

say we need to constrain the President the way the Congress has traditionally constrained the executive branch. I am hopeful, but I am also skeptical.

If the past is prologue, my Republican friends will ultimately back down. Leader MCCONNELL, his MO, will let a few of them off the hook so they can go home and say they supported it but never enough to make sure Congress provides an effective check on the President. It is sort of a wink and a nod. Well, let's hope this time it is different. Let's hope that these murmurings among Republicans about the Saudi arms sales and about the tariffs are real, and they will actually stand up to him, which is what a Congress should do even when they are of the same party as the President.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, on the climate, as I have said so many times, no threat poses a greater danger to our planet than that of climate change. The last 5 years have been the warmest on record. There is more carbon dioxide in the air than any point in human history. Our children and grandchildren will live with the consequences of the decisions we make today. We need all hands on deck—the Federal Government, local governments, municipalities, corporate leaders, global efforts—if we are to meet the challenges of climate change head-on, but for years our government has been too slow to act and more often than not we have done nothing or very little.

Just yesterday, President Trump once again—not based on fact, based on whim, as he so often acts—voiced a dangerous skepticism about climate change while meeting with Prince Charles.

Now, one of the biggest reasons for the slow progress on climate policy has been the oppressive grip of Big Oil, Big Gas, and Big Coal, on our political system. They spent untold millions to debunk climate science and torpedo climate legislation. One of the largest perpetrators has been the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which never reveals its donors and has acted all too often as a front for Big Oil.

Recently, as public support for action upon climate change has grown even more overwhelming, the chamber is starting to sing a different tune. They have launched a campaign for cleaner energy sources. They have added a new section to their website, "Addressing Climate Change." They now even say that, on this issue, "inaction is not an option." Well, I could not agree more; inaction is not an option, but color me skeptical about the chamber.

I hope to see the chamber follow its public stance with real action, but until I do, I fear this change is merely cosmetic. All too often, the big oil and big coal companies don't act themselves, although some do, but they let the chamber do their dirty work for them. So today SHELDON WHITEHOUSE

and I, along with a number of our colleagues, will be sending a letter to the chamber, calling on them to speak out against the administration's effort to undermine the "National Climate Assessment." It is not enough to simply say: Oh, well, it is a problem.

Inaction is not an option. They must do something concrete. This is a concrete action we are proposing that will make a difference. I read in today's New York Times that companies are now beginning to plan for how climate change will cost them more money in the next 5 years. They don't think it is no problem. They don't think it is a 30-year problem. These companies and their interest in their profits—that is how they should be interested, although I would like to see them a little more interested in workers and communities and climate. These companies, for their own bottom lines, are saying climate change is real, and we better do something.

Well, one way the chamber can move things along is to speak out against this administration in its efforts to undermine the "National Climate Assessment." For years, this study has been the gold standard for climate research within our government. It is not partisan. It is factual; it is based on science; and it assesses the long-term threats to climate change.

The President is sort of, on climate, a member of the Flat Earth Society, just denying the facts. It would be as if Columbus sailed, and the President still said the earth is flat. That is how he is acting on climate. Well, the Chamber ought to break with that. They ought to let science and facts determine how we act.

This is a moment when the Chamber could actually use its influence to convince the administration to reverse course. If the business community said this, it would make a big difference. So this is a moment. Let's see if the chamber really wants to prove that they are for climate change. Let's see. Let's see. If they don't, we ask their members who say they believe in climate—and who are even planning for the problems we face—to put pressure on them to do it. Let's hope. Let's hope.

Now, before I yield the floor, I just want to send a kudos—he reminded me that the word "kudos" is singular, not plural, which I did not know for all of my years here. Mr. President, I see by your reaction, you did not know either. It is a kudos. So let me give a kudos to SHELDON WHITEHOUSE's leadership on this issue. One of his many positive traits is he knows grammar and all of that much better than most of us, but one of his greater traits is how he has been relentless in pushing forward on climate and on pushing corporate America to do more.

I look forward to continuing to work with him to shed light on the role that Big Money plays in undermining climate policy, and I look forward to hearing from the chamber of commerce on what they have to say about the ad-

ministration's latest attacks on climate science.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of David Schenker, of New Jersey, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Near Eastern Affairs).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to complete my remarks.

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

(The remarks of Mrs. BLACKBURN pertaining to the introduction of S. Res. 233 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I yield the floor. The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the votes following the first vote in the series be 10 minutes in length—I say again, 10 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON SCHENKER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Schenker nomination?

Mr. COTTON. 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. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea" and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH),