

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

The result was announced—yeas 73, nays 17, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 348 Ex.]

YEAS—73

Alexander	Graham	Roberts
Baldwin	Grassley	Romney
Barrasso	Hassan	Rosen
Blackburn	Hawley	Rounds
Blunt	Hoeven	Rubio
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Braun	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Brown	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Capito	Jones	Shaheen
Carper	Kaine	Shelby
Casey	King	Sinema
Collins	Lankford	Smith
Coons	Leahy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lee	Tester
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Thune
Cotton	McConnell	Tillis
Cramer	McSally	Toomey
Crapo	Moran	Van Hollen
Cruz	Murkowski	Warner
Daines	Murphy	Whitehouse
Enzi	Paul	Wicker
Ernst	Perdue	Wyden
Feinstein	Peters	Young
Fischer	Portman	
Gardner	Risch	

NAYS—17

Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reed
Cantwell	Hirono	Schatz
Cardin	Markey	Schumer
Duckworth	Menendez	Stabenow
Durbin	Merkley	Udall
Gillibrand	Murray	

NOT VOTING—10

Bennet	Harris	Sanders
Booker	Isakson	Warren
Burr	Kennedy	
Cassidy	Klobuchar	

The nomination was confirmed.

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 senior assistant legislative 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 Joseph Nardini, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

John Thune, Thom Tillis, Chuck Grassley, Mike Crapo, James E. Risch, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Mike Rounds, Lindsey Graham, Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, Tom Cotton, John Cornyn, Joni Ernst, Roy Blunt, Roger F. Wicker, Jerry Moran, Shelley Moore Capito.

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 Joseph Nardini, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator

from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 87, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 349 Ex.]

YEAS—87

Alexander	Gardner	Reed
Baldwin	Graham	Risch
Barrasso	Grassley	Roberts
Blackburn	Hassan	Romney
Blumenthal	Hawley	Rosen
Blunt	Heinrich	Rounds
Boozman	Hoeven	Rubio
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Brown	Inhofe	Schatz
Cantwell	Johnson	Schumer
Capito	Jones	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Lankford	Shelby
Collins	Leahy	Sinema
Coons	Lee	Smith
Cornyn	Manchin	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	McConnell	Sullivan
Cotton	McSally	Tester
Cramer	Menendez	Thune
Crapo	Merkley	Tillis
Cruz	Moran	Toomey
Daines	Murkowski	Udall
Duckworth	Murphy	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murray	Warner
Enzi	Paul	Whitehouse
Ernst	Perdue	Wicker
Feinstein	Peters	Wyden
Fischer	Portman	Young

NAYS—3

Gillibrand	Hirono	Markey
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NOT VOTING—10

Bennet	Harris	Sanders
Booker	Isakson	Warren
Burr	Kennedy	
Cassidy	Klobuchar	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 87, the nays are 3. The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of William Joseph Nardini, of Connecticut, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, with respect to the Hunsaker nomination, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The Senator from New Hampshire.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1743

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to express my concern and my disappointment over the decision by the President to formally withdraw the United States from the Paris climate agreement.

Though the President announced this decision over 2 years ago, this past Monday marked the first day his administration could send a letter to the United Nations formalizing the year-long withdrawal process. Of course, we know that they did that.

American leadership on climate action is being ceded to other countries before our very eyes. With this move, the President is betraying the trust of the American people and betraying the trust of our international allies in the fight against climate change.

Climate change is a very real and present threat to our environment, to our national security, to our economy, to our health, and to our very way of life. That is why I introduced the International Climate Accountability Act, to prevent the President from using funds to withdraw the United States from the Paris climate agreement. This bipartisan bill would also require the administration to develop a strategic plan for meeting the commitments we made in Paris in 2015.

We can see on this chart that the House passed legislation over 6 months ago. It has been 188 days since the House passed their legislation, the Climate Action Now Act. Yet in the Senate the majority leadership has refused to call up this bill for a vote.

The administration's withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement and the general refusal to bring climate change legislation to the floor is out of step with the desires of the American people.

Approximately two out of every three Americans believe it is the job of the Federal Government to combat climate change, according to a recent poll from the Associated Press. The same poll found that 64 percent of Americans disapprove of the President's climate change policies.

Unfortunately, the Senate majority leadership continues to refuse to act on climate change. Yet what we hear from our scientists and experts is that they tell us that we need to act and act now on climate change before it is too late. This poll shows us, as others have, that a supermajority of the American public wants us to do just that.

I have come before this body a number of times in the past to highlight the impact of climate change in my home State of New Hampshire. We see very directly the effects of climate change. The farther north you go, the more you see those impacts. Our fall foliage season is shortened. Our maple syrup production season is disrupted. Our outdoor recreation industries are hampered. Our ski and our snowmobiling industries are hampered. Our lobsters are moving north to colder waters. Our moose population is

down 40 percent, and Lyme disease is on the rise.

But today what I really want to highlight are the revelations that have been made clear in recent weeks by our national security experts. A report entitled “Implications of Climate Change for the U.S. Army,” which was commissioned by the current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, GEN Mark Milley reads: “The Department of Defense is precariously unprepared for the national security implications of climate change-induced global security challenges.”

The Pentagon’s “Report on Effects of a Changing Climate to the Department of Defense” reads, as we can see right here: “The effects of a changing climate are a national security issue with potential impacts to Department of Defense missions, operational plans, and installations.”

When former Secretary of Defense James Mattis was before the Senate Armed Services Committee for his confirmation hearing in 2017, his testimony read, in part: “Climate change is impacting stability in areas of the world where our troops are operating today.”

I had the chance to ask him in that hearing: “Do you believe climate change is a security threat?”

He responded this way: “Climate change can be a driver of instability, and the Department of Defense must pay attention to potential adverse impacts generated by this phenomenon.”

He went on to say: “Climate change is a challenge that requires a broader, whole-of-government response.”

I could go on detailing the calamitous conclusions of our national security experts, but, instead, I ask unanimous consent that a letter addressed to the President from nearly 60 national security and military leaders be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

AMERICAN SECURITY PROJECT,
THE CENTER FOR CLIMATE AND
SECURITY,
March 5, 2019.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: We write to you as former US national security leaders to offer our support to our uniformed military, civilian national security professionals, and members of the scientific community, who across the past four Administrations have found that climate change is a threat to US national security.

Climate change is real, it is happening now, it is driven by humans, and it is accelerating. The overwhelming majority of scientists agree: less than 0.2% of peer-reviewed climate science papers dispute these facts. In this context, we are deeply concerned by reports that National Security Council officials are considering forming a committee to dispute and undermine military and intelligence judgments on the threat posed by climate change. This includes second-guessing the scientific sources used to assess the threat, such as the rigorously peer-reviewed National Climate Assessment, and applying that to national security policy. Imposing a political test on reports issued by the science agencies, and forcing a blind spot onto the

national security assessments that depend on them, will erode our national security.

