

regulators hold probing hearings on rate requests which often lead to lower rates being approved. Most State insurance regulators have consumer protection advocates who resolve disputes between insurers and individual consumers. State regulators do not tolerate unfair or anticompetitive practices. As the National Association of Insurance Commissioners wrote to the leaders of the Senate and the Senate Judiciary Committee, "The potential for bid rigging, price-fixing and market allocation is of great concern to state insurance regulators and we share your view that such practices would be harmful to consumers and should not be tolerated. However, we want to assure you that these activities are not permitted under state law. Indeed, the state insurance regulators in all states actively enforce their antitrust rules and review rates to ensure they are actuarially justified, sufficient for solvency and nondiscriminatory."

Based on this experience, I have consistently raised concerns about legislation that could interfere with the current State-level regulation of insurance and could ultimately harm Maine consumers and smaller insurers. These concerns extend to the Competitive Health Insurance Reform Act.

While the bill does not directly modify the portion of McCarran-Ferguson that affirms State regulatory authority, it, however, does add a layer of Federal review, and we need to ensure that in doing so we do not create increased confusion, cost, and possible conflicts between State and Federal efforts.

This is why it is very important to make clear Congress's intent that along with the changes specified in the bill, it is Congress's expectation that the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission must notify State bureaus of insurance and attorneys general of any complaints or investigations they have received or are performing that involve entities in their state. I appreciate Senator DAINES' willingness to join me today to ensure this intent is clearly stated in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Given the agreement to provide formal clarification of the expectation that DOJ and FTC shall provide notification to States regarding complaints or investigations they have received or are performing, I will withdraw my objection to passage of this legislation.

Thank you.

CONFIRMATION OF ERIC J. SOSKIN

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, for over 40 years, inspectors general have acted as independent, nonpartisan watchdogs tasked with preventing and uncovering fraud, waste, and abuse in the Federal Government. Simply put, inspectors general make sure government is doing what it's supposed to do. To accomplish this immense task, inspectors general must be experienced in oversight, trusted by both political parties,

and ready to hit the ground running on any audits, investigations, and other reviews of their agencies.

Unfortunately, the nominee for inspector general that we considered last week does not meet this basic test.

The Department of Transportation is charged with ensuring that America has the safest, most efficient and modern transportation system in the world, so that Americans are able to travel safely and efficiently by road, rail, or air. The Department has an annual budget of over \$87 billion and employs over 55,000 personnel, with a footprint in every State.

The DOT inspector general must be ready to oversee the full range of these activities, from every dollar that funds our highways to every safety decision issued by DOT regulators. To meet this task, the office employs over 400 personnel, with an annual budget of over \$94 million.

Eric Soskin, the nominee for DOT inspector general, is not qualified to oversee an agency of this size and scope, or to lead the activities of one of the largest Offices of Inspector General in the Federal Government. Mr. Soskin does not have any experience managing large organizations. He has never worked in an Office of Inspector General, and he does not have experience in many of the basic activities of such an office, like audits or inspections. Although he has legal experience, he has not focused on DOT or transportation issues at any point in his career.

While I appreciate Mr. Soskin's service at the Department of Justice and his enthusiasm for the position, he simply lacks the qualifications to ensure DOT is fulfilling its responsibilities.

I am most troubled, however, by the increasing politicization of inspectors general by the President and by the majority.

Since 1981, this body has confirmed over 150 inspectors general; until last week, all but two of these nominees had been confirmed by unanimous consent, a voice vote, or a unanimous vote. The reason for this is simple: To do their jobs, inspectors general must be trusted by each member of Congress and by every American, regardless of political party.

Until this Congress, when an inspector general has faced significant opposition, the Senate either worked through any concerns or declined to advance the nomination. The majority did not force through partisan or unqualified nominees. That is how we have upheld this institution. That is how we have maintained trust in the independence, qualifications, and integrity of inspectors general.

This Congress, we held our first party-line vote in 40 years to confirm a deeply partisan inspector general nominee. We have now confirmed yet another inspector general on a party-line vote during a lameduck session, with a nominee who was already rejected by nearly half of the Commerce

Committee and as well as on the Senate floor.

The inspector general is a position that continues across administrations. It is one with tremendous authority to look at every agency record, to interview any employee, and to carry out criminal investigations. We cannot transform this institution into one of Democratic inspectors general and Republican inspectors general. This is not and cannot become a political position.

Inspectors General hold government accountable to the law and to the American people. And it is our responsibility to protect this institution and reject any nomination that will undermine their independent, nonpartisan work.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2019, the Secretary of the Senate, on December 22, 2020, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BEYER) had signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 1240. An act to preserve United States fishing heritage through a national program dedicated to training and assisting the next generation of commercial fisherman.

H.R. 4031. An act to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5458. An act to modify the boundary of the Rocky Mountain National Park, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5852. An act to redesignate the Weir Farm National Historic Site in the State of Connecticut as the "Weir Farm National Historical Park".

H.R. 6535. An act to deem an urban Indian organization and employees thereof to be a part of the Public Health Service for the purposes of certain claims for personal injury, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7460. An act to extend the authority for the establishment by the Peace Corps Commemorative Foundation of a commemorative work to commemorate the mission of the Peace Corps and the ideals on which the Peace Corps was founded, and for other purposes.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2019, the enrolled bills were signed on December 24, 2020, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. BLUNT).

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2019, the Secretary of the Senate, on December 24, 2020, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BEYER) had signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 133. An act making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021, providing coronavirus emergency response and relief, and for other purposes.