

against her confirmation, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I rise to speak in opposition to the nomination of Neomi Rao to serve as a judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. Ms. Rao is the latest in a string of ultra-conservative judicial nominees who will rubberstamp Donald Trump's far-right agenda. Her record portends a threat to the rights of women and minorities, to consumer protection statutes and regulations, and to the security of our financial institutions.

Moreover, Ms. Rao utterly lacks the experience to serve on the court that many view as second in importance only to the U.S. Supreme Court. She practiced for only 3 years as an associate at a large law firm. None of her practice was in Federal courts or State courts, before administrative agencies, or involved criminal proceedings.

These are disqualifying reasons on their own, but I rise to speak about Ms. Rao's record on the environment, and the contempt she has demonstrated for fair, reasonable, and commonsense regulations that protect the health of our communities and the safety of our air and drinking water.

Ms. Rao currently serves in the Office of Management and Budget as Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OIRA. She is commonly known as the Trump administration's "regulatory czar." This role has her in charge of implementing the Trump administration's anti-environment, climate-change-denying, and polluter-friendly agenda.

Ms. Rao has called climate change a "dangerous orthodoxy," led the Trump administration's efforts to gut fundamental environmental protections, and has misused the regulatory review process for partisan political purposes.

The attacks on the environment that Ms. Rao has launched from OIRA include rolling back national auto fuel efficiency standards, challenging California's Clean Air Act waiver that allowed it to set higher fuel efficiency standards, removing safety rules for fertilizer plants, and rolling back safety rules put in place for oil rigs after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill disaster in 2010.

During review of a proposed rollback of the Methane and Waste Prevention Rule, Ms. Rao's office repeatedly pressured the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, to adopt fossil fuel industry requests to significantly reduce natural gas leak inspections. This would have doubled the amount of methane released into the atmosphere and, according to the EPA's own determination, conflicted with its legal obligation to reduce emissions.

Ms. Rao's office censored language about the impact of climate change on child health when reviewing a proposed rollback of the Refrigerant Management Program, a program that limited the release of greenhouse gases thousands of times more powerful than carbon dioxide.

Ms. Rao's office approved a proposed EPA rule to roll back public health protections that reduce pollution from wood-burning stoves, despite the EPA's own admission that the new rule would cost nine times as much in harm to public health as it would benefit the industry.

Ms. Rao has overseen the Trump administration's repeal of regulations to address climate change, including a repeal of President Obama's historic Clean Power Plan that would have significantly reduced greenhouse gas emissions. By comparison, Ms. Rao has approved a proposal to replace the Clean Power Plan with a rule that would lead to increases in carbon dioxide emissions, asthma attacks, and even death from black carbon, mercury, and other dangerous air emissions from power plants.

It is bad enough that, with Donald Trump, we have a climate-change denier in the White House, and with Andrew Wheeler, we have a coal industry lobbyist running the EPA. We don't need a judge on the DC Circuit whose record demonstrates that she is a sympathetic ally to their anti-environment agenda. I urge my colleagues to vote no on the nomination of Neomi Rao to the DC Circuit Court of Appeals.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

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

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 44 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  | Tillis     |
| Cruz      | McSally    | Toomey     |
| Daines    | Moran      | Wicker     |
| Enzi      | Murkowski  | Young      |
| Ernst     | Paul       |            |

NAYS—46

|            |          |        |
|------------|----------|--------|
| Baldwin    | Booker   | Cardin |
| Bennet     | Brown    | Carper |
| Blumenthal | Cantwell | Casey  |

|              |
|--------------|
| Coons        |
| Cortez Masto |
| Duckworth    |
| Durbin       |
| Feinstein    |
| Gillibrand   |
| Harris       |
| Hassan       |
| Heinrich     |
| Hirono       |
| Jones        |
| Kaine        |
| King         |

|           |
|-----------|
| Klobuchar |
| Leahy     |
| Manchin   |
| Markey    |
| Menendez  |
| Merkley   |
| Murphy    |
| Peters    |
| Reed      |
| Rosen     |
| Sanders   |
| Schatz    |
| Schumer   |

|            |
|------------|
| Shaheen    |
| Sinema     |
| Smith      |
| Stabenow   |
| Tester     |
| Udall      |
| Van Hollen |
| Warner     |
| Warren     |
| Whitehouse |
| Wyden      |

NOT VOTING—1

Murray

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 action.