It is dangerous to have national security analysis conform to politics. Our officials’ job is to ensure that we are prepared for current threats and future contingencies. We cannot do that if the scientific studies that inform our threat assessments are undermined. Our national security community will not remain the best in the world if it cannot make decisions based on the best available evidence.

When extreme weather hits the United States, it degrades the fighting force. Just last year, Hurricane Florence caused \$3.6 billion in damages to Camp Lejeune, home of the Marines’ expeditionary units on the East Coast. You called Florence “One of the biggest to ever hit our country.” Stronger storms and storm surges have long featured in predictions about a changing climate. Around the world, climate change is a “threat multiplier”—making other security threats worse. Its effects are even used by our adversaries as a weapon of war; ISIS used water shortages in Iraq, in part driven by a changing climate, to cement their hold on the population during their reign of terror from 2014 to 2017.

We support the science-driven patriots in our national security community who have rightly seen addressing climate change as a threat reduction issue, not a political one, since 1989. We support the bipartisan finding of the US Congress, which you signed into law on December 2017, stating that “climate change is a direct threat to the national security of the United States.” We urge you to trust and heed the analysis of your own national security agencies and the science agencies on which their assessments depend, including the 21 senior defense officials that have identified climate change as a security threat during your Administration. A committee designed to undermine the many years of work they have done will weaken our ability to respond to real threats, putting American lives at risk.

Our climate will continue to change, and the threats will continue to grow. We spent our careers pledged to protect the United States from all threats, including this one. Let’s drop the politics, and allow our national security and science agencies to do their jobs.

Sincerely,

Hon. John Kerry, Former Secretary of State; Hon. Ray Mabus, Former Secretary of the Navy; General Gordon R. Sullivan, US Army (Ret), Former Chief of Staff of the US Army; Admiral Samuel J. Locklear III, USN (Ret), Former Commander, US Pacific Command; Admiral James Stavridis, USN (Ret), Former Supreme Allied Commander Europe; Nancy Soderberg, Former Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Hon. Sharon Burke, Former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Operational Energy; Hon. David Goldwyn, Former Assistant Secretary of Energy and Special Envoy for International Energy Affairs; Hon. Miranda AA Ballentine, Former Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Installations, Environment, and Energy); Leon Fuerth, Former National Security Adviser to the Vice President.

Dr. Geoffrey Kemp, Former Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; General Paul Kern, USA (Ret.), Former Commanding General, US Army Materiel Command; Lieutenant General John Castellaw, USMC (Ret), Former Chief of Staff, US Central Command; Lieutenant General Arlen D. Jameson, USAF (Ret), Former Deputy Commander, US Strategic

Command; Lieutenant General Norm Seip, USAF (Ret), Former Commander, 12th Air Force; Hon. Sherri Goodman, Former Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Environmental Security); Hon. Chuck Hagel, Former Secretary of Defense; Vice Admiral Richard Truly, USN (Ret), Former Administrator of NASA; Admiral Paul Zukunft, USCG (Ret), Former Commandant of the Coast Guard; General Stanley McChrystal, USA (Ret), Former Commander, US and International Security.

Lieutenant General Donald Kerrick, USA (Ret), Former Deputy National Security Advisor to the President of the United States; Tom Hicks, Former Acting Under Secretary of the Navy and Deputy Under Secretary of the Navy for Management; Hon. John Conger, Former Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations and Environment; Eric Rosenbach, Former Chief of Staff, Department of Defense, and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Security; Vice Admiral Dennis McGinn, USN (Ret), Former Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment; Hon. Alice Hill, Former Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Resilience Policy, National Security Council; Major General Randy Manner, USA (Ret), Former Acting Vice Chief, National Guard Bureau; General Ron Keys, USAF (Ret), Former Commander, Air Combat Command; Vice Admiral Philip Cullom, USN (Ret), Former Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Fleet Readiness and Logistics.

Lieutenant General Kenneth E. Eickmann, USAF (Ret), Former Commander, Aeronautical Systems Center, Headquarters Air Force Materiel Command; Vice Admiral Robert C. Parker, USCG (Ret), Commander, Coast Guard Atlantic Area; Greg Treverton, Former Chair, National Intelligence Council; Major General Jerry Harrison, USA (Ret), Former Chief, Office of Legislative Liaison, Army Staff; Rear Admiral Leendert R. Hering USN (Ret), Former Commander, Navy Region Southwest; Major General Jeff Phillips, USA (Ret), Executive Director, Reserve Officers Association; Rear Admiral Michael Smith, USN (Ret), Former Commander, Carrier Strike Group 3; Rear Admiral Jonathan White, USN (Ret), Former Oceanographer & Navigator, US Navy; Captain James C. Goudreau, SC, USN (Ret), Former Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Energy); Brigadier General Steven Anderson, USA (Ret), Former Director, Operations and Logistics Readiness, Headquarters, Department of the Army.

Brigadier General Donald Bolduc, USA (Ret), Former Commander, Special Operations Command-Africa; Brigadier General Robert Felderman, USA (Ret), Former Deputy Director of Plans, Policy and Strategy, United States Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command; Brigadier General Carlos Martinez, USAF (Ret), Former Mobilization Assistant, Chief of Warfighting Integration and Chief Information Officer, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force; Joan VanDervort, Former Deputy Director, Ranges, Sea, and Airspace, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Readiness); Commander David

Slayton, USN (Ret), Executive Director, the Arctic Security Initiative The Hoover Institution; Hon. Richard Morningstar, Former Ambassador to the European Union; Major General Richard T. Devereaux, USAF (Ret), Former Director, Operational Planning, Policy and Strategy, Headquarters US Air Force; Rear Admiral Sinclair M. Harris, USN (Ret), Former Commander, United States Fourth Fleet; Rear Admiral Michael G. Mathis, USN (Ret), Chief Engineer to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition); Rear Admiral Fernandez L. Ponds, USN (Ret), Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 3.

Rear Admiral Kevin Slates, USN (Ret), Former Director of Energy and Environmental Readiness Division, US Navy; Rear Admiral David W. Titley, USN (Ret), Former Oceanographer & Navigator, US Navy; Joe Bryan, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Energy); Brigadier General John Adams, USA (Ret), Former Deputy United States Military Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Military Committee; Brigadier General Joseph R. Barnes, USA (Ret), Former Assistant Judge Advocate General of the Army; Brigadier General Stephen Cheney, USMC (Ret), Former Commanding General Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island; Brigadier General Gerald E. Galloway, USA (Ret), Former Dean of the Academic Board, US Military Academy, West Point; Brigadier General Stephen Xenakis, USA (Ret), Former Commanding General, Southeast Regional Medical Command; Colonel Lawrence B. Wilkerson, USA (Ret), Former Chief of Staff to the US Secretary of State.

