rest of the world is going to continue to pollute even if the country were to adopt something as extreme as the Green New Deal. It would cancel all of the gains we have made in the United States by the fact that our emissions continue to go down. In 2017, we produced just 13 percent of global emissions here in the United States—just 13 percent. China and India together—33 percent. And they are rising over there. Without dramatic changes from India and China, global emissions are going to continue to climb. So even if all the Green New Deal's costly mandates went into effect, with the punishment to our country and our economy, there would still be no real effect on the Earth's temperature.

So, look, it is no surprise that the Democrats are trying to duck this big green bomb. Senate Democrats may even decide to vote present to avoid

voting for their own extreme proposal that a dozen of them have either signed on to or cosponsored, including just about every Democratic Senator who is running for President. They have all signed on. They are all cosponsoring it.

This green dream is unreachable, but there is a proven way to reduce our emissions, which is why I talk about what we are wanting to do in a positive way with nuclear energy, with carbon capture, things that have gathered the attention of the New York Times and were on the front page of USA TODAY on Monday.

So we are going to continue to work with the FUTURE Act and with the USE IT Act. The committee is going to continue to work in a bipartisan way because Republicans are committed to finding solutions through innovation, not taxation, not regulation—solutions that do not hurt our strong and healthy, growing economy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleagues, first of all, in, yes, opposing this Green New Deal, this joint resolution, that is full of so many dangerous policies and positions. But before I get into my reasons for that, let me also join my colleague from Wyoming in saying I am for the things he is for and even more—carbon capture, utilization, and storage, refined coal, all kinds of ways that we can accomplish the same goals together, with realistic proposals, not fantasies.

Let me also say something that should warm the heart of our colleague from Massachusetts. The Koch brothers strongly opposed my candidacy and my election to the U.S. Senate. I owe them nothing, and I am grateful.

You know, I wasn't always this pessimistic about the possibilities in this Chamber. I believe, in fact, that divided government presents an opportunity for the parties to come together to find common ground and to have legislative victories based on shared goals and shared values. I hope we can get back to that.

I had hoped for it even on controversial issues, like immigration and healthcare, and I certainly hoped for it on energy policy, but when I heard that the Democrats were proposing this Green New Deal, I didn't view it as an opportunity for political gamesmanship. I viewed it as an opportunity to find common ground, to compromise, to find balance, and to negotiate the way that I believe our founders intended it.

I don't think killing innovators with something like a Green New Deal is how we accomplish the goals they say they are for in their Green New Deal.

You can imagine my disappointment when I read the contents of this joint resolution. The Green New Deal is not serious policy. It is a fantasy. I am personally disappointed to see so many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle cosponsor this—especially those

who are seeking higher office—and ignore the realities.

Someone earlier mentioned that the Green New Deal never talks about airplanes. No, but it does say that we want to transition to 100-percent renewable energy by 2030. Well, I don't know how you fly airplanes without having fossil fuels.

As the Presiding Officer may have seen, in my State of North Dakota, we are having a really, really cold winter. In fact, most of the Upper Midwest is. The National Weather Service referred to a stretch of this really cold weather earlier this winter as a polar vortex. We call it winter.

Polar vortex or whatever you want to call it, it has been a rough winter. Rough winters aren't rare or new to us, but this one has been particularly cold. We were well below zero several days in a row. In fact, during the polar vortex, one day the wind chill was well below 50 degrees below. By the way, for those of you from the South, 50 below is below zero—zero. It is a really low number.

But I believe there are some facts that have been left out related to how this will affect human health.

On January 1, in Hettinger, ND, it reached 42 degrees below zero without wind chill. That is real temperature. Again, that has happened in many communities throughout the State.

During these low temperatures, guess what doesn't happen. The wind doesn't blow, and when the wind doesn't blow, windmills stop providing energy, and they actually start consuming it. When I was a regulator, I cited a couple thousand megawatts of wind turbines in North Dakota.

When the energy can't be produced by wind turbines, it turns to gas, and, then, guess what happens. Natural gas providers have to ask their customers to curtail their gas consumption because they need the gas for a more firm supply of electricity that backs up the wind turbines.

Again, I was a utility regulator. I saw this happen a lot, and it happened just a couple of weeks ago in the Midwest.

Can you imagine that when temperatures drop below minus 22 degrees and wind turbines stop working? That means that many North Dakotans, like my mom and my grandchildren, have to rely on intermittent electricity to fill the gap caused by the cutbacks in gas. Do you see the cycle of this? It is a circle. One bad thing leads to another bad thing.

In this situation, it is when—not if—an electric outage occurs during a polar vortex, it would be disastrous for the people of my State and many others. This is a serious health risk, and I do not want my friends and family to ever wonder if they will be able to warm their homes when they need it the most.

Even if the Green New Deal were to pass, we could never afford it. You have heard a lot of statements today from Members about the expected cost of up

to \$93 trillion. You can argue that it is not \$93 trillion—that it is only \$90 trillion, it is only \$80 trillion, or it is only \$50 trillion. It is too much. It is unaffordable. And \$93 trillion is more than 90 percent of the combined wealth of all—I said “all”—American households in this country. It would cost every American family as much as \$65,000 per year, which, as you know, is more than the average yearly household income.

A tax-and-spend agenda to pay for an energy plan that wouldn't even work flies in the face of one of our Nation's greatest success stories—our domestic energy production.

To a large degree, the U.S. rocket ship economy is being driven by the energy renaissance happening all across our country, like in my State of North Dakota. Our strategy of energy dominance encompasses an “all of the above” approach—harnessing wind, oil, natural gas, solar, nuclear, and, yes, coal potential.

Millions of Americans are employed by energy development, and that number is only expected to grow.

In fact, in 2020 the United States will become a net energy exporter for the first time. At the same time, emissions have steadily decreased over the years, and it serves as a very important national security hedge. Why would we halt this positive momentum and stymie promising solutions?

The key to a better energy future is not taxation regulation but innovation and empowerment, as so beautifully articulated by my friend from Wyoming.

Ms. STABENOW. Would my friend from North Dakota pause for a question?

Mr. CRAMER. If these recent polar vortexes and cold winters taught us anything, it is that we have a well-rounded energy policy that encourages the best ideas. We need to be pragmatic and collaborative to find solutions. That is not what defines this Green New Deal. It is unrealistic, unworkable, and unaffordable.

I hope we never become so lopsided that my friends, neighbors, and family back home are unable to turn the heat on when they need it the most.

I yield the floor.

Ms. STABENOW. Will my friend from North Dakota be willing to yield for a question?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I am grateful for the opportunity to echo my colleagues' concerns about the Green New Deal.

We are here because the majority leader has indicated that the Senate will be considering this misguided proposal in the coming weeks.

You would think our colleagues on the other side of the aisle would be ecstatic about the idea of a Senate vote on a resolution that essentially compasses their party's entire platform. Instead, the minority leader is scrambling to conceive ideas that will give

his caucus members cover instead of embracing a plan. I can see why.

The Green New Deal didn't quite receive the celebration Democrats were expecting when it was announced. Its release was greeted with a combination of bewilderment, amusement, and confusion, which gave way to anger and disbelief the more Americans learned about it.

This is understandable. People don't tend to react positively when you threaten to upheave their lives by eliminating their jobs, outlawing their vehicles, and demanding they essentially build their homes to whatever standards Democrats in Washington decide.

If you ask most Americans if government control over almost every aspect of their lives is the direction they want to see the Nation take, the answer is an overwhelming no. Yet that is exactly what the Green New Deal seeks to do under the pretense of ending climate change.

The authors of the Green New Deal and its accompanying memo suggest their plan is the cure for all of society's ills. They cast themselves as saviors who will end global warming, income equality, and depression in one fell swoop. The Green New Deal will guarantee every American free healthcare, college tuition, and a job with a "family-sustaining" wage.

That last part isn't even required to receive the benefits promised by the Green New Deal. If an able-bodied person is unwilling to look for work, the government would provide "economic security" under the plan.

What supporters can't say is how they will implement this, what impact it will have on the average American, and where the trillions of dollars it will cost will come from. These details are important when you are asking for support of a plan that is estimated to cost up to \$93 trillion and dramatically expands the Federal Government's reach into the daily lives of every American.

Single moms, seniors, and those living on fixed incomes—the very people whom the Green New Deal supporters purport to help—will be the most negatively impacted by this proposal.

Getting the majority of our Nation's energy from renewable sources is certainly a worthy goal. However, you cannot brand a \$93 trillion, all-encompassing liberal wish list as an energy plan and expect it to be embraced with no questions asked.

Only a fraction of this plan deals with climate change, but its energy mandates are entirely unworkable. The Green New Deal dictates that the Nation will rely 100 percent on renewable power within a decade. Experts say it is impossible to accomplish this by 2050, much less within a constricted 10-year timeline.

The way forward to solve our environmental challenges should be driven by positive incentives, research, and development, not heavyhanded regulation.

The uncomfortable truth for the Green New Deal proponents is that the United States is already leading the charge on reducing carbon emissions. We can continue to build on that progress and encourage change within the international community without mandating a government takeover of nearly every sector of our economy.

As a member of the Environment and Public Works Committee, I have long advocated for an "all of the above" approach to energy security. This strategy includes wind, renewable biomass, hydroelectric and solar power, and it absolutely needs to include the expansion of nuclear power, which the Green New Deal mysteriously leaves out.

These are the right ways to responsibly address our energy needs. The Green New Deal—which makes undeliverable promises, proposes to dramatically drive up costs for every American, and eliminates thousands of jobs in the energy sector—is not the way to go. The Green New Deal will result in a staggering loss of jobs. It redistributes wealth on a scale our Nation has never seen before. It calls for a massive government takeover of our Nation's economy and culture. Worst of all, it hides all of this in a fanciful energy modernization scheme that can't be achieved in the manner it is written.

The Green New Deal is not a serious plan. The Senate should wholeheartedly reject it when it comes before us.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I am here on the floor to ultimately speak regarding Mr. Reader's nomination, but I do want to respond to my colleagues. It is hard to know where we begin because so much is said that doesn't make any sense. It is made up. It is ridiculous.

What I wanted to address as my colleague was speaking was where it said in the Green New Deal that we couldn't have ice cream. I have looked everywhere. I like ice cream, and I was shocked that we weren't going to have ice cream. Sure enough, there is nowhere where it says that they are outlawing ice cream.

For people who like cheeseburgers and milkshakes, I don't see anything in there about that either.

As the lead Democrat in the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee, who works with farmers every single day and appreciates the great work they are doing to stop carbon pollution, I would just have to say that it is pretty silly, if it weren't so serious, how the Republican majority and the Republican leader are mocking what is probably the most serious issue of our time.

There are many things that I care about and the people in Michigan care about, but if we don't get a handle on what is happening on this erratic and dangerous weather, it is going to affect

every part of our economy and every part of our way of life.

So if the majority leader or others want to say that we are declaring a war to outlaw air travel or the military or ice cream, that is absurd and would be funny if the whole subject weren't so serious.

By the way, in addition to that, the Republican majority leader said that we want to end air travel and cow farts. By the way, just for the record, cows don't fart; they belch.

The fact is that this mocking the serious, serious issue of our time, where we can't get the majority to join us on a simple resolution to say that climate change is real, that it is man-made, and that we need to act and that we have a responsibility to our children and our grandchildren to act. Let's start there.

I don't want to hear that somehow the world is coming to an end if there is a proposal that passes and not have something in its place that addresses what is actually happening in terms of the threats to all of us, our families, our States, and our economy.

This is real. This subject is real. It needs a real discussion. We can have differences. We will have differences on how to address it, and that is fine—but to mock the whole subject of what is happening right before our eyes. We have to make up new names now for weather events in Michigan. Not only do we have polar vortexes where the cold is rolling down because of the warming in the Arctic, but we have cyclone bombs or bomb cyclones—I am not sure which it is—but it is weather, wind events, that come at 60, 80 miles an hour into a community like a cyclone bomb. We are having to make up new terms for what is happening right in front of us.

So I would hope that when it comes to this discussion on what happens with the weather and climate change, that we would put aside the games, stop making stuff up, and have a serious discussion about how we can come together, create new jobs, move the economy, stop carbon pollution, and make sure our kids and grandkids actually have something to be proud of.

NOMINATION OF CHAD A. READLER

Mr. President, I now want to speak about the Readler nomination. I have often said that healthcare isn't political; it is personal. Being able to take your child to the doctor when they get sick is not political; it is personal. Being able to manage chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure with quality medical care and prescription medicine is not political; it is personal. Being able to count on your medical insurance to cover you if you get sick is not political; that is personal.

That is why, when the Trump administration nominates people for powerful positions who waged war on healthcare—you want to talk about somebody going to war. We have someone who waged war on healthcare who

we are about to vote on, on the Senate floor. I take that very personally, and the people of Michigan take it personally too.

I will be voting no on Chad Readler, President Trump's nominee for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. I want to take a moment to explain why.

The Sixth Circuit covers Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, and my own State of Michigan. In this unending parade of terrible judicial nominees, Mr. Readler stands out. It is not just that he defended restrictive voting laws in Ohio or that he voiced support for giving minors the death penalty—young people the death penalty—or that he argued that State and local governments shouldn't be allowed to pass laws to protect our LGBTQ friends and neighbors from discrimination, no, Mr. Readler's appalling views, if implemented, would touch every single family in Michigan.

At the Department of Justice, Mr. Readler has led efforts to dismantle the Affordable Care Act, including protections for people with preexisting conditions. In fact, he is the architect of the argument in *Texas v. United States*; that if the requirement that people have health insurance is found unconstitutional, then protecting people with preexisting conditions is also unconstitutional. Perhaps "architect" is the wrong word, given that architects build things, and Mr. Readler is solely devoted to tearing them down.

His argument is, of course, nonsense. It is also terrifying for Michigan families. Just imagine what Mr. Readler's goal could mean for the family of a child with diabetes, asthma, or cancer. Parents could find themselves with no insurance coverage for a child who needs chemotherapy to survive. Families could once again run up against lifetime limits that mean a child with complex medical issues could reach her lifetime limit by age 2 or 3. Parents could spend a lifetime worrying about a child who would never be able to qualify for health insurance as an adult.

Of course, moms and their daughters would be charged more if being a woman was once again treated as a pre-existing condition. All of these things routinely happened to Michigan families during the bad old days when insurance companies were in charge of our healthcare prior to the Affordable Care Act. Now Mr. Readler wants to bring those bad old days back.

However, that is not the end of Mr. Readler's noxious views. He is just as toxic when it comes to education.

In my State, Education Secretary Betsy DeVos made a name for herself undermining our public education system. Well, you can call Chad Readler the Betsy DeVos of Ohio. Mr. Readler, as chair of the Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools, pushed school privatization and fought oversight over Ohio's troubled charter schools. He fought oversight of the troubled charter schools.

He fought to eliminate the part of Ohio's Constitution that guarantees Ohio students will receive "a thorough and efficient" education. In short, he would eliminate the right to public education in Ohio.

He proposed language that would exclude LGBTQ students from discrimination protections in Ohio schools, and while at the Department of Justice, he defended Betsy DeVos when she delayed implementation of rules aimed at helping students who are victims of illegal or deceptive tactics by colleges. They were victims of illegal or deceptive practices by colleges, and he supported stopping that relief.

Michigan families who have children with preexisting conditions deserve better than Chad Readler. Michigan students who have been targeted by unscrupulous colleges deserve better than Chad Readler. Michigan folks who have business before the U.S. court of appeals certainly deserve better than Chad Readler.

In my judgment, he has no business being a judge with a lifetime appointment, and I know a whole lot of Michigan families who agree. I am voting no, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as the longest serving Member of the Senate and also the former chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I feel compelled—and I normally don't come down and speak about these things—but I want to warn about the destruction of long-held norms and traditions that have protected the Senate's unique constitutional role with respect to lifetime judicial appointments.

This is an extraordinary responsibility on the part of the U.S. Senate. The Constitution quite properly allows any President to nominate whomever they want for a lifetime position on our Federal courts, but as our Founders said, the Senate has to give advice and consent because of the effect of this person's lifetime position. They go way beyond the term of the Senators who vote for them and the term of the President who nominates the person.

In fact, until recently, and certainly during the years I have served here, Members of this body knew well they had a say when it came to who serves in the Federal courts in their States. It didn't matter whether you had a Republican or Democratic President or a Republican or Democratic majority in the Senate; blue slips protected the prerogative of home State Senators and gave meaning to the constitutional requirement of advice and consent. It ensures fairness but, more importantly, I think it also ensured comity in the Senate. That now is fast becoming history, and I fear it is going to do lasting damage to the Senate.

What is happening is a disingenuous double standard. When I was chairman

of the Judiciary Committee at the beginning of the Obama administration, every single Senate Republican, including many serving today, signed a letter. They made the case for the importance of the blue-slip tradition. They said it was absolutely imperative that it be respected during the new administration, the Obama administration. The Republicans said: We must do this. Well, I didn't need any reminder because under my chairmanship during both the Bush Republican administration and the Obama Democratic administration, I respected the blue-slip tradition without exception, even when it was not politically expedient to do so. I respected Republicans and Democrats alike. Regardless of who was in the Oval Office, under my chairmanship, not a single judicial nominee received a hearing without first receiving both home State Senators' positive blue slips.

I defended the blue slips, and that was unpopular in my own party on occasion, but I believed in both their constitutional and institutional importance. I also believed in the prerogatives of home State Senators and the need to ensure that the White House works in good faith with those Senators. I believed then, and I still believe now, that certain principles matter more than party. Something that, unfortunately, some, probably because they are new here, don't understand.

