

namesake waterway has historically provided Lee County residents a ship-ping avenue and a scenic venue for out-door recreation. Lush valleys led local farmers to grow a wide range of crops, including tobacco, corn, and apples. The Daniel Boone National Forest, which covers thousands of acres of the county, provides an abundant source of hardwood. Taking advantage of the beautiful Appalachian Mountains, coal operations in the county have been a historic aspect of this region.

Formed in the years following the Civil War, Lee County did not take long to become a center of regional ground and water transportation. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Louisville and Atlantic Railroad extended its line to Beattyville, encouraging new opportunities for local growth. The following decades saw a strengthening economy and growing population.

As the county developed, so did its rural traditions. One of them, the local Woolly Worm Festival, celebrates Lee County's mountain culture. Each October, the community gathers for a variety of events, including a pet show, a parade, and a pageant. The most interesting day is the Woolly Worm Races, where young people see whose banded woolly worm is the fastest to climb a string. The winning worm is given the responsibility of predicting that year's upcoming winter based on its body's coloration. This is just one example of the pride every Lee County resident can enjoy in their home county.

I frequently get the chance to visit with families in Lee County and consistently work to advance their priorities in the Senate. For example, I have partnered with local officials to secure millions of Federal dollars to upgrade their water infrastructure and to build a hiking and mountain biking trail. It has also been a privilege to support the brave drug eradication efforts of law enforcement and the Kentucky National Guard in the Daniel Boone National Forest. Answering the call of Kentuckians is one of the best aspects of my service in the Senate, and I look forward to continuing to deliver for communities in Lee County and across Kentucky.

Lee County will kick off its year of festivities on March 1, the same day the county was established in 1870. In addition to many community events, the county is also presenting an oral history project, featuring community members discussing local artifacts and historical events. There is certainly a lot to celebrate about the last 150 years. I am delighted to join all the families throughout Lee County in marking this impressive milestone, and I urge my Senate colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this wonderful Eastern Kentucky community.

S.J. RES. 68

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, earlier today, we voted on an amendment to

S.J. Res. 68 that was offered by the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator RISCH. That amendment consisted of one sentence, as follows: "The President has a constitutional responsibility to take actions to defend the United States, its territories, possessions, citizens, servicemembers and diplomats from attack."

On its face, the Risch amendment seems reasonable. The President does have a responsibility to defend the country. But, as is so often the case, the devil is in the details, or the absence of details, and when it involves engaging U.S. Armed Forces in hostilities, we should pay particularly close attention. I was among those who opposed the amendment and I want to explain why.

First, it is important to note that the underlying resolution already states that "[nothing] in this section shall be construed to prevent the United States from defending itself from imminent attack." So there is no question about the President's authority to defend the country. But the central purpose of the resolution is to give meaning to the Congress's constitutional authority—the Congress's sole power—to declare war. For far too long this body has surrendered that duty to the executive branch.

In 2002, when the Senate considered whether or not to authorize President George W. Bush to invade Iraq, many in this body argued that providing the President with that authority was needed to convince Saddam Hussein to back down. I, instead, saw it as Congress abdicating its constitutional duty by providing the President with open-ended authority to use military force against Iraq. For that reason, among others, I voted no.

In fact, my worst fears were realized. Not only was the justification for that war based on lies, but thousands of Americans died, trillions of dollars were wasted that could have been used to fix what's broken in this country, and the American people are no safer. Today that authority is being used in ways that no one envisioned or intended to justify an attack against another country, Iran, nearly two decades later.

We should learn from that costly mistake. The obvious implication of the Risch amendment is that any President is authorized, and has an affirmative responsibility, to use military force at anytime, anywhere, indefinitely, to prevent an unspecified attack that might occur sometime in the future. There is no requirement that it be "imminent". There is no requirement that such an attack be anything other than speculative or imagined.

Given the way this and past administrations have expansively interpreted past authorizations for the use of force, the Risch amendment could be interpreted to further erode Congress's ability to prevent a President from unilat-

erally sending U.S. forces into hostilities without prior consultation with, or further authorization from, the Congress. Such an endorsement—even if unintended—of unchecked Executive power undermines the purpose of the underlying joint resolution, and it makes a mockery of the Congress's sole power to declare war. That is not something any of us should condone.

#### THE CLEAN ECONOMY ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I rise to discuss solutions to the climate crisis, which threatens the health and well-being of my constituents in Maryland and Americans across the Nation.

The urgency of climate change asks us to be our most cooperative and collaborative selves and to seek policy solutions that far outlast our legacies in office. As the threat of climate change becomes more and more visible to the American public, people are demanding action from their Federal Government. This year, we have seen an unprecedented level of interest from Americans of all ages and walks of life on real solutions to this complex problem. A variety of comprehensive solutions have been proposed, some that represent a departure from how the Federal Government has addressed climate change in the past, while others utilize existing Federal frameworks to drive climate action.

History tells us that our Federal agencies have an incredible capacity to evolve to meet the threats of their time. In previous administrations, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has been a dynamic steward of domestic environmental law throughout the last half-century and is well-practiced in addressing environmental concerns as they emerge. Unfortunately, Congress and the President have failed to provide the EPA with the direction and funding it needs to address the issue of climate change in earnest. I support Senator CARPER's Clean Economy Act for this very reason. The Clean Economy Act understands that the EPA lies at the center of America's climate future and empowers it to address climate change proactively.

The Clean Economy Act provides the agency with the clear goal of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 to match the urgency to reduce warming global temperatures. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's—IPCC—October 2018 Special Report on climate warns that warming above 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels will have a catastrophic impact on our global systems. The United States reaching net-zero is an essential component to keep global temperature warming below the 1.5 degrees Celsius cap.

Many of this administration's nominees are fond of pointing out that they are not scientists, implying that they are not qualified to make decisions related to climate change. I will point out that most of us are not economists