This letter very directly rebukes the attempt by the President to create a committee within the National Security Council that would undermine military and intelligence judgments on the threats that are posed by climate change. So instead of recognizing those and developing a plan to address them, what the President has been trying to do is to figure out how to undermine those very judgments.

At this time, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration of S. 1743 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I am reserving the right to object.

With all due respect to my good friend and colleague from New Hampshire, we both served on the Foreign Relations Committee. The Foreign Relations Committee is, as it has been noted, the committee of jurisdiction on this matter. We are talking about the Paris climate agreement. What Senator SHAHEEN is attempting to do with this—and, again, with all due respect, I understand where she is coming from

on it—is to stop the President from withdrawing from the Paris climate agreement that was made by his predecessor, President Obama.

Let me say, first of all, that the Senator is right that the changes we are experiencing are great. They have large effects. They are of great magnitude. Just as importantly, the changes we make attempting to address this are going to have great magnitude. In a great magnitude, they are going to affect the American people both financially and in the quality of life and the lifestyle they enjoy.

We can't do anything about the changes that are occurring right now, but what we can do is to do something about the way we attack this, the way we make changes to our lifestyle and what we will give up and what people are willing to give up in order to address this.

The way this is done is nations get together to talk about this—the 200 nations get together. They did, and they came up with the Paris climate agreement. Under article II of the U.S. Constitution, section 2, the President is given the power to make treaties with other countries, and that is what President Obama attempted to do with this. However, section 2 goes on to say that the President can make these treaties provided two-thirds of the Senate present concur. So that is a treaty, and that is how ordinarily agreements are made between nations.

Obviously, we can do things ourselves without having a two-thirds vote—with a 60-percent vote in the Senate and a simple majority vote in the House. We can do that amongst ourselves if we want to change U.S. law as to how we are going to change the way we do industry and the way we lead our lives. We can do that with that kind of a vote. If we are going to agree with other countries, on the other hand, it takes a two-thirds vote.

Now, at the time this was negotiated, I disagreed with President Obama, and I disagree with the accord at this time. The reason I do is I really believe this is a bad deal for the people of the United States. I really believe we can get a better deal. I think what we need to do, if we are going to do that, is we need to do it on a bipartisan basis. There is not going to be a two-thirds vote without a bipartisan agreement on this issue.

I would like to see this addressed. I would like to see us, as the Foreign Relations Committee, and us, as the first branch of government, constitutionally protected as such, be a part of this and not just the second branch negotiating and then entering into the agreement.

The President has, No. 1, every right to withdraw from this agreement, just as President Obama had the right to enter into this executive agreement. I, for one, agree that he should withdraw from the Paris accord. In fact, I encouraged him to do so personally when he was running and then when he was elected and continuously since then.

That doesn't mean we should walk away from this by any stretch of the imagination. I think what we should do is do what the U.S. Constitution envisions; that is, you have a negotiation between us, the United States, and other countries, and then the matter is submitted to the U.S. Senate for a vote to see if two-thirds of us can agree that this is the way to do this.

So based on that, with all due respect to my good friend from New Hampshire, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am not surprised by my colleague's objection. I am, however, disappointed, and I have to disagree, to some extent, with the rationale because in fact this was not a treaty. It was a voluntary, non-binding agreement that the United States entered into voluntarily.

I am not saying President Trump doesn't have the authority to withdraw from the agreement. I am saying he is wrong to withdraw because it is not in the U.S. national interest to withdraw from this agreement.

There is an international race to develop clean energy technologies and practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and this race exists, in large part, because of the goals that were established in the Paris climate agreement.

Instead of leading the pack in this race, which the United States should be doing, the President has chosen to put us on the sidelines. We are going to watch our allies and our adversaries clamor to fill the void he has created. After decades of American leadership in clean energy technology innovations, other countries are now poised to develop new low-carbon technologies to help countries throughout the world meet their Paris commitments. Those could be American technologies. Those could be American jobs. Instead of being developed in the United States, too many of these new technologies and the jobs that go with them will be developed outside of our shores. This is a missed opportunity for the United States. It is a setback for the American economy and for American workers.

The scientists are in agreement worldwide. Climate change is the single greatest environmental public health and economic challenge our world has ever faced. Right now, watching this President withdraw the United States from the Paris Agreement, sitting idly by, this Congress is surrendering American leadership in the fight against climate change.

I hope that as time goes by, the President and our Republican colleagues will rethink the position and acknowledge the need to do something to address the climate challenge we are facing and to make sure the United States is in line for those jobs and the new energy economy that is being created.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, first of all, I don't question the sincerity whatsoever of my good friend from New Hampshire. Indeed, she is quite correct that the United States has been a leader as far as developing methods by which we clean up the air and clean up the water.

There is nothing that is happening here today, at this moment, that is going to affect that at all. American companies are going to continue to be on the front edge of this, on a very innovative basis, and I have every confidence that American businesses will rise to the occasion and will continue to actually be the world leader in this regard.

What I object to is making an agreement with other countries that truly binds U.S. citizens by doing it without going through the constitutional process of submitting the agreement that is between our country and others, as is specifically—very specifically provided in article II, section 2.

I think if we did that, I think we would wind up with a better agreement. I think we would wind up with a bipartisan agreement. We all know that when we have a bipartisan agreement, we do substantially better as far as rising to the occasion and all getting behind the effort.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, yesterday a bipartisan group met with seven Fortune 500 companies. They were all on the cutting edge of new energy technologies, and everyone around the table said what they need is to see policies at the Federal level that encouraged the development of new energy technologies and what we can do to address climate change.

I like what my colleague said about being able to work together to address this. I hope we can do that, and I am ready to sit down anytime he is to look at things we might be able to agree on that will help us move forward to address climate change. I appreciate his willingness to work in a bipartisan way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

VETERANS DAY

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise this evening to pay tribute to all the men and women who have worn our Nation's uniform in defense of our freedom. Veterans Day is a deeply meaningful day for our Nation. Our country sets this day aside to honor her servicemembers.

In Nebraska, we remember the sacrifices of our own heroes. We admire the courage required to leave your home in Nebraska and serve America in her hour of need. It was over 100 years ago, at the 11th hour, on the 11th day, during the 11th month of the year that the roars of battle in World War I

fell silent. Since then, Nebraskans and all Americans have come together every year to renew our appreciation for our Nation's heroes. We pledge that no matter how much time has passed, we will never forget their valor, their service, and their selflessness.

In June, it was one of the greatest honors of my life to gather at freedom's altar in Normandy, France, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of D-day. I was overwhelmed with both gratitude and pride for our men and women who ensure that our freedom lives on, and evil is vanquished.

Now, 75 years earlier, minutes from where I was standing, Omaha's own CPL Ed Morrisette arrived at the beaches of Normandy with the 6th Infantry Regiment. As the Omaha World Herald reports, "He leaped over the side of the landing craft into shoulder-deep water, carrying a roll of communications wire."