All of us, whether Democratic or Republican, should care about good-faith consultation when it comes to nominees from our home States. The reasons are principled and pragmatic. We know our State better than anybody else. We know who is qualified to fill lifetime judicial seats. They are going to have a tremendous impact on our communities. We know the men and women who are qualified. Without blue slips, nothing prevents our State selection committees from being completely ignored by the White House. Nothing would even prevent a New York or California lawyer from being nominated to a Texas court or vice versa.

Yet the Senate is abandoning this protection. Senators of the Republican Party who promised they would uphold it, gave their word they would uphold it, asked me to uphold it, have suddenly broken their word. That bothers me.

Last week, for example, for the first time in the history of this body, a nominee was confirmed to a seat on the circuit court over the objections of both home State Senators. That is the first time in our history that has happened. That meant my friends on the other side of the aisle had to break their word from what they agreed to before.

This week, we are voting on two additional nominees, Chad Readler and Eric Murphy, who are opposed by another home State Senator, Mr. BROWN. Senator BROWN made extensive efforts to reach a compromise with the White

House on these two Sixth Circuit vacancies, but the White House was not interested.

The White House knew the Republicans would not keep to the position they expected Democrats to keep when we were in the majority, and because they knew they could rely on Members of their own party not to follow tradition for the first time, they didn't even try. The White House didn't even try to consult. Even superficial consultation is an afterthought.

Senator BROWN then attended the confirmation hearings. He spoke against these nominations. He cited, among other things, Mr. Readler's unprecedented actions attacking healthcare protections while serving in the Trump Justice Department.

Mr. Readler was willing to reverse Justice Department policy and sign a brief undermining protections for pre-existing conditions when career Justice Department officials—career officials who have been there in both Republican and Democratic administrations—refused. They refused to reverse their well-established Justice Department policy. He, however, was perfectly willing to throw it away in court. Is this somebody we expect to be fair on the court?

Senator BROWN cited Mr. Murphy's longstanding support and advocacy for restrictive voting laws in Ohio. He knows that his constituents will have to live with the ramifications if these nominees are confirmed. It will directly affect the State. He expressed his concerns about their records, and his voice, in this process as a U.S. Senator, was ignored.

These votes come on the heels of the Senate's confirming a 37-year-old nominee for the Fourth Circuit who has practiced law for less than 10 years—a grand total of 9 years. She now holds a lifetime judgeship on an appellate court, just one step below the Supreme Court. Her confirmation hearing made a mockery of the Senate's duty of advice and consent.

It marked the first time in the Judiciary Committee's history—the first time ever that a nomination hearing was held during the October recess over the objections of the other party. We found out why.

Only two Republican Senators attended the hearing, and the questioning lasted only 20 minutes for someone who demonstrated no abilities to serve on the Fourth Circuit. They knew it didn't make any difference whether she had the abilities or knew what she was doing. All they knew is that this White House had nominated her, so let's rubberstamp this.

Frankly, the Senate should never function as a mere rubberstamp for nominees seeking lifetime appointments to our Federal judiciary. We shouldn't do it whether there is a Republican or a Democrat in the White House. That is exactly what we are doing with a Republican President and a Republican majority. No matter

whether the person is qualified, if the name comes up, rubberstamp it.

When I chaired the Judiciary Committee, many Senators—Republican Senators—expressed both publicly and privately their appreciation for the fact that my respect for blue slips protected their rights and gave meaning to advice and consent. Many told me this is the way it must always be, whether Republicans or Democrats are in the majority.

Well, their about-face, now that they control the Senate, is unbecoming, and it basically says that the Senate will just bow down to the executive branch. We will give up our responsibility, we will give up our authority, and we will just be rubberstamps. We might as well not even bother to show up; just do whatever we are told. It is deeply disappointing.

I know the pressure because many of my Republican friends have told me to rubberstamp President Trump's nominees. I know my warnings will fall on many deaf ears, even for those who promised me they would not do this.

I have served in the Senate long enough to know that political winds tend to change direction. Inevitably, the majority becomes the minority, and the White House changes hands. I suspect that many of my Republican colleagues who care about this institution, as do I—and there are many—are going to live to regret many of these actions.

The further down this path the Senate goes, the harder it is going to be to unring this bell. A vote for Mr. Readler or Mr. Murphy is a vote to say that we abandon our abilities as home State Senators to serve as a check not just on this President but any future President, Republican or Democrat. Basically, we are saying that we don't believe in advice and consent. Basically, we are saying that we don't believe in the Senate being the conscience of the Nation. Basically, we are saying that we don't believe the Founders of this country knew what they were doing when they said the U.S. Senate—this body of 100 people—has to represent 325 million Americans and that we don't believe they should have any responsibility, have any say in lifetime appointments.

If we abandon longstanding traditions and chase partisan expediency, I remind everybody that provides only fleeting advantage. It inflicts lasting harm on this body. It is within our power to stop it right here and right now.

I urge all Senators to ensure that home State Senators are provided the same courtesies during the Trump administration that they received from both Republican and Democratic judiciary chairmen during the Obama administration. I believe we can do that. I ask my fellow Senators to oppose Mr. Readler's and Mr. Murphy's nominations because they were done so out of the way that they should be done. Let the U.S. Senate, all of us, Republicans

and Democrats, say that we are not a rubberstamp to any President. We don't take our orders from any President. We don't bow and scrape for any President. Let's act like Senators, not like a rubberstamp.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

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.

TRIBUTE TO FRANZ WUERFMANNSDOBLE

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to recognize a true public servant, an individual who has been by my side since my first year as a Senator, someone who will be dearly missed, not only in my office but by this institution as a whole as he moves on to his next chapter this week: my deputy chief of staff and senior policy advisor, Franz Wuerfmannsdobler.

Franz has had a great impact on this institution, on the staff members who served here over the last two decades, and on me. His sage advice, his patience, his incredibly calm demeanor, his willingness to mentor and guide others, his respect for this institution, and his knowledge borne out of 20 years of experience in the Senate have contributed in countless ways to the meaningful work we have been able to do here for the people of Delaware and our country.

Today, I want to recognize and thank Franz for his remarkable and his selfless career. I want to thank him for what he has done for me, for my office, for the people of Delaware, and pay tribute to the legacy he leaves.