## 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 William Beach, of Kansas, to be Commissioner of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor, for a term of four years.

Mitch McConnell, David Perdue, John Boozman, Thom Tillis, Mike Rounds, John Hoeven, John Barrasso, Chuck Grassley, Roy Blunt, Johnny Isakson, Lamar Alexander, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, John Cornyn, Richard Burr, John Thune, Roger F. Wicker.

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 William Beach, of Kansas, to be Commissioner of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor, for a term of four years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 45 Ex.]

YEAS—55

|           |            |           |
|-----------|------------|-----------|
| Alexander | Cruz       | Kennedy   |
| Barrasso  | Daines     | Lankford  |
| Blackburn | Enzi       | Lee       |
| Blunt     | Ernst      | Manchin   |
| Boozman   | Fischer    | McConnell |
| Braun     | Gardner    | McSally   |
| Burr      | Graham     | Moran     |
| Capito    | Grassley   | Murkowski |
| Cassidy   | Hawley     | Paul      |
| Collins   | Hoeven     | Perdue    |
| Cornyn    | Hyde-Smith | Portman   |
| Cotton    | Inhofe     | Risch     |
| Cramer    | Isakson    | Roberts   |
| Crapo     | Johnson    | Romney    |

Rounds  
Rubio  
Sasse  
Scott (FL)  
Scott (SC)

Shelby  
Sinema  
Sullivan  
Thune  
Tillis

Toomey  
Wicker  
Young

## NAYS—43

Baldwin  
Bennet  
Blumenthal  
Booker  
Brown  
Cantwell  
Cardin  
Carper  
Casey  
Coons  
Cortez Masto  
Durbin  
Feinstein  
Gillibrand  
Harris

Hassan  
Heinrich  
Hirono  
Jones  
Kaine  
King  
Klobuchar  
Leahy  
Markey  
Menendez  
Merkley  
Murphy  
Peters  
Reed  
Rosen

Sanders  
Schatz  
Schumer  
Shaheen  
Smith  
Stabenow  
Tester  
Udall  
Van Hollen  
Warner  
Warren  
Whitehouse  
Wyden

## NOT VOTING—2

Duckworth  
Murray

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of William Beach, of Kansas, to be Commissioner of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor, for a term of four years.

## NOMINATION OF WILLIAM BEACH

Mr. BLUNT. I want to talk a little about the Green New Deal, but I can't pass up the opportunity to point out that we are now starting 30 hours of debate on the Director of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

It is outrageous. Everybody knows it is outrageous. If you start the clock right now, there will not be an hour of debate—there might not be 10 minutes of debate—on the Director of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, but what our friends on the other side have done is ensure that we can't do any other business during that 30 hours, and, at some point, once it is too late to do anything else this week, they may even waive some of that time back.

This has to change. I certainly would like to see Members on the other side of the aisle work with us to make that change. The bill I have reported out of the Rules Committee that we have reported out of our committee to change this is given more verification every single week, as we try to let the President put a government in place, as we try to do our job of confirming judges to judicial vacancies. That has to stop, and I believe it is about to stop. I would like to see some cooperation from our friends on the other side so we can move forward in the way the Senate should move forward.

## THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Mr. President, the Senate has also been talking about legislation called the Green New Deal. A dozen of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have put this legislation in place. When you sponsor a piece of legislation, it usually means you are for that piece of legislation and think it needs to be debated, and it sure does.