Morrisette recalled holding the wire and his rifle above the water as he waded through, dodging an onslaught of enemy artillery fire. By the grace of God, he completed his mission, and he survived the Normandy invasion.

Corporal Morrisette continued fighting for our Nation in France and Germany. Following the war, his career as a civilian engineer eventually led him to Offutt Air Force Base. Recently, his courage and his dedication were recognized.

At the age of 96, the Government of France awarded Corporal Morrisette the highest military or civilian medal—the French Legion of Honor. Corporal Morrisette's story inspires all of us to remember that our duty to honor our Nation's heroes is never finished. The responsibility falls to all of us to listen to their stories and to carry them on. Not only do we honor our troops with our words, we salute them with our actions.

Nebraskans have always taken this to heart. It is why you read stories like that of Chuck Ogle from Kearney. He was a pilot in the 498th U.S. Army Medical Corps air ambulance company during the Tet Offensive in Vietnam. Every single day, he carries with him a list of his 14 fellow servicemembers who were killed in action. It is why you see stories of hero flights for Nebraska veterans to visit Washington, DC.

Last October, a plane carried 80 Korean veterans from Hall County to our Nation's Capital to visit the monuments dedicated to their service. This marked the 10th flight for the county's veterans to Washington. Now, every living veteran in Hall County has been given the opportunity to make this trip. It is why over the last few years business leaders and members of the Omaha community rallied around the goal of building a new ambulatory clinic at the Omaha VA hospital.

In response to delays to update the aging Omaha VA facility, I introduced and President Obama signed into law the CHIP IN for Vets Act in 2016. The

bill allows control of VA projects to be placed where it should be—back in the hands of local communities. It allows communities like Omaha to take the lead on new projects by permitting the VA to accept private contributions to ensure VA projects are finished both on time and on budget. Omaha's community and business leaders came up with this idea in the first place, and they have delivered.

Construction began on a new ambulatory center on the Omaha VA campus in May of 2018. After the original cost estimate of \$120 million, the Government Accountability Office released a preliminary report that found that the implementation of the CHIP IN for Vets Act would reduce the total estimated cost to \$86 million. The report projected that the new facility is now \$34 million under budget and it is 4½ months ahead of schedule.

In the same report, a VA official stated that because of the agency's current major construction backlog, the CHIP IN approach allowed work on the Omaha project to begin at least 5 years sooner than it would have under a normal process. Now Nebraska's veterans may get the quality of care they need and deserve earlier than expected. The success of this project is a testament to the deep respect and admiration Nebraskans have for our veterans.

Scripture encourages us to pay our dues wherever they may be. If someone is due respect, show them respect. If honor is due, honor them. The amount of honor and respect our State and Nation owe our veterans is something we can never fully repay. Our country could not live on without their service and sacrifice.

I want to sincerely thank our veterans for their service when our country needed it the most.

Whether it was in the trenches of Europe while liberating a continent from evil or in the Pacific theater during World War II or stopping the threat of communism in Korea or Vietnam or defending our Nation against terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan, the rescue of human freedom began with you. I can promise you that America will never forget your incredible courage and patriotism, and we will continue to strive to be worthy of the freedom that burns brighter today because of your service. On behalf of all Nebraskans and a grateful country, thank you.

May God bless our Nation's veterans and their families, and may God bless the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized as in morning business for such time as I may consume.

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

Mr. INHOFE. You know, we don't hear that very often. I just heard the term from the Senator from Nebraska "under budget and ahead of schedule."

You did something right. Good for you.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. President, I have been asked several times in the last couple, 3 days where we are with regard to what I consider to be the most significant bill of the year every year, which is the Defense authorization bill, and I have been having to give the same answer for the last 3 or 4 days, and it is unfortunate, but I think it is going to ultimately happen.

Last week, I came down here and I talked about why we needed to pass the National Defense Authorization Act and why a full-year continuing resolution is totally unacceptable and would be devastating to us. I am back here again because in the last week, nothing has changed. That is not OK. The reason it has not changed is because many of the Members of the House are off someplace. I think they are in Afghanistan or someplace on a trip when we are in the middle of negotiating.

Let me just make sure we all understand what I am talking about. For 58 consecutive years, we passed the national defense authorization bill, so we will ultimately pass it. We did that. And I have to say that this is not a partisan statement I am making about this because the House and Senate Democrats and Republicans did a good job.

I particularly want to thank JACK REED, JACK REED and I—I am the chairman of the committee, and he is the ranking member—did our bill in record time. We set a record, actually, a year ago. We did this in a shorter period of time than has been done in 40 years, and we were anticipating doing that again. We did our bill in the Senate, and everything came out fine. We ended up passing it with only two votes in opposition to it. So there is no reason we are not doing it right now.

The reason this is critical is that if for some reason we didn't get this done until December, our kids over there would not be funded. I am talking about payroll and everything else. Our military would stop in its tracks. That is not going to happen. One reason we know it is not going to happen is because we introduced the short version of the bill that upset everyone. That was taking everything out of the bill that had nothing to do with defense and just doing it. That is getting kind of in the weeds, and it is complicated. Nevertheless, we need to get to it just in a matter of days now, as soon as the members of the committee in the House are back in town.

What kind of a message do my Democratic colleagues think they are sending our troops who lay their lives on the line every day if we don't prioritize their pay, their housing, and their programs to care for their families while they are away? What kind of a message do our Democratic colleagues think we are sending our allies and our partners, those who depend on us? What kind of a message are we sending those who are not our allies?

This is the problem we are having. I say to the Democrats in the House—because it is not the Republicans in the House, and it is not the Democrats in the Senate. This is just the Democrats in the House. We passed our bill in a bipartisan way here in the Senate, and we just need to get this finished. It is the most important bill of the year.

Now they claim we are not supporting our partners in Syria, and then they turn around on a dime and refuse to authorize the very funds that keep our partners safe and effective in the fight against ISIS.

I am concerned about the kind of message our colleagues are sending to our adversaries. Our adversaries enjoy this dysfunction. They want defense funding mired in partisan debate. They don't want us to catch up.

If we don't take action now, partisan bickering over supporting our troops and investing in national defense will be our Achilles' heel.

At the end of the day, these challenges won't go away because we want them to go away. They are out there. To meet these challenges, our troops need equipment, training, and weapons.

Everything is outlined in this blueprint. This is the blueprint that is the National Defense Strategy of the Nation. This was put together by an equal number of Democrats and Republicans well over a year ago as to how we want to handle our national defense and what our strategy is going to be. The President adopted this, it is a good strategy, and we have been following this in our committee to the letter.