It is a remarkable legacy. He has been on the frontlines of events and policy battles that have quite literally shaped the history of our country over the last two decades—from 9/11 to the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, from energy and appropriations efforts to sustained concerns and engagement around bipartisanship.

Franz's career in the Senate began in 1998 when he served as a legislative assistant for the late, great Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia, who was himself a giant of this body. For 8 years, Franz handled issues from energy to environment, to climate change and natural resources. It was also in Senator Byrd's office that Franz cut his teeth on the complex appropriations process, learning from the master appropriator himself.

Franz's career then took him to the office of former Senator Byron Dorgan of North Dakota, where he was a trusted senior energy policy advisor, and then on the Senate Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee before finally joining my own office in March of 2011.

Franz's list of legislative accomplishments is long and impressive and reflects his deep grasp of policy and the mechanics of politics. He helped to shape elements of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. He was central to establishing reformed fuel economy standards for our Nation's automobiles and played a key role in the Recovery Act, a massive effort that helped pull our Nation out of the depths of a recession.

Franz is a person of ideas and vision. His vision for our country has led to policies that have made our Nation cleaner, more innovative, and more secure. Likewise, his vision in my Senate office has made our team more efficient, more effective, and more successful. Franz has played a key role in shaping my office early on, helping to create a team-based structure and the positive culture of our legislative staff.

He also introduced me to the valuable concept of having an office built around and relying on expert legislative fellows, including, in particular, fellows from the American Association for the Advancement of Science, whose incredible expertise and deep knowledge in scientific matters has been invaluable in advancing technology and science policy in my last 8 years. In total, Franz has mentored more than 15 fellows during his time in the Senate—13 of them are AAAS fellows in my own office, and they have attested individually and collectively to the reach, scope, and power of his guidance and mentorship to them.

Franz is also a master of appropriations—an arcane process that even the most seasoned legislative veterans should admit that they don't completely understand. He brought his wealth of experience to our team, taking the reins of the Federal budget and appropriations process and building from the ground up the complex and detailed appropriations system that we use to this day. There is no question that Franz's expertise and the time he dedicated to building this meticulous system has made me a more effective member of the Senate Appropriations Committee and led to countless wins for the State of Delaware—from funding for critical transportation improvements and investments in our first responders to support that has helped to establish and enhance the NIIMBL manufacturing institute of the University of Delaware and to fully fund science and R&D projects around the country and in my home State.

Beyond Franz's technical expertise, nothing better exemplifies his character than the patience and dedication with which he has taught others about the appropriations process. Each year, Franz hosts "Appropriations Bootcamp 101" to teach new staff members the ins and outs of this riveting and complex process. He takes the time to explain it, to get into the weeds, and to answer question after question. Franz has also taken his show on the road in

my home State of Delaware, meeting with State, local government, and community stakeholders to explain the appropriations process and help to secure more funding for our State. He has even developed a legendary method for teaching staff about appropriations by using bags of marbles to explain funding allocations for each Appropriations subcommittee. For the record, the legislative branch gets just one marble.

Franz's patience extends far beyond the annual appropriations process. He always maintains his cool and has a striking and calming presence, even in the most trying of circumstances. One of those more trying circumstances occurred at a staff outing just a few years ago. Franz had driven a couple of other members of our team, and on their way home, his car broke down. The group decided to push start the car, going down a hill to get momentum, while a junior staffer manned the wheel. Unfortunately, the lack of power steering made it impossible to turn the wheel. After a good strong push, the car rolled right down the hill and into a tree. Franz very calmly said: Don't worry about it. It is not a problem; it is all going to be fine—even when the front end of his car was unrecognizable. Franz's response to that situation, his cool and calm demeanor, is characteristic of the grace he has imparted on all of us, even in some of the most tumultuous times here in the Senate.

One of the unique things about Franz is that whenever you meet somebody who knows him or has worked with him, they talk about the ways in which he has gone out of his own way to help them and mentor them over the years. So many people in the Senate view Franz not just as a friend or colleague but as someone who they know has helped them in their careers and someone who has shown them the ropes and invested time in supporting them and helping them succeed. One member of my team described it this way:

Franz has an uncanny ability to take the time necessary to help. He enables us to do our jobs and do them well. We get meaningful things done, and that's because of the wisdom Franz has imparted."

In an environment here in the Senate that is at times fast paced, Franz takes the time to invest in younger people. He sees potential in staff and imparts knowledge and experience, even when there is more than enough to keep him busy just meeting his own commitments. For example, Franz took it upon himself to create a manual for the new fellows who work in my office every year. The manual, which should be required reading for every new Senate staffer, describes how to write a bill and important things about the process of working in the Senate.

He also maintains the Capitol Hill Urban Dictionary, which he shares with new staff and interns to help them decode internal Senate jargon, including oft-used, but rarely explained phrases like "en bloc" or "move the needle." It explains, for example, what

to do when asked: Do you have language on that.

Franz embraces the importance of teaching the next generation of Capitol Hill staff how to do their job well. I think that is truly his greatest legacy—the remarkable diaspora of younger staff members he has believed in, invested in, and helped to train who are now working everywhere from the Senate to the House, to the Department of Defense, to running a non-profit in Kenya.

Each year, Franz and his wonderful wife Lisa host an annual gathering at their home for a growing community of current and former fellows and, literally, dozens of colleagues—folks who have shared experiences, who care about policy, who like a good geeky joke, and who enjoy helping each other and developing and sustaining each other's careers.

That is just the kind of person Franz is. He has impacted so many people—something that was never more evident than at his wedding to Lisa a few years ago, which I was deeply honored to have the chance to officiate. In addition to their friends and family, guests that day included former Senator Dorgan, folks who had mentored Franz early in his career, dozens of individuals he mentored himself, and people from all walks of life who support Franz and Lisa and care about them. It was a testament to the community they have created, both inside and outside the Senate.