This is a huge piece of legislation. Anything called the green anything would mean you would think it would be mostly about climate change or environmental things, but actually most

of it is about other things. I want to talk for a few minutes about what it says about healthcare.

It is estimated that one part of the Green New Deal would cost \$36 trillion over the next 10 years. That is about the same amount of money we would spend for everything else over the next 10 years of the money we appropriate. It is such a big number; it is hard to imagine how you would even describe it, but \$36 billion would be 100 times what it would cost to rebuild the entire Interstate Highway System. If you can imagine the entire Interstate Highway System, and you wanted to build it all over again—build it again, go in and tear it up, and build it again—do that 100 times over the next 100 years or however many years it would take, that is \$36 trillion. I might have even said earlier \$36 billion, but it is \$36 trillion, 100 times what it would cost to build the entire Interstate Highway System all over again.

It is an absolutely enormous figure, but the government is accepting an absolutely enormous new obligation, an obligation that, just in terms of the healthcare part of this bill, would again be more than all the money we would expect to spend over the next 7 years.

That would take us through fiscal year 2025. Everything we would spend on Social Security, everything we would spend on Medicare, everything we would spend on Medicaid, everything we would spend on defense, on education, on homeland security, on interest on the debt, and everything else would be less money than we would spend in the first decade on Medicare for All.

If you look at this legislation, it is pretty obvious that Medicare for All would, for a lot of reasons, be Medicare for None. One is that big of a system probably wouldn't serve anybody very well, if at all. Two is that Medicare would be eliminated. It would just be part of a big healthcare system. If you are planning on benefiting from Medicare as we know it today, that will not be there if this bill passed because everybody would have something that would be theoretically like Medicare is now, but there wouldn't be Medicare; there wouldn't be Medicaid; there wouldn't be military TRICARE; there wouldn't be the Children's Health Insurance Program. None of the things we have now would exist. They would all become part of this big system of Medicare for All.

In fact, it actually would eliminate private health insurance. We are in this debate way beyond the debate of the days of when President Obama said over and over again, if you like your current healthcare insurance, you can keep your current healthcare insurance. Nobody even pretends with Medicare for All that would be the case. In fact, this legislation specifically says: "It is unlawful for a private health insurer to sell health insurance coverage that duplicates the benefits provided

under this Act." You will have no choice but to look at Medicare for All.

So when they say Medicare for All, they really mean Medicare for All. The other forms of healthcare coverage would be gone.

One of our colleagues who is also running for President said: "Let's eliminate all of that." "That" in the question was private health insurance. "Let's eliminate all of that. Let's move on."

Well, what moving on would look like would be everybody, again, thrown into one system. There would be a single-payer, the Federal Government. There would be a single system. You could call it Medicare for All or anything else you want to call it, but there would be one place to go.

We are now spending about \$6 trillion over the next 10 years on Federal healthcare systems. This would go from \$6 trillion to \$36 trillion.

I could spend a lot of time talking about, how could we afford that? What would the taxes look like? The point is, it is an outrageous proposal, particularly for the millions and millions of Americans who like the insurance they have, who get insurance at work. It has been a benefit in our country that workers first started getting right after World War II. It has been a benefit at work that workers have never paid taxes on. It has been a benefit at work that an awful lot of people have been well served by.

We need to fill in the gaps. We need to create more options. We need to do lots of things. This isn't one of them. When people lose their healthcare options, when people begin to have to stand in line for healthcare like people do in Canada, they are quickly persuaded that, whatever turn was made, it was made in the wrong direction.

This would be a turn in the wrong direction. It would be something the government can't afford and individuals and families will not want. It would be something that people who have actually depended on Medicare being there when they qualify for Medicare—and people pay into it all their working lives, just like they do into Social Security, except there is no cap, so many people pay a lot more into that fund than they do the Social Security fund—but it would be gone. Medicare for All would be Medicare for None.

I think there is a reason sponsors of this bill aren't eager to talk about a lot of it and don't even want to vote on it. If I had sponsored it, I might not want to vote on it either.

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. 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.

S.J. RES. 7

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am reading a book called "These Truths"

by Jill Lepore. It is a history of the United States. She is a really gifted historian and writes quite a few things. She has an article in the New Yorker magazine about Eugene V. Debs, an early Socialist in the 20th century who ran for President. She is a skillful historian, and she tells a story in "These Truths" about how this Nation came to be.

Of course, we emerged from a colony—a colony of England, Great Britain—and then fought for our independence. One of the reasons we fought for independence was to take the role of Kings out of the lives of the people who lived in what we call America and to say we aren't going to have Kings making decisions for us here. We will make our own decisions. Thank you. We will call it a democracy, and the people will rule.

At that point, we sat down and tried to put it in writing. The first time we put it in writing, it didn't work out too well. The Articles of Confederation really didn't unite our country and move it in the direction that most people wanted. So the constitutional convention followed. The constitutional convention in Philadelphia sat down and wrote this document, the Constitution of the United States, and here we are, over 200 years later, still living by those words that were written over 200 years ago.

There were efforts to change and amend it to reflect changes in America. The end of slavery, for example, was one of the most significant, but, by and large, the principles of this document have guided us for a long time.

Article I, section 8 gives the Congress—the Senate and the House—the power to declare war. You think to yourself: Well, it is certainly better for the Congress to make that decision than for a President to do it alone. Letting a President do it without the people being involved, or Congress, really would be much like a King deciding whether we would go forward as a nation to be involved in a war.

This week, on the floor of the Senate, we will test that provision in the Constitution and see if the current Members of the Senate believe that the Constitution was right and that the Congress should be declaring war.

My colleagues, BERNIE SANDERS, well-known to most across America, MIKE LEE, a conservative Republican from Utah, and CHRIS MURPHY, a Democrat from Connecticut, have decided that we should have a test vote as to the United States' involvement in Saudi Arabia's bloody war in Yemen. I am glad to be a cosponsor of that legislation.

Regardless of who has been in the White House during the time that I have served in the House and the Senate, I have tried to consistently argue that the American people, through their elected Congress, must play a constitutional role in declaring a war—whether it was President Bush on the Iraq war or President Obama on the

U.S. military intervention in Syria or Libya.

I think the Constitution is very clear and very wise in saying that the American people, before we ask their sons and daughters to give up their lives in a war, should have a say in these decisions through their elected Members of Congress.

What we are doing today is deeply important. It occurs in the 18th year of a war in Afghanistan that hardly anyone could have imagined would be the case. Did anyone here who voted, as I did, 18 years ago—18 years ago, voting in this Chamber—for the authorization of the use of force in Afghanistan to go after the perpetrators of 9/11 believe that we were authorizing the longest war in the history of the United States, in Afghanistan—I am sure not a one—or that this authorization would be stretched by Presidents of both political parties to approve U.S. military action in other countries around the world? It became a blanket authorization that has been used time and again.

This brings me to the question before us in the Senate today—the disastrous, bloody war, led by the Saudi Arabians in Yemen, which the United States is supporting.

Has there been a vote in the Senate for that? No. In the House? No. Does anyone here remember authorizing any U.S. military involvement in the war in Yemen? Well, they certainly couldn't find a recorded vote to prove it.

Did anyone who voted in 2001, as I did, to go after the terrorists responsible for 9/11, believe that this would somehow include a Saudi-led quagmire in Yemen?

This war in Yemen is being led by a reckless young Saudi Crown Prince, whom I believe had direct involvement in the brutal murder of a journalist and resident of the United States, Jamal Khashoggi. It is highly unlikely that anybody would have argued that we gave permission for the U.S. Military and taxpayers' dollars to be spent in support of this Saudi Arabian cause.