We have this National Defense Strategy Commission report. There is a quote from GEN Creighton Abrams, a military leader from World War II on through Vietnam. His name may sound familiar because the Abrams tank was named after him. He talked about how after World War II the United States failed to properly modernize and train our military. And who paid for it? Our soldiers, airmen, Marines, and sailors. They paid for it with their lives. He said: "The monuments we raise to their heroism and sacrifice are really surrogates for the monuments we owe ourselves for our blindness to reality . . . for our unsubstantiated wishful thinking about how war could not come."

That is exactly what happened. It was true then, and it is true now. So to say that these things can wait while the House goes on another recess or to use them as a bargaining chip or to forgo them to instead wage war on our own President is at best a waste of time and resources and at worse a dangerous abdication of our constitutional duty.

Unfortunately, the truth is, if we kick the can down the road on these defense policy and funding bills, we are just adding another challenge to our defense.

We were off to a great start last year. Defense appropriations were enacted on time for the first time in a decade, and,

as I said, we passed the NDAA over here faster than we had ever done in 40 years.

All of the service leaders who came before the Senate Armed Services Committee said that having on-time appropriations and authorization is critical to rebuilding the force. We have the National Defense Strategy and the commission report as a roadmap. We have a budget deal. There is no reason we can't get this done. There is no good reason our Democratic colleagues are dragging their feet. Our senior military leaders said that a continuing resolution is absolutely the worst thing we can do.

By the way, a lot of people don't know what a continuing resolution is. If you pass a continuing resolution because you can't get appropriations bills passed, then you are continuing what you did the previous year. That doesn't work when you are carrying on a military because the needs we have in the coming year are not the same needs. We could have those programs already complete. Yet we would still have funding for them under a continuing resolution. It is a separate issue, but it is one that is critically important today and is being considered today.

So I am surprised that the Democrats in the House—not the Senate. The Senate Democrats and Republicans worked very well together. I am surprised that the Democrats in the House are willing to resort to a full-year CR. It is throwing in the towel. It is quitting when our troops need us the most.

My Republican colleagues in the House, led by House Armed Services Ranking Member THORBERRY, put out this document that talks about how America's military will be damaged under a full-year CR. No one has talked about this before. I am glad he came out with it. I will mention five examples that he mentioned.

It would extend the pilot shortage in our Air Force—extend, because we are still climbing out of the current shortage. We have a problem. We have a problem in the Air Force, and we have a problem everywhere we are using flying equipment, whether it is fixed wing or otherwise. This is a problem, and it is a serious problem. If we were to somehow have to do a full-year CR, that problem wouldn't be solved.

It would prevent the military from managing its personnel, including necessary efforts to grow the force, pay for military moves, and lock in bonuses for our troops. That won't happen if we end up with a full-year CR.

It would force the Navy to cancel ship maintenance and training. Repairs for 14 ships would be canceled.

It would worsen the existing munitions shortage by preventing DOD from buying more than 6,000 weapons.

Finally, we would fall even further behind our competitors on hypersonic weapons, artificial intelligence, and next-generation equipment that we need to face all the challenges I just talked about.

With regard to hypersonic weapons, as an example, I saw the other day for the first time—in fact, I used this picture down on the Senate floor. A hypersonic weapon is kind of the weapon of the future. It is one that works at 5 times the speed of sound. It is a type of artillery. It is a type of munition.

Prior to the last administration, the Obama administration, we were ahead of our peer competitors, which are China and Russia. Now we are actually behind China and Russia. That is how serious this is.

I talk to people in the real world. When I go back to Oklahoma, I talk to people, and they assume that we in the United States have the very best of everything. We don't. We have allowed other countries—primarily China and Russia—to catch up with us and actually put us behind in some areas, not to mention the waste of taxpayer dollars.

A CR wastes billions of dollars by creating repetitive work, injecting uncertainty into the contracting process, and forcing rushed work at year's end. It is something that is totally unnecessary and is something that should not be happening.

I have been meeting with my fellow conferees regularly—more than we ever have before NDAA negotiations. I am making sure we have a backup plan if we can't reach an agreement on the NDAA, but time is running out.

Here is the reality. We only have 20 legislative days left in the Senate. The House has even less than that because of the recess week they took. If the House sends us articles of impeachment, that would eat up all the time in December and could spill into January. That would mean we go beyond the deadline our troops need to be funded, and that is a reality we never had to face before.

We don't have time left. We need to make these bills a priority the way we always have done before. The NDAA has passed for the last 58 years. It is the most important thing we do each year.

In June, the Senate bill passed 86 to 8. That is a landslide, and that was not down party lines; that was on a bipartisan basis. I am grateful to the Senate Democrats for their partnership and their work in creating and passing this bipartisan bill. JACK REED is my counterpart over there. He is the ranking member in the Senate Armed Services Committee. We worked hand in glove throughout this process and even set records. We did our job, and it has to be completed in the House. This happened in line with the best traditions of the Senate Armed Services Committee—a tradition that spans almost six decades.

Usually, this is a bipartisan process; both sides give and take. So it concerns me to see partisan politics being inserted into this must-pass bill when we go to conference between the House and the Senate. It concerns me to see Democrats filibustering Defense appropriations to prove a political point. It

concerns me to see them prioritizing their misguided attempts to undo the results of the 2016 election through impeachment, instead of taking care of our troops with the NDAA. If we can't keep Defense authorizations free of partisan gridlock, what kind of message does that send to Americans who rely on our troops for protection and our allies who rely on us?

I said before: The world is watching. We are sending a message. We need to make that a successful message.

Let me say one more thing about the skinny bill. This is now a reality. When I filed this, we thought the chances we would have to use that were very remote. If they should go through with this thing they are threatening to do over on the House side—an impeachment process—people don't realize that if you want to impeach somebody, it not a simple vote of the majority. It is the second step that is significant. If they impeach, they don't have to have any evidence, any documentation, any problem at all if they just want to get the majority of people and say: Let's impeach the President, they can say: We will impeach the President.

The problem there is, then it comes over to the Senate, and the Senate has to go through this long process, and that is what we would be competing with when we are not getting the Defense authorization bill done. The skinny bill is important. It is now filed. It is ready to pass, if we should have to do that. Nobody wants to do it, but we may end up having to do it. That is the good news and the bad news. This is the most important bill of the year. We need to get it passed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I thank the chairman of the Armed Services Committee for his bipartisan work with my senior Senator, JACK REED, year after year on the National Defense authorizations.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. President, this 257th "Time to Wake Up" speech reports on my trip to Colorado to see how climate change is affecting the Centennial State and to learn more about the remarkable action that Coloradans are taking to confront climate change.

Colorado is the 18th State I have visited on my climate road trips. Typically, these trips land me in States where people fighting for climate action need some bucking up. Often, I remind those people that there is hope, even if their State legislature may be captured by fossil fuel interests, even if climate change is a dirty word in local hangouts. That was not the case in Colorado. In fact, it is a State on a major climate change winning streak.