Franz cares deeply about this institution. He cares about policies, and he cares about people. He is always looking for ways to bridge the partisan divide and make this broken place work better. It hasn't always been easy. Like many of us, Franz has struggled with the slowing pace of legislative progress in the Senate in recent years and its increasingly divisive nature. It says so much about him and about his faith in us and in this institution that he is leaving his Senate career to go work on these very issues, helping to lead the Bipartisan Policy Center in advancing bipartisan policy solutions to address the challenges facing our Nation and the institution of the Senate.

He has made such a mark that he is known throughout this institution by a single name. Few people are known by just one name—Bono, Noah, Cher, Franz. With Franz's leaving the Senate, I promise to continue to do my part here to bridge what divides us where we can and to do the important work required of us. That includes passage of the Master Limited Partnerships Parity Act, important bipartisan legislation that will level the tax playing field for clean energy, which Franz has worked on for Congress after Congress as long as I have been here—work that I intend to finish.

While I am sad today to see Franz leave my office in the Senate, he will be deeply missed by everyone on my staff and everyone who has benefited from his wisdom, but I am also excited

to see the inspiring things he will accomplish in his next chapter.

I want to thank Franz for his dedication, his leadership, and his expertise. I want to thank his family for sharing him with us these past 8 years in my office and these 2 decades here in the Senate. He inspires me every day to be a better and more thoughtful, more careful, and more caring legislator. He leaves a deep and positive impact on all of us that we will not soon forget. Thank you, Franz. You will be deeply missed.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to three circuit court nominees who will receive votes on the floor this week: Allison Jones Rushing, nominated to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals; Chad Readler, nominated to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals; and Eric Murphy, also nominated to the Sixth Circuit.

I want to begin by addressing how these nominations were handled and the ongoing disregard for Senate norms and traditions by Republican leadership. Most notable is the change in how blue slips are treated. Blue slips work. The blue slip ensures that the interests of home State Senators are respected when it comes to judicial nominees from their States.

Honoring blue slips helps guarantee that the White House nominates well-qualified, mainstream individuals to key seats on the circuit and district courts, and it prevents the selection of nominees who do not reside in the circuit in which they are slated to serve.

In the past century, before President Trump took office, only five judges had ever been confirmed with only one blue slip; two were by a Democratic chair over the objection of a Democratic Senator, not over the objection of a Republican, then in the minority. The other three instances occurred when a Republican chairman overruled a Democratic Senator.

In fact, Democratic chairs have never moved a judicial nominee to confirmation over the objection of a Republican Senator. Let me say that again: Democratic chairs have never confirmed a judicial nominee without a blue slip from a Republican Senator.

However, since President Trump took office, 10 circuit court nominees have received hearings, and four have been confirmed over the objection of Democratic home State Senators. In just over 2 years, Republicans are on their way to doubling the number of judges confirmed over the objection of home State Senators than have been confirmed in the last 100 years.

This week we are considering both Mr. Readler and Mr. Murphy who lack blue slips from Ohio's Senior Senator, my friend and colleague Senator BROWN.

Senator BROWN's opposition was not unreasonable; in fact, Senator BROWN

worked with the White House for weeks in an effort to find consensus picks for the Sixth Circuit.

But the White House refused to cooperate, and he was left with no choice but to withhold his blue slip. In doing so, Senator BROWN said: "I cannot support nominees who have actively worked to strip Ohioans of their rights. Special interests already have armies of lobbyists and lawyers on their side, they don't need judges in their pockets."

Further, when the majority did move forward on the nominations of Mr. Readler and Mr. Murphy, the two appeared on the same panel at the same hearing. With 5-minute rounds of questioning, these stacked circuit court hearings make it all but impossible for Senators on the committee to thoroughly vet judicial nominees, and that, in turn, makes it impossible for this body to fulfill its obligation of providing advice and consent.

Ms. Rushing's nomination is also the product of a departure from Senate norms. Then-Chairman GRASSLEY held Ms. Rushing's hearing on October 17, 2018, during an extended Senate recess. Only two Senators questioned Ms. Rushing, and no Democrats were present to question the nominee.

These process violations matter. They matter because they impact the quality of the nominees we are considering and the ability of the nominee to reflect the State and community to which they are being nominated.

We have already seen several nominees who have had no judicial experience, and others with no trial experience whatsoever. We have seen nominees who have been rated unqualified for lack of experience and also for lack of judgement, ethical problems, and issues with impartiality and temperament.

This isn't a partisan issue. This is an issue that should concern Senators from both sides of the aisle. At a time when Americans increasingly distrust the institutions of our government, we should not be degrading the Federal judiciary with unqualified and ideological nominees.

Turning to the nominees themselves, I first want to discuss Allison Rushing. Ms. Rushing is only 36 years old. In fact, she has practiced law for only 9 years. She has never tried a case in the Fourth Circuit, the court to which she has been nominated, and she was not even admitted to practice in the Fourth Circuit until 2017; yet she is being nominated to serve on a Federal circuit court.

Even in her limited experience, Ms. Rushing has demonstrated strong ideological views. For instance, in 2013, Ms. Rushing spoke about the Supreme Court's decision to strike down a key provision of the Defense of Marriage Act. She claimed that Justice Kennedy had written "the opinion in a unique way that calls it bigotry to believe that homosexuality does not comport with Judeo-Christian morality."

Ms. Rushing also demonstrated her hostility to the rights of employees in a brief she submitted in a 2018 Supreme Court case. Ms. Rushing argued that employment agreements requiring employees to waive their rights to go to court as a condition of employment should be allowed, even though most people don't have a choice to turn down a job.

Ms. Rushing's view prevents employees who have entered arbitration agreements from bringing lawsuits against their employers, even if the employers have violated their rights or fired them against the law.

As the dissent pointed out, Ms. Rushing's position risked leading to "the under-enforcement of federal and state statutes designed to advance the well-being of vulnerable workers."

I next would like to address the nomination of Chad Readler. Mr. Readler previously headed the Justice Department's Civil Division. In that position, he defended some of the most troubling policies this administration has implemented. He defended the President's decision to end the DACA program, the policy to separate immigrant children from their parents, and the President's Muslim travel ban.

