

Duckworth	Klobuchar	Schatz
Durbin	Leahy	Schumer
Enzi	Manchin	Scott (FL)
Ernst	Markey	Scott (SC)
Feinstein	McConnell	Shaheen
Fischer	McCally	Sinema
Gardner	Menendez	Smith
Gillibrand	Merkley	Stabenow
Graham	Moran	Tester
Harris	Murphy	Thune
Hassan	Murray	Tillis
Heinrich	Perdue	Tillis
Hirono	Peters	Udall
Hoeven	Portman	Van Hollen
Hyde-Smith	Reed	Warner
Isakson	Risch	Warren
Johnson	Roberts	Whitehouse
Jones	Romney	Wicker
Kaine	Rosen	Wyden
King	Rounds	

NAYS—19

Barrasso	Inhofe	Sasse
Blackburn	Kennedy	Shelby
Braun	Lankford	Sullivan
Cruz	Lee	Toomey
Daines	Paul	Young
Grassley	Rubio	
Hawley	Sanders	

NOT VOTING—2

Booker	Murkowski
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 79, and the nays are 19.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Judith DeZoppo Pryor, of Ohio, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States for a term expiring January 20, 2021.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

NATURAL GAS FLARING

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I would like to take a few moments to speak on an issue that, as you know, is important to American families all across the country.

Hardworking Americans long for cheap and efficient sources of energy for their homes, for their businesses, and for their schools, and one of the answers—not the only answer, but one of the answers—to this dilemma is clean-burning natural gas.

Natural gas is an abundant energy source that, unfortunately, in some cases is being squandered. We can do a better job of getting the fuel to consumers. In fact, we waste too much of this useable fuel source through a process known as natural gas flaring. Natural gas flaring is a practice where the natural gas is intentionally burned off at a drill site.

What I can happily report, however, is that President Trump and his administration have begun to take the necessary steps to address the underlying causes for this inexcusable waste.

Just last month, President Trump signed a pair of executive orders to ex-

pedite the construction of pipelines that will allow oil and natural gas to be safely and economically transported from drill sites to end users.

The President took the courageous first step in addressing a problem that has been present for far, far too long, and I am talking, of course, about the lack of infrastructure. The lack of infrastructure not only chips away at the great economic benefits our country receives thanks to our drilling boom, but without pipelines and other means of transport, processing, and storage, the cheaper and cleaner burning natural gas is too often wasted—natural gas, mind you, that could be powering businesses, schools, and even tens of millions of homes across the United States.

I would also like to note that I would be remiss if I didn't mention the environmental benefits of natural gas. Simply put, natural gas is an environmentally friendly fuel source. This abundant fuel is not only incredibly efficient, with a 92-percent energy efficiency, but the use of natural gas reduces carbon emissions as well. When compared to other fossil fuel sources, burning natural gas results in far fewer pollutants such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide, nonmethane organic gas, and carbon dioxide. In fact, depending on the pollutant, using natural gas can mean a reduction in carbon emissions of up to 90 percent—90 percent—in some cases.

As our drilling boom continues in America, by implementing greater direct use of natural gas, we can cut thousands and thousands of tons of carbon emissions from our atmosphere every year, and these are numbers that we should all be able to get behind.

Ever since the advent of hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling, we have been able to extract crude oil from deposits that we not only didn't think we could ever reach but from deposits we didn't even know existed until a few years ago.

American ingenuity is truly an amazing thing, and that American inventiveness and perseverance have led the United States in becoming the world's leader in oil production. Did you ever think America would lead the entire world in oil production?

Unfortunately, the infrastructure to support this boom has lagged. When drilling for oil, it is not an a la carte menu. Once the drill reaches the desired deposit and begins pumping the targeted crude oil to the surface, what is also brought to the surface alongside the crude oil is natural gas. You simply cannot drill for shale oil and not extract natural gas.