Not only was this war never authorized by elected representatives or the American people, but it is a humanitarian disaster. An estimated 85,000 children have already died of malnutrition. We have created a famine with this war in Yemen. In a country of 28 million people, nearly half face death through famine.

I have a photo here, which I have displayed once on the floor, but I can't bring myself to do it again. It is a photo of a 7-year-old Yemeni girl, Amal Hussain. It is a heartbreaking photo. It appeared in the New York Times last November. This little girl died shortly thereafter. She starved to death. I just can't bring myself to display this photo again.

Do you know what her mother said after she died? It is what any mother would say: "My heart is broken."

This is a reality of the war that the United States supports in Yemen. We

have not debated it. We have not approved it. Yet taxpayers' dollars make certain that it continues day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year.

Now, let's take a look at Saudi Arabia, which has asked us to join in this effort in Yemen that is causing such a humanitarian disaster. This is the same Saudi Arabia—the nation that conducted the cold-blooded murder of Jamal Khashoggi, a nation that is detaining and torturing women's rights activists, including Loujain al-Hathoul and Samar Badawi. This is a nation that is detaining and torturing U.S. citizen Dr. Walid Fitaishi. It is jailing Saudi blogger Raif Badawi and his lawyer, Waleed Abu al-Khair, on charges that are ridiculous on their face.

Saudi Arabia is accused of recruiting and using Sudanese children as soldiers in the war in Yemen. Saudi Arabia continues to turn a blind eye to the export of extremist teachings that have shown up and caused great harm around the world, most recently in Bosnia and Kosovo.

There may be some who think this war is justified. I am not one of them. There may be some who think that because Iran is the enemy, we should be engaged in this war. But, ultimately, this war, this debate, and this vote are not about the merits of any of the things that I have raised. It is not about a vindication of the Houthis, whom the Iranians have sided with, and their troubling role in this horrific civil war. It is about whether we in the Senate, who took an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution, believe it. If we don't believe it, we will just ignore it, let our military wage the war, let the President look the other way, and let this administration come up with another excuse for Saudi Arabia killing that journalist, and we will keep sending our tax dollars in, which prolong this terrible war.

I think the Constitution requires more of us. If you truly believe in what the President is asking us to do in Yemen, if you truly want to stand with Saudi Arabia at this moment in history, show the courage by voting that way. That is all I am asking for.

Our Founding Fathers showed great wisdom. They knew that the decision to send someone's son or daughter into a war was not to be made by a King or a supreme executive but by the people—the people of the United States. So our Constitution wisely rests that responsibility with us—the Senators and Members of the House of Representatives.

Today, there will be a recorded vote—a historic vote—as to whether we go forward with this involvement in the war in Yemen. I will be voting against any more involvement by the United States in this war.

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. JOHNSON. 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 question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Beach nomination?

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 46 Ex.]

#### YEAS—55

|           |            |            |
|-----------|------------|------------|
| 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) |
| Collins   | Kennedy    | Shelby     |
| Cornyn    | Lankford   | Sinema     |
| Cotton    | Lee        | Sullivan   |
| Cramer    | Manchin    | Thune      |
| Crapo     | McConnell  | Tillis     |
| Cruz      | McSally    | Toomey     |
| Daines    | Moran      | Wicker     |
| Enzi      | Murkowski  | Young      |
| Ernst     | Paul       |            |
| Fischer   | Perdue     |            |

#### NAYS—44

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

#### NOT VOTING—1

Murray

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROMNEY). 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.

### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each and with 30 minutes controlled by the Senator from Iowa, Ms. ERNST, or her designee.

The Senator from Wyoming.

#### THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor to discuss the so-called Green New Deal.

America needs every form of energy in order to succeed, but the Democrats' extreme Green New Deal would send our strong, healthy, and growing economy over a liberal cliff. This radical plan would eliminate fossil fuels by requiring 100-percent renewable, carbon-free fuels in just 10 years.