Most concerning, however, is that Mr. Readler led the administration's efforts to overturn the Affordable Care Act. Mr. Readler argued that the healthcare law's protections for pre-existing conditions should be struck down. Even Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER called the arguments made in Mr. Readler's brief "as far-fetched as any I've ever heard."

Finally, the Senate is voting on Eric Murphy to the Sixth Circuit. As the chief appellate lawyer for the State of Ohio, Mr. Murphy led the State's defense of its law banning same-sex marriage, which was struck down by the Supreme Court in *Obergefell v. Hodges*. Jim Obergefell wrote an op-ed recently saying: "Barely four years ago, Mr. Murphy made a forceful argument that my marriage was unconstitutional. As the attorney tasked with defending Ohio's discriminatory ban on same-sex marriage, he used dog-whistles . . . [I]f Murphy had been successful, [my husband] and I, and tens of thousands of couples like us, would have been denied the right to marry and forced to live as second-class citizens."

Mr. Murphy also led Ohio's defense of restrictive voting laws, including the Ohio law allowing the State to purge eligible voters if they missed voting in just one Federal election, and he has amassed a troubling record on women's reproductive rights, arguing for instance in support of a 20-week abortion ban, which he claimed would create "at most, an incidental burden" on a woman's right to make her own reproductive health care decisions.

The three nominees before the Senate exemplify the Trump administration's efforts to stack our courts with nominees who are far outside the judicial mainstream. I believe they will

not protect the rights of all Americans and should not be confirmed. I will vote no on each of these nominees, and I hope my colleagues will do the same.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

NOMINATION OF CHAD A. READLER

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the judicial nomination coming up and the cloture vote on the other nominee.

With both nominees, I offered the White House cooperation to choose two more moderate nominees for Ohio, both of whom had been vetted by a bipartisan commission Senator PORTMAN and I had, and the White House said they would rather pick these two extremist judges—these two young, far-right judges who have attacked America’s healthcare and have attacked the consumer protection on preexisting condition.

Judges are making decisions right now—in this body, fortunately, as Members of the Senate, we all have good coverage and health insurance—that try to take insurance away from millions of Americans and several thousands in my State, even as they have tried to eliminate the consumer protections for those people who have preexisting conditions. There are millions of Americans who are anxious about holding onto their insurance because they get sick a lot and it is expensive to take care of them. They are afraid of having their insurance canceled, and they can’t get insurance because of a preexisting condition, and this Congress tried to repeal that law and it failed.

Now, Senator MCCONNELL has turned to the Federal Judiciary, and the President of the United States seems to think the only way to eliminate the consumer protection for those with preexisting conditions is through the Judiciary. Judges are making decisions right now on voting rights, on civil rights, on women’s rights, LGBT rights, on healthcare, on sentencing, and on corporate power—decisions that could limit those rights for a generation.

We know that the Federal Judiciary already puts its thumb on the scales of justice to support corporations over workers, to support Wall Street over consumers, and to support insurance companies over patients. We know that the Federal Judiciary and the Supreme Court have done that dozens of times. We know that the Federal Judiciary, increasingly, is looking like a group of far-right, young, detached people who never go out and get their public opinion pass, as Lincoln said. They never consider what the public wants in this country.

Chad Readler, the nominee whom we will vote on in a moment, took it upon himself as a Jones Day lawyer—one of the greatest law firms in the country, headquartered in Cleveland—to write an op-ed as a private citizen saying we should allow the execution of 16-year-olds. He actually wasn’t that specific.

He implied it could be even younger than that. He said we would allow the execution of teenagers. At a time when this body—something we should be proud of—took important bipartisan steps forward on sentencing reform that was supported by the White House, supported by a lot of Republicans, and supported by virtually all Democrats, how do we turn around and put someone on the bench for life who supports executing children? How does that compute? How we can do that?

He argued on behalf of the far-right think tank for the elimination of “Golden Week” in Ohio, a period where people can vote early. They can register and vote early. It was passed by a Republican legislature. It has bipartisan support, but not by this right-wing nominee who thinks it is OK to eliminate people’s right to vote and restrict it. He defended restrictive voter ID. He defended the squeezing of provisional ballot laws.

On the eve of the 54th anniversary tomorrow of Bloody Sunday in Selma, AL, it is shameful to put on the bench another judge who will rubberstamp modern-day literacy tests and poll taxes. Fundamentally, it is the same purpose. You find ways to suppress the vote. You find ways to take people’s voting rights away. You find ways to disqualify people who want to vote.

Chad Readler’s record on healthcare is clear. He has been a ringleader in the Republican effort to take away the protections on preexisting conditions for all Americans. He wrote the White House’s brief. We all know that now. He wrote a brief that nobody else above him at the Justice Department was willing to do. Three people refused to write it. One actually resigned. The next day, he was rewarded by this lifetime appointment as a Sixth Circuit Federal judge. Remember that. The White House rewarded him after suggesting that we block the consumer protections for preexisting conditions for millions of Americans and for hundreds of thousands in Virginia, Arkansas, and in Ohio. Millions of Americans would lose their consumer protections under his views, and the next day the White House decided to reward him with a judgeship.

As I said, three career attorneys withdrew from the case. One resigned altogether in objection to doing this. Senator ALEXANDER, our friend from Tennessee, who sits near where Senator KAINE is sitting, said this was just amazingly awful language that Chad Readler had suggested.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator’s time has expired.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for an additional 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, judges are deciding the future of America’s healthcare right now, the right to vote right now, civil rights right now,

LGBTQ rights right now, women’s rights right now. Judges around the country are deciding that. We can’t afford to put another out-of-the-mainstream judge on the court—and he is clearly out of the mainstream among Ohio lawyers, among Ohio judges, among Ohio citizens—who will not defend America’s right to healthcare.

I ask my colleagues to think about the families you promised to vote for. If any of you in your campaigns, if any of you in discussions you have had with your constituents, if any of you in your public statements, and if any of you running for office committed that you would support consumer protections for preexisting conditions, the only way you can prove you actually believe that is by voting no on Chad Readler in about 1 minute from now. If you really believe in preserving preexisting condition consumer protections so you don’t see in your State—in Tennessee, Virginia, Arkansas, and Ohio—millions of Americans lose their insurance, then your only way to support what you promise is to vote no on Chad Readler.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Under the previous order, all postcloture time is expired.

