

Wildlife Service proposed some of the most drastic changes to the ESA in 30 years. These changes include allowing economic estimates during the listing process, changing the definition of “foreseeable future” to not allow for the consideration of climate change when determining whether to list a species and removing a blanket rule that protects threatened species.

It certainly doesn't seem like a coincidence that the Department is considering such radical changes to the ESA under the leadership of Mr. Bernhardt—someone who was paid by his clients to challenge it.

Over the past few weeks, we have also learned from reporting in the New York Times about Mr. Bernhardt's efforts to suppress a Fish and Wildlife Service report on the impacts of certain pesticides on endangered species. This report was due to be released more than 1½ years ago, and despite documents indicating that the Department had completed the report on time, it has yet to be released.

Last week, I, along with several of my colleagues, sent a letter to the Department's deputy inspector general, requesting that she open an investigation into these allegations. Based on Mr. Bernhardt's industry priorities and past attempts to weaken the ESA, I think it is prudent that we get to the bottom of what is going on at the Department before confirming him.

If the Department of the Interior's mission is to “provide scientific and other information about natural resources,” then isn't it Mr. Bernhardt's job to ensure that scientific reports on the impacts of chemicals on endangered species are released in a timely manner, especially knowing that these species are threatened or endangered? Yet this report has been kept back for over 1 year.

Unfortunately, I don't think he considers that a priority of his job. Instead, he seems to prioritize moving the levers within the Department that he was unsuccessful in moving while representing his clients as a lobbyist.

This pattern of activity also extends to his former clients in the oil and gas industry. During the government shutdown, for example, Mr. Bernhardt recalled furloughed DOI employees in order to have them process and approve 267 offshore oil drilling permits and 16 leases for drilling on public land. His decisive action on behalf of oil and gas interests came as thousands of employees went without pay and critical Federal services were shuttered for over 1 month.

Is it really any wonder that executives from the Independent Petroleum Association of America were caught on tape bragging about the unprecedented access they have to Mr. Bernhardt at the Department?

The American people deserve an Interior Secretary devoted to the mission of the Department, not the narrow special interests of his former lobbyist clients.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this nomination and await the IG report before voting on this nomination.

One would hope that with all of these conflicts he has to carry around in his pocket, surely we can come up with someone to lead this Department who actually has the mission of the Department as his calling. That is not the case with Mr. Bernhardt.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order and pursuant to S. Res. 155, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, April 11, and does so as a further mark of respect for Ernest “Fritz” Hollings, former Senator from South Carolina.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:14 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 11, 2019, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

KATE MARIE BYRNES, OF FLORIDA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

LT. GEN. ARNOLD W. BUNCH, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. DAVID A. HARRIS, JR.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS AND APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 8033:

To be admiral

ADM. WILLIAM F. MORAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS VICE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS AND APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 8035:

To be admiral

VICE ADM. ROBERT P. BURKE

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. HERMAN S. CLARDY III

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE TO BE A SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

LISA ANNE RIGOLI, OF FLORIDA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

JENNIFER M. ADAMS, OF VIRGINIA
JEFFREY N. BAKKEN, OF MINNESOTA
SUSAN F. FINE, OF VIRGINIA
SUSAN KOSINSKI FRITZ, OF WASHINGTON
LAWRENCE HARDY II, OF WASHINGTON
SARAH-ANN LYNCH, OF MARYLAND

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR:

DERRICK SCOTT BROWN, OF FLORIDA
MICHAEL JOSEPH GREENE, OF MARYLAND
GARY C. JUSTE, OF VIRGINIA
MARK A. MEASSICK, OF FLORIDA
ELIZABETH B. WARFIELD, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CLINTON D. WHITE, OF MARYLAND

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

KAYA D. ADAMS, OF LOUISIANA
MAURA E. BARRY BOYLE, OF MARYLAND
IDRIS M. DIAZ, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BETH PENNOCK DUNFORD, OF MARYLAND
NATALIE J. FREEMAN, OF VIRGINIA
JONATHAN T. KAMIN, OF MARYLAND
LESLIE C. MARBURY, OF FLORIDA
MICHAEL RICHARD MCCORD, OF CALIFORNIA
MIKAELA SAWTELLE MEREDITH, OF VIRGINIA
V. KATE SOMVONGSIRI, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO BE A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER, A CONSULAR OFFICER, AND A SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

TIMOTHY RYAN HARRISON, OF CALIFORNIA
ELIZABETH VIVIAN LEONARDI, OF CALIFORNIA
LAZARO SANDOVAL, OF CALIFORNIA
J. BRET TATE, OF TEXAS
RACHEL LYNNE VANDERBERG, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA, BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS, FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, AND A CONSULAR OFFICER AND A SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

WILLIAM S. MARTIN, OF CALIFORNIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL, FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR:

CHRISTINE BYRNE, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, AS A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

ROBERT MASON, OF VIRGINIA

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate April 10, 2019:

THE JUDICIARY

DAVID STEVEN MORALES, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS.

HOLLY A. BRADY, OF INDIANA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

CHERYL MARIE STANTON, OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JOHN P. ABIZAID, OF NEVADA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA.

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on April 10, 2019 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

KATE MARIE BYRNES, OF FLORIDA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 16, 2019.