

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