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

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 37 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Alexander	Gardner	Portman
Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blackburn	Grassley	Roberts
Blunt	Hawley	Romney
Boozman	Hoehn	Rounds
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Burr	Inhofe	Sasse
Capito	Isakson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Tillis
Cruz	McSally	Toomey
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Enzi	Murkowski	Young
Ernst	Paul	
Fischer	Perdue	

NAYS—47

Baldwin	Coons	Jones
Bennet	Cortez Masto	Kaine
Blumenthal	Duckworth	King
Booker	Durbin	Klobuchar
Brown	Feinstein	Leahy
Cantwell	Gillibrand	Markey
Cardin	Harris	Menendez
Carper	Hassan	Merkley
Casey	Heinrich	Murphy
Collins	Hirono	Murray

Peters	Shaheen	Van Hollen
Reed	Sinema	Warner
Rosen	Smith	Warren
Sanders	Stabenow	Whitehouse
Schatz	Tester	Wyden
Schumer	Udall	

NOT VOTING—1

Manchin

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Eric E. Murphy, of Ohio, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, Roy Blunt, John Cornyn, Joni Ernst, Lindsey Graham, John Boozman, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Steve Daines, James E. Risch, John Hoeven, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, John Thune, Pat Roberts, Jerry Moran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Eric F. Murphy, of Ohio, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 53, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 38 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Alexander	Fischer	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blackburn	Graham	Risch
Blunt	Grassley	Roberts
Boozman	Hawley	Romney
Braun	Hoeven	Rounds
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Isakson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Thune
Cruz	McSally	Tillis
Daines	Moran	Toomey
Enzi	Murkowski	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	Young

NAYS—46

Baldwin	Hassan	Sanders
Bennet	Heinrich	Schatz
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schumer
Booker	Jones	Shaheen
Brown	Kaine	Sinema
Cantwell	King	Smith
Cardin	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Markey	Udall
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warren
Durbin	Murray	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Peters	Wyden
Gillibrand	Reed	
Harris	Rosen	

NOT VOTING—1

Manchin

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 53, the nays are 46. The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Eric E. Murphy, of Ohio, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

TRIBUTE TO DON YOUNG

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, it is Alaskan of the Week time on the Senate floor, my favorite time of the week to talk about someone who has made a difference in my State. As you know, and as all the pages know, I try to come down to the floor every week to talk about someone who is in Alaska doing a great job for America, for their community, for the State, and what I believe is the best State in the country. I know we can all debate that.

Some of you might take issue a little bit with the characterization of the best State, but we certainly have some bragging rights on some elements that make us the most unique State in America. For example, right now, the Iditarod, the Last Great Race, is underway, with 52 mushers and their dog teams—up to 14 dogs—barreling for well over 900 miles across the State of Alaska toward Nome in some of the most harsh, difficult, and rugged terrain in the world. That is just one of the many things that makes us unique. We have the Iditarod, the Northern Lights that dance in the sky, communities that still hunt whales to feed their villages, which they have been doing for centuries. We have the most fish and the longest coastline. As a matter of fact, our coastline is longer than the rest of the lower 48's coastline combined. We have the tallest mountain in the world, and we have a mountain of a Congressman named DON YOUNG.

Usually, Alaskans of the Week are reserved for people who aren't so visible, who aren't legends, who maybe are doing something in their community that not a lot of people are noticing. Today, March 6, 2019, I couldn't resist because DON YOUNG, the Dean of the House, has officially become the long-

est continuously serving Republican in the Congress in U.S. history. Let me repeat that. Today, DON YOUNG has become the longest, continually serving Republican in the Congress—Senate or House—in the history of the United States of America. He was already here when every single Member of Congress was sworn in. Think about that. For every Member who has been sworn in, in the Senate or in the House, DON YOUNG was here. In fact, according to Roll Call, there are at least 75 Members of the House who were not even born when DON YOUNG came to Washington. That is an amazing achievement.

He has served Alaska and our country so well for 46 years that it was only right to feature him as the Alaskan of the Week and to make a special Alaskan of the Week poster with the young DON YOUNG and President Ford and many others and Don in uniform. We just love DON YOUNG in Alaska. Congrats to DON.

Where do we begin to talk about Congressman YOUNG and the enormous impact he has had on Alaska and America? Let me start in Central California, where he was raised on a small ranch. He began the hard work of ranching young. "My dad was a good man," Don said, "but he believed that when you turned 7, you became a hired man." So he worked sunup to sundown. It was hot, riddled with snakes, and poison ivy. When he was still young, his dad read him the book "The Call of the Wild" by Jack London. Alaska sounded really good to DON YOUNG. It was cold, not hot, and there were lots of dogs. He loved dogs. There were no snakes and no poison ivy.

After he got out of the Army in 1959, the year Alaska became a State, he heeded the call of the wild and headed up the Alcan—much of it was still unpaved—in a brandnew Plymouth Fury. Alaska would never be the same.

He fought forest fires. He owned a skating rink for a short time, but the BIA school needed a teacher in Fort Yukon, way up in the Interior on the Yukon River—a place he still, to this day, calls home and has a home there. In fact, he jokes that he is the only Congressman who uses an outhouse when he goes home. Anyway, he went to coach and teach fifth grade. He became a trapper, a gold miner, and a tugboat captain. Eventually, he met Lou, his wife, who stayed by his side for 46 years until she passed in 2009. Now he has found another partner in Ann. Thank you, Ann, for continuing to share him with all of us.

DON, with Lou's prompting, caught the political bug. He served in the State House in Alaska. He served in the State Senate in Alaska. He learned some good lessons there; namely, that his time in the State Senate taught him that he was more of a House guy, where bills move fast, where elections are right around the corner no matter what, and where the action is.

Along the way, they had two wonderful daughters, which to DON are still