Coloradans were the ones bucking me up. I saw that right off the bat at the Alliance Center in downtown Denver. The center's chief operating officer, Jason Page, took me around this LEED-certified space, which is part

business incubator, part rallying point for an array of organizations fighting for climate action in Colorado and throughout the country. Jason and his colleagues hosted me and local environmental leaders to discuss the work they have done, and they have done a lot.

Just in the last year, Colorado passed and signed into law seven important climate and clean energy bills. They include legislation to set targets for cutting the State's climate pollution relative to 2005 levels by at least 90 percent by 2050. The legislature passed four measures to boost the adoption of electric vehicles, and it passed bills to help move to new energy-efficient home appliances, to ease the transition to renewable energy for Xcel, Colorado's largest utility, and to collect long-term climate data so the State can craft even more smart legislation to combat climate change and build resiliency to climate consequences.

To hear how Colorado is going to hit its renewable targets, I met with Xcel, State public utility commissioners, and Gov. Jared Polis. Their message to me was simple: It is a challenge, and we are going to do it. They certainly aren't backing away from the challenge. On top of the State's renewable goal, Xcel has committed to an 80-percent cut in carbon emissions across its portfolio by 2030 and to reach 100 percent carbon-free energy by 2050. Xcel, supported by the Colorado Public Utilities Commission, is now incorporating the social cost of carbon—a key measure of the long-term damage done by carbon pollution—into its planning process.

On top of forward-looking policy, Colorado is fortunate to be a leader in developing clean energy technology. For that, I visited Panasonic's Pena Station NEXT project, they call it. It is a collaboration between the city of Denver, the utility Xcel, the Denver International Airport, the State Department of Transportation, and Panasonic. The project is designed to show what a smart city powered by renewable energy looks like. It includes two megawatts of solar, a massive battery storage system, which I am looking at right here, a facility to test autonomous vehicles, and an operation center that can integrate all that technology for better efficiency.

At the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden, I saw some of the most advanced wind, solar, and other renewable energy technologies in the world. This National Lab is testing the next generation of wind turbines, hydrogen fuel cells, autonomous vehicles, solar panels, smart grid technology, and more. NREL's job isn't just to develop these technologies but also to help private industry adopt them, bringing clean energy to scale and creating jobs in the process.

This is me at NREL. I am painting a solar-activated fluid that they have come up with onto a plate and instantly generating energy from the

lamp coming above. As I painted it, you could see the dials come up as energy was generated off that freshly painted plate. It was like putting nail polish down on a surface. They are doing some pretty amazing stuff. At NREL, I could not help but notice a familiar logo, TPI Composites, a company that makes top-of-the-line composite materials in Rhode Island. Naturally, because NREL needs the best, they work with this company with a Rhode Island footprint to develop next-generation materials. I am proud to report that our Composites Alliance of Rhode Island includes TPI. They have a big role in building wind turbine blades and other technologies.

Colorado feels this urgency because the Mountain West is feeling the effects of climate change more and more every day. I met with leading climate scientists for a briefing at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, overlooking the Flatirons at the feet of the Rocky Mountains. NCAR's Doctors James Done, Laura Reed, Daniel Swain, Jackie Schuman, and Bill Mahoney told me about their important research into climate change's effects in the West; how vegetation is withering; how wildfires grow more frequent, have longer duration and are more intense; how hydrology changes as weather patterns shift and temperatures rise throughout the region; and how extreme weather events like sudden downpours and prolonged droughts are becoming a new unfortunate normal.

In Fort Collins, I met with truly dedicated public servants from across the Federal Government who specialize in land management and climate adaptation and have gotten together to coordinate their efforts. These exceptional public servants spent their careers protecting our public lands. They are witnessing firsthand the devastation wrought on our public lands by climate change. They described to me their battles to safeguard stands of old-growth sequoias—a national treasure—and to rebuild beaches and dunes in the face of rising seas and stronger oceanic storms and even to cover melting glaciers with sheeting to try to help prevent them from melting quite so quickly.

They love these lands. They work all their lives to help and save and protect these lands. They do everything in their power to honor and serve these lands. The fact that they battle on in spite of the heartbreaking pace and severity of the destruction climate change is causing is a human inspiration.

Speaking of inspiration, I closed out my trip with an event organized by the group POW—Protect Our Winters—to hear what climate change means to the winter sports and outdoor industry. Skiers, snowboarders, and industry executives told me about the climate threat to the multibillion-dollar winter sports industry in Colorado, which relies on plenty of snow and cold weather

to thrive. Professional skier Cody Cirillo told me:

I fear there will be no more snow by the end of the century. I fear a whole ski culture will cease to exist. I fear economic impacts on Summit County and all other mountain towns. I fear the loss of an industry that has given me so much. . . . I fear the kids will not get the opportunity to see a first snow, to feel winter's inaugural bite on the nose, and to miss out on so many wonderful lessons.

These fears are driving Cody and other world-class athletes to speak out. He and his fellow POW members aren't giving in; they are speaking up.

There are many reasons Coloradans are acting on climate and transitioning their energy mix away from fossil fuels. Colorado has the benefit of fossil fuels, but Coloradans want to protect their beautiful, natural landscape. They want to sustain their winter sports and hospitality industries. They want a healthy, prosperous future for their children, and they understand the risks of developing and using those fossil fuels. They also recognize that there are strong forces coming in the energy market—forces that will shift away from fracked natural gas and coal to carbon-free wind and solar. Coloradans know it is better to lead that shift than to wait until the bottom drops out.

We have known for a while that coal is facing big problems. Murray Energy, which is a major coal company with cozy ties to the Trump administration, just filed for bankruptcy last week. Alarms are going off about natural gas, which is a type of fuel that the fossil fuel industry touts as less dirty.

In Boulder, Paul Bodnar, the managing director of the Rocky Mountain Institute, highlighted a report RMI issued in September showing just how quickly this shift, this cost reduction across the renewable spectrum, is going to make the economics of natural gas untenable.

RMI's report foretells of "a turning point for the relative economics of clean energy resources (including wind, solar, storage; energy efficiency; and demand flexibility) versus new gas-fired generation."

The report continues: "For the first time, the rapidly falling costs of renewables and batteries are allowing optimized combinations of these resources . . . to systematically outcompete gas-fired generation on a cost basis while providing all the same grid services." The "same grid services" means the same reliability and the same availability but at a lower cost.

Here is a graph showing how fast clean energy will overtake gas plants.

This has been the falling cost of clean energy. This is the cost of building and operating a new gas plant. This is the cost of operating an existing gas plant. So we are now at the crossover point where it is cheaper to use renewables—clean energy power—than it is to build new natural gas plants.