The problem, however, is while we should be looking at this phenomenon as a net positive—one drill extracting two sources of energy—far too often this natural gas byproduct is wasted because the infrastructure is simply not there to move the large quantity of natural gas to consumers. In one of our Nation's busiest oil fields—perhaps the

busiest, at least operating in America today—the Permian Basin in the great State of Texas and the great State of New Mexico, our shale drillers have long complained that they have no way to move natural gas to the market because there simply aren't enough natural gas pipelines. Adding to the dilemma is the fact that not only is there a severe lack of pipelines, there is a severe lack of alternative transportation options as well. When it comes to transporting oil and natural gas, we have four alternatives: pipeline, train, truck, and boat—pipeline, train, truck, and boat. Until President Trump signed his Executive orders last month—one requiring the Transportation Department to allow liquefied natural gas to be shipped via specialized rail and tanker trucks—too much of the natural gas extracted had no way of getting to open markets. In the Permian Basin alone—remember in Texas and New Mexico—about 3 percent of the natural gas that comes to the surface with the oil is flared. That means it is just burned off. It is wasted.

Now, 3 percent may not initially sound like a lot, but when you run the numbers, it becomes clear that we are wasting a vast amount of money and a huge source of energy. There is so much oil being extracted in the Permian Basin alone that over \$1 million worth of natural gas is burned away, flared, wasted every day; \$1 million worth of natural gas—a relatively clean source of energy, better for our environment—is burned away every single day. To put that in perspective, the entire daily energy needs of Montana or New Hampshire could be met with just the gas that is flared in 1 day in the Permian Basin. A further look at the numbers suggests that by the end of 2018 alone, so much natural gas was burned off in the Permian Basin that the entire residential energy needs of Texas for the year could have been met—the entire State of Texas.

The problem is likely only going to get worse. The Permian Basin is far from the only area in which flaring occurs today in our country. Just accounting for the month of October this past year in North Dakota, it was reported that the amount of gas flared or burned off or wasted was enough to heat 4.25 million homes. The amount of natural gas flared, burned, wasted for the month of October, just in North Dakota, would have heated 4.25 million homes. This has to change. We simply cannot continue to sit by as millions of dollars are literally burned off every day into the atmosphere.

I thank President Trump. He took some great initial steps in trying to solve the wastefulness inherent in flaring from speeding up the construction of much needed pipelines to ordering increased use of specifically designed trains and tanker trucks. The American people will have far more access to this abundant and ever-present fuel source for their homes, for their businesses, and for their schools. There is

still a long way to go—a long way to go. Additional miles of pipeline and specialized train cars are just the beginning. I believe we can do better—much better, in fact—than simply sitting idly by as we watch good fuel being burned off into the night sky.

(Ms. McSALLY assumed the Chair.)

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, today I wish to speak in support of including provisions in any reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act that would ensure Tribal governments can prosecute heinous crimes on their lands.

When Congress last reauthorized the Violence Against Women Act, also known as VAWA, in 2013, we made historic advancements to address domestic violence on Tribal lands. Those important steps must be preserved, but we must also fix gaps in the law that the last reauthorization left open. These gaps allow crimes against children, the elderly, and law enforcement to essentially go unpunished.

As I have mentioned before, I support H.R. 1585, the bill passed by the House to reauthorize VAWA. One of the reasons I support that bill is because it addresses those gaps. Tribes should be able to address violent crimes that happen on their lands and to their most vulnerable populations.

According to a 2016 Justice Department report, “more than four in five American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence in their lifetime.” That is disturbing. The report also found that 56 percent have experienced sexual violence; 56 percent have experienced physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner; and 49 percent have been stalked.

For me, these numbers are even more upsetting because California has the largest Native American population in the United States. There are almost 700,000 Native Americans living in California, which has 107 federally recognized and 50 unrecognized Tribes.

We must continue to respect Tribal sovereignty, to advance the very core of what sovereignty means: the right of Tribes to exercise dominion and jurisdiction over appalling crimes that occur on Tribal land. For many years, Tribal governments were unable to prosecute crimes committed by non-Indians on Tribal lands. Thankfully, that changed when Congress reauthorized VAWA in 2013.