Clearly, we realize that the climate is changing and that the global community has a collective duty to deal with this and to address it. Renewables like wind and solar are certainly a key part of the solution, but still, in the United States today, wind and solar provide only 8 percent of our power. Abundant, reliable, and affordable fossil fuels, like coal and natural gas, power about three out of five U.S. homes and businesses. Excluding them would harm our national security; it would make us dependent on foreign energy; it would destroy jobs; and it would reduce our quality of life.

In a letter sent to the Green New Deal's sponsors, the AFL-CIO—the Nation's federation of labor unions that represents about 12½ million employees and 55 different unions—called the plan a threat to U.S. workers. The letter reads: "We will not accept proposals that could cause immediate harm to millions of our members and their families."

Those at the AFL-CIO also say the plan is not achievable or realistic, and I agree with them. By themselves, renewables can't keep the lights on, and an all-renewable energy electric power grid would collapse. This isn't serious environmental policy—it is a pipe dream.

The Democrats have yet to provide a cost estimate for the Green New Deal. One analysis by the former Director of the Congressional Budget Office estimates it could cost up to \$93 trillion—with a "t." That is more than the U.S. Government has spent in our Nation's entire history—combined. We are \$22 trillion in debt right now. So how are we going to pay for it—by borrowing more money we don't have or by hiking taxes?

The crushing burden is going to fall the hardest on working families. To get to this number, it would drain every person's checkbook in America, starting with Warren Buffett and going all the way down. The Green New Deal would cost every American family as much as \$65,000 a year every year. That is more than the average family makes in America. In Wyoming, where the average family's income is way above average, it would cost the family \$61,000 a year.

Despite the heavy toll it would take, the Green New Deal would still fail to significantly lower the Earth's temperature. Already, America leads the world in reducing carbon emissions. In 2017, the U.S. produced just 13 percent of the global emissions, and China and India combined produced 33 percent.

Let's take a look at this from a global standpoint. To me, it doesn't make any sense at all to destroy our competitive economy and allow the biggest polluters to continue to prioritize growth at our expense. Backbreaking tax increases and heavyhanded mandates are not the answer. The solution is to promote free market innovation, and the Republicans continue to advance several innovative strategies for reducing emissions.

First, we are encouraging carbon capture, utilization, and sequestration technologies. That means actually capturing carbon and using it productively for medical products, for construction products.

There are things we can actually do. Last year, we passed a bipartisan bill in this body that was signed into law. It is called the FUTURE Act, and it expands tax credits for capturing carbon.

The Clean Air Task Force calls it one of the most important bills for reducing global warming pollution in the last two decades.

Our carbon capture work continues with the bipartisan USE IT Act, which is going to help turn captured emissions into valuable products.

The other thing we are promoting is advanced nuclear power technologies. Nuclear power has helped lower emissions by providing most of America's carbon-free energy.

In late December, we passed the bipartisan Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act. This law will help innovators develop new-age nuclear reactors that are cheaper, better, and more reliable.

We also have extended the nuclear tax credit to speed completion of two new nuclear reactors. We are going to speed that completion—the first in a generation. Together they will prevent 10 million tons of emissions every year.

Third, we are encouraging an increase in the use of renewables. Republicans have repeatedly passed tax incentives to promote clean energy.

These include tax credits for wind, for solar panels, as well as incentives for biodiesel and compressed natural gas. The clean energy strategies that Republicans have been working on in a bipartisan way are working because America leads the world in reducing energy-related emissions.

Since 2007, U.S. emissions have been down 14 percent. This progress is the result of innovation. So let's continue to promote proven solutions. Let's reject the Democrats' Green New Deal as unreasonable, unworkable, and unaffordable.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, last week, I joined several of my colleagues to highlight the unrealistic and unreasonable and impractical ideas of the Green New Deal—the staggering cost, which is more than the Federal Government has spent in our history; the misguided assumptions about what it