Setting aside the pollution and the other extraneous costs, all of which

economists would call externalities that come with burning natural gas, which is the methane leakage, the CO₂ from the burn—all of it—on even just the heavily subsidized existing natural gas pricing, clean energy still beats them right now. They are projecting that it is going to go ahead, and by about 2035, it will be cheaper to build a new clean energy power facility than it will be to continue to feed natural gas into your existing, already built, depreciated natural gas facilities. Just on price is where we are going. So somebody building natural gas facilities into this projected future has a real problem on his hands.

RMI has found that clean energy resources beat on price alone—on price—over 80 percent of proposed gas-fired powerplant capacity, and that clean energy will render 70 percent of proposed gas plants "uneconomic"—can't compete—just on price by 2035. In other words, it will not make sense even to run, let alone build, those uneconomic natural gas plants. They will be shuttered, stranded assets, which will deal a financial blow to the company or the investors who own them, and if the utilities can shove that cost through to their consumers, it will leave consumers in the lurch. If over half of your fleet is stranded, that is catastrophic for a utility company just on the economics.

It actually gets worse for natural gas in a new investigation by the watchdog group Unearthed, based on data from a very respected fossil fuel industry firm, the expert consulting firm Rystad. Based on Rystad's data, the new report finds that the big oil companies' promises to curb the methane emissions from natural gas extraction appear to be completely bogus. The report found that the biggest industry players, including ExxonMobil and BP, were among the worst when it comes to wasting and burning off methane.

Natural gas is facing a double whammy. First, natural gas is worsening our climate crisis faster than we knew, and some of our biggest fossil fuel companies are driving the problem.

Now, while we are finding out how the fossil fuel industry has misled us about its methane emissions and about how much leakage and burning off there is, we are being treated to the spectacle of one of the biggest fossil fuel industry trade groups—the American Petroleum Institute—in its launching of a seven-figure ad campaign to convince America that "we're are on it." We are America's natural gas industry, and we are on it when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions.

Well, it is on it not so much, apparently.

This ad campaign looks like just more fossil fuel industry disinformation. It is an industry that just can't seem to help itself from saying things that aren't true.

Anyway, if you pair natural gas's rapidly becoming "uneconomic" against renewables with emerging data

showing a much bigger methane problem for the industry, that pairing—that combined result—is very gloomy for natural gas investors. That is why, in getting back to Colorado, it is such a smart move to unhitch your energy market from those fuels while you can.

A savvy move, Colorado.

Across this country, Americans are already acting on climate. In the face of the President's extraordinarily ill-advised decision to pursue a departure from the Paris Agreement, States, municipalities, and major corporations are all standing up and saying: Nope, we are still in.

They get the problem that we face, and they get how important it is. It is time for us in the Senate to join them in waking up and coming up with a solution to this evident problem.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TRIBUTE TO JOSHUA HALL, JENNIFER CHILDRESS, DAWN WILCOX, AND ANGIE WRIGHT

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, it is one of my favorite times during the week, when I get to come to the Senate floor—I know it is the pages' favorite time—to talk a little bit about Alaska and talk about my State and present what we weekly call the "Alaskan of the Week."

It is the opportunity to talk about someone in the community who has done something great for their community, for the State, maybe for America, and I would like to recognize this great variety of wonderful Alaskans, great Americans, whom we have in my State and talk about them.

By the way, I always like to give a little update on what is going on in Alaska and to talk to people who are in the Gallery and who are watching on TV and encourage them—now is the time to plan your next trip to Alaska if you are going to come next summer. But, also, you should know that winter, which is coming—it has pretty much come to Alaska—is a great time to visit too. It is a winter wonderland. You can ski, snowboard, and at end of the day, sit back and drink something warm and watch the northern lights dance in the sky. You can't do that in many States in our great Nation. So come on up for the trip of a lifetime. We want you to come whether it is summer, winter, fall, spring; it doesn't matter. You will not be disappointed if you come visit us in the great State of Alaska.

I am going to break the rules a little bit on the Alaskan of the Week because I usually recognize one, but today I am going to recognize four extraordinary Alaskans. They are four teachers in my State who are the recent recipients of

the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. Joshua Hall is a math teacher at Dimond High School in Anchorage and the chair of the math program there. Jennifer Childress is also a teacher at Dimond, teaching science and engineering courses. She currently teaches 11th and 12th grade physics and Advanced Placement physics. Dawn Wilcox teaches second grade at Campbell Elementary School in Anchorage, and Angie Wright teaches 4th and 5th grade math at Auke Bay Elementary in Juneau, AK.

We are very, very proud of them. This is a great achievement for all four of these wonderful teachers.

This award is the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. Government specifically for K–12 science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and computer science teaching—something we need more of, not just in Alaska but in America. And we need great teachers who can do this, and that is what this award recognizes.

As any State has—Alaska, North Dakota—we have thousands of teachers in my State who do such great work day in and day out to make sure our next generation is not only educated on the facts but who also understand, in the words of the great leader Nelson Mandela, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Nelson Mandela said that.

These four teachers have been working hard every day for years so that their students will go out and do just that—change the world; make Alaska, America, the world a better place.

They, as well as our teachers all across the country, all across Alaska, certainly have one of the most important and most difficult jobs, so we salute all of them, but I want to salute these four teachers in a little bit more detail. They have chosen not only to master these science, engineering, physics subjects, but to teach it to the next generation.

Despite a slight improvement in the STEM skills of Americans over the last 20 years, it is widely recognized that the United States is still being outpaced by countries all over the world in these critical subject matters.

Now, more than ever, our country desperately needs skilled Americans, skilled professionals, who can innovate for our Nation, who can improve our Nation's infrastructure, advance our healthcare system, build the tools that defend our country, and ensure our Nation's prosperity and a strong economy. We need STEM education.

There is so much to say about all four of these teachers, but let me give you a brief example of how they are teaching the youth of Alaska in these critical areas.

Mr. Hall is a math teacher at Dimond High School who, by the way, has former students and fans in my office. This is a bit of a theme. A lot of these teachers have taught a lot of my staff

right now, including Jesse here. Mr. Hall has been an educator for more than 20 years. He has been teaching math for the past 14 years at Dimond High, and as the department chair, he decided that the school needed an event where math students could show and take pride in the skills they are learning.

He worked with another math teacher to design and organize a schoolwide math competition. They just had their fourth annual event, and 175 students participated. The audience cheered; students were excited. It was a huge deal. Studying math is really cool. It is great. Gosh, there were 175 students. So that is Mr. Hall.

Mrs. Childress is also at Dimond High and also has a big fan base in my office of former students, including Jesse, I believe. She has taught for over 20 years, 14 of which have been teaching science and engineering courses at Dimond.

She helped found the Engineering Academy at Dimond, and she and another teacher developed and ran a program called Smart Girls Rock! Smart Girls Rock! exposes freshman and sophomore girls to female engineers from Anchorage and encourages young women to pursue STEM careers. As a father of three daughters, I know just how important it is to do that.