The 2013 reauthorization of VAWA allowed Tribes to exercise their sovereign powers to prosecute, convict, and sentence both Indians and non-Indians who assault Indian spouses or dating partners. In other words, Tribes were finally able to prosecute anyone who committed domestic violence against an Indian on Indian land. These measures were not only necessary; they worked.

In just 5 years, under these new laws, there were 142 arrests, 74 convictions, and 24 more cases pending. These charges were processed through Tribal courts that provided the requisite due process protections under our Constitution. In fact, not a single conviction was overturned because of a lack of due process. We must now build on that success.

The VAWA reauthorization the House passed is a strong bill. I would note that it passed on a significant bipartisan basis, with a vote of 263-158 and 33 Republicans supporting it. This was even in the face of an active opposition campaign conducted by the National Rifle Association.

But importantly, one of the reasons the House bill is a strong bill is because of its Tribal protections. For example, the House bill expands jurisdiction over non-Indians for crimes against children, elders, and law enforcement.

We have a duty to prevent child abuse and elder abuse wherever they occur. It is also only right that Tribes be able to prosecute attacks on law enforcement officers. The people who protect the public deserve protection as well.

These advancements ensure that Tribes are able to address acts of violence, while respecting Tribal sovereignty. We should welcome the opportunity to continue to build on our past successes. I look forward to working with my colleague Senator ERNST on these provisions and hope other Senators with significant stake in this area will join us.

There are several other provisions that I believe should be included in a VAWA reauthorization. Chief among those is keeping guns out of the hands of domestic abusers. I plan to speak about those provisions at a later date, but I mention them now because I believe that we must have a comprehensive approach to addressing domestic violence in this country.

Simply put, all of the different parts of VAWA are linked. For instance, ensuring Tribal governments can prosecute domestic violence committed on Tribal lands is important, but keeping guns out of the hands of domestic abusers will help protect victims on Tribal lands as well.

The bill passed by the House takes this sort of comprehensive approach by, for example, improving the law in the areas of housing, Tribal protections, and gun safety.

I believe the Senate must do the same. There is no simple way to stop

domestic violence, but we have a duty to do all that we can. Thank you.

NOMINATION OF JANET DHILLON

Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, today I wish to speak on the nomination of Janet Dhillon, who is nominated to be Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The EEOC plays an important role in protecting American workers. I am deeply concerned that Ms. Dhillon will put the interests of corporations over those of employees, which is antithetical to the mission of the EEOC.

The EEOC is charged with “enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee because of the person’s race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information.” It also investigates claims of individuals who are retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. Needless to say, the EEOC plays a critical role in protecting American workers and ensuring that our Federal anti-discrimination laws are enforced and not disregarded by unscrupulous employers.

In choosing someone to sit on the Commission, it is critical that the administration select someone with a history of working to advance civil rights and workers’ rights. Ms. Dhillon clearly does not have that background.

Ms. Dhillon has spent the vast majority of her career working for and representing the interests of large corporations. Notably, while she was employed at JC Penney, the company was harshly criticized for its handling of a garment factory accident in Bangladesh that killed more than 1,000 people. She also worked at the Retail Litigation Center, an entity that works to limit employees’ and consumers’ access to justice. These experiences stand in direct opposition to the mission of the EEOC.

Additionally, during her confirmation hearing, she would not commit to maintaining the EEOC’s current position that title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects LGBT people from discrimination. As one of the main authors of the Equality Act in the Senate, which clarifies that existing civil rights law forbids discrimination of LGBT people, I am deeply concerned Ms. Dhillon would not make that commitment at her hearing.

If the United States is going to be a beacon of liberty and freedom, we must not allow discrimination of any kind to continue. The EEOC plays an essential role in fulfilling that promise of eradicating discrimination and creating a workplace that reflects the best of American values: hard work, ingenuity, decency, and respect.

It is clear to me that Ms. Dhillon is not the right person for the job, and I urge my colleagues to vote against her nomination.