Here is a fun fact: Mrs. Childress and Mr. Hall have been married for 23 years, which makes this award all the more special for both of them. I would call them a true power couple in Alaska STEM education.

Miss Wilcox, a teacher from Campbell Elementary, has had a 20-year career and has been teaching at Campbell for the past 3 years. Working with her colleagues, she created a STEM school at Campbell—the first STEM elementary school in Anchorage.

Again, these are innovators. You can tell these teachers are innovators.

Also, as a project for the Iditarod Teacher in Every Classroom, which is a science program based on our famous sled dog race, the Iditarod, she worked with another colleague to get their classroom to adopt and improve a local park.

Miss Wilcox's second graders appeared before the school board, the community council, and the parks commission to advocate for their idea. So not only are they learning STEM, but they are learning civics. For their efforts, they were awarded a \$20,000 Anchorage Parks Foundation matching grant, and the park now has outdoor learning labs, paths, signs, and is a joy to visit. So all of you visitors who are going to come to Alaska have to make sure you check out this great new innovation in our parks.

Finally, let me talk about Ms. Wright. Ms. Wright has been an educator for over 16 years. She began her career teaching in rural Alaska, which I view as the heart and soul of our State. For the last 7 years she taught at Auke Bay in Juneau, where she was born and raised.

She is passionate about incorporating place-based knowledge into the classroom. She says that every year her students participate in place-based learning. They pick berries, a traditional part of the Alaska Native subsistence lifestyle, in order to gather the data and more detailed information about our incredible environments throughout the State.

“Students in my classroom learn a lot of Alaskan Native languages and participate in a Tlingit dance group, performing around southeast Alaska.” She also takes her fourth and fifth grade students on a field trip to the muskeg ecosystem to learn how animals adapt to survive in different environments.

“Teaching in Alaska is a gift and taking advantage of it is something I value very much,” Ms. Wright said. It was, in fact, Mr. President, a sentiment expressed by all four of these teachers who won this very prestigious award.

Henry Adams once wrote, “A teacher affects eternity; he or she can never tell where their influence actually stops.” Think about that. A teacher impacts eternity.

The influence that these teachers have over the lives of so many young Alaskans will really never stop. As I mentioned, many staff members of my office are direct recipients of this influence, which will continue help to grow the next generation of leaders, of workers, of thinkers, of doers, and I am sure the next generation of teachers, through their example. I see students who, in turn, will continue to make our State and our country the great places that they are. We cannot thank these teachers enough for what they have done.

So I want to congratulate Mr. Hall, Ms. Childress, Ms. Wilcox, and Ms. Wright for all they have done for this great award, for all they continue to do, for your dedication to your profession, for your passion for math and science, and for your commitment to Alaska’s next generation.

And, of course, I want to congratulate them on being this week’s Alaskans of the Week.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. SULLIVAN. For the information of Senators, tomorrow the Senate will vote on the confirmation of the Rudofsky and Wilson nominations at 11:45 a.m. and the confirmation of the Nardini nomination at 1:45 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Ms. HARRIS. Mr. President, I was absent but had I been present, I would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 344 the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 355, David Austin Tapp, of Kentucky, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims. •

S. RES. 150

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, this week, the United States House of Representatives made history. For the very first time, an overwhelming majority of its members—more than 400—adopted a resolution recognizing the Armenian genocide. I rise today to urge my colleagues in the Senate to do the same thing—the right thing—and pass S. Res. 150.

It has now been 104 years since the Armenian people became targets of the most evil and hate-filled campaign of violence that the world had ever seen. From 1915 to 1923, a million and a half Armenian men, women, and children were murdered at the hands of the Ottoman Turkish Government. It was so atrocious that no word yet existed to describe what was happening—not until the creation of the word “genocide,” the deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial, political, or cultural group.

Unfortunately, nobody has ever been held accountable, and the events surrounding the Armenian genocide continue to be denied, but the truth is simple: What happened to the Armenian people was absolutely genocide, and the Armenian community is right to insist that it be described that way.

This is why I have always supported Senate resolutions calling for the recognition of the Armenian genocide and urged my colleagues to join me.

We know that the deeper the wound, the longer it takes to heal, and nothing cuts deeper into the collective consciousness of a people than genocide.

At the same time, we know now that the Ottoman Empire’s determination to exterminate the Armenian people was no match for their will to survive, and those who survived embodied the best qualities of the human spirit: hope, resilience, perseverance, and love.

Some survivors made their way to America, and many of them built their new lives in Michigan. They have created thriving communities, built businesses, raised families, founded schools, and contributed their rich culture to the fabric of our State.

The more than 20,000 Armenians who are living in Michigan today have not forgotten what happened—none of us should, for we know that, if we do not recognize the atrocities of the past, we

risk blinding ourselves to atrocities in the future.

Recognition of the Armenian genocide is long overdue. A crime like this casts a long shadow, and this shadow can be conquered only by light, the light of truth that comes from fully acknowledging the full scale of the horror that the Armenians endured.

I urge my colleagues to take up and support this resolution.

Thank you.

REMEMBERING KAY HAGAN

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of the late Senator Kay Hagan. Her loss will be deeply felt by us here in the Senate, both by those who served with her as well as the many staff and individuals she worked with over time. Senator Hagan was a dedicated public servant who touched many lives faithfully serving her home State of North Carolina.

Born in Shelby, NC, Senator Hagan attended Florida State University and then returned to North Carolina to attend law school at Wake Forest University. She worked at North Carolina National Bank, a predecessor to Bank of America, for 10 years, becoming a vice president in the estates and trust division. She was a loving wife and mother deeply committed to her family. She left the bank to raise her three children—Jeanette, Tilden, and Carrie—and became actively involved in the Greensboro community.

Senator Hagan started early in politics helping her uncle, former Florida Governor and U.S. Senator Lawton Chiles, paste bumper stickers on supporters’ cars. She was active in North Carolina politics and ran Governor Jim Hunt’s campaign in Guilford County in 1992 and 1996. In 1998, she ran for the North Carolina State Senate and served there for 10 years, where she co-chaired the budget committee. During her 6-year tenure as cochair of the budget, she increased North Carolina’s Rainy Day fund and balanced five straight budgets. I commend her commitment to fiscal responsibility and achieving a balanced budget. In 2008, she won the election for the U.S. Senate seat and showed up in Congress ready to work for North Carolinians back home.

One thing Senator Hagan was known for here in the Senate was the effort she put in to be as open and accessible to her constituents. As a dedicated public servant, Senator Hagan made constituent services a priority and often traveled the State hosting “Conversations with Kay.”

It is difficult to pinpoint Senator Hagan’s single most greatest achievement. During her political career at the local, State, and Federal level, Senator Hagan championed many important issues and served as a tireless advocate for her constituents.

Representing one of the most military-friendly States in the Nation,