build consensus and find principled compromises. Judge Garland will bring a wealth of legal, law enforcement, and judicial experience to the Department of Justice to make him uniquely qualified—uniquely qualified—to lead the Department at this critical moment.

Judge Garland will be an Attorney General for all Americans—all Americans. He will not shy away from the challenges facing the Justice Department. He will meet them head on.

At the top of Judge Garland's to-do list is bringing the perpetrators of the January 6 insurrection to justice. Judge Garland will make sure that the Department stays out of the political fray and remains independent from the White House. And Judge Garland will answer the calls for racial justice and refocus the Department on one of its core missions, to protect the civil rights and voting rights of all Americans.

While I will never truly forget the shameful treatment of Judge Garland during his previous nomination to serve on the Supreme Court and in my heart I will always believe he should be serving on the Supreme Court today, I am grateful that Judge Garland has answered the call to serve.

I am also grateful to his wife of many years. I am grateful to his family for supporting him and allowing him to serve us as he has. He is more than just a judge or attorney or a servant. He is a mentor. He is somebody who, every week, for years—20 years—has made time, found time in his life to mentor a kid who needs somebody in his life or her life. As someone who has been mentored for many years myself, I just want to say: God bless you. God bless you, Judge Garland. My hope today is he will get a resounding—resounding—vote out of this body. He has earned it. He deserves it.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Merrick Brian Garland, of Maryland, to be Attorney General.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:45 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. ROSEN).

VOTE ON GARLAND NOMINATION

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

Mr. SCHATZ. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 70, nays 30, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 114 Ex.]

YEAS—70

Baldwin	Hassan	Peters
Bennet	Heinrich	Portman
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Reed
Blunt	Hirono	Romney
Booker	Inhofe	Rosen
Brown	Johnson	Rounds
Burr	Kaine	Sanders
Cantwell	Kelly	Schatz
Capito	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Lankford	Sinema
Casey	Leahy	Smith
Cassidy	Luján	Stabenow
Collins	Manchin	Tester
Coons	Markey	Thune
Cornyn	McConnell	Tillis
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Moran	Warnock
Ernst	Murkowski	Warren
Feinstein	Murphy	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden
Graham	Ossoff	
Grassley	Padilla	

NAYS—30

Barrasso	Hagerty	Rubio
Blackburn	Hawley	Sasse
Boozman	Hoeven	Scott (FL)
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Kennedy	Shelby
Cramer	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Lummis	Toomey
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	Paul	Wicker
Fischer	Risch	Young

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the Garland nomination, 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.

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 bill 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 Executive Calendar No. 15, Michael Stanley Regan, of North Carolina, to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Charles E. Schumer, Thomas R. Carper, Richard Blumenthal, Christopher A. Coons, Patty Murray, Chris Van Hollen, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jeff Merkley, Brian Schatz, Cory A. Booker, Amy Klobuchar, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sherrod Brown, Angus S. King, Jr., Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Tim Kaine, Tammy Baldwin, Martin Heinrich, Maria Cantwell.

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 Michael Stanley Regan, of North Carolina, to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 65, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 115 Ex.]

YEAS—65

Baldwin	Hassan	Portman
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Romney
Booker	Hirono	Rosen
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Brown	Kaine	Sanders
Burr	Kelly	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Sinema
Casey	Lee	Smith
Collins	Luján	Stabenow
Coons	Manchin	Tester
Cortez Masto	Markey	Tillis
Cramer	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murkowski	Warnock
Feinstein	Murphy	Warren
Fischer	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Wicker
Graham	Padilla	Wyden
Grassley	Peters	

NAYS—35

Barrasso	Hagerty	Risch
Blackburn	Hawley	Rubio
Blunt	Hoeven	Sasse
Boozman	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Capito	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lummis	Thune
Crapo	Marshall	Toomey
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Young
Ernst	Paul	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). On this vote, the yeas are 65, the nays are 35.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Michael Stanley Regan, of North Carolina, to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, we have just invoked cloture on the nomination of Michael S. Regan, President Biden's nominee to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. The vote was 65 to 35. To every Democrat and every Republican and maybe an Independent or two, I want to thank you for your vote.

I rise today to talk about this nomination and, more particularly, about the person, the man who has been selected to serve as our EPA Administrator.

As Members of this deliberative body, each one of us has taken an oath to protect and defend our U.S. Constitution. That oath includes offering our

advice and our consent when it comes to nominations of the President to fill posts in his or her administration.

It is hard to think of a time in modern history when the Senate's role on nominations could be considered more urgent. We live in a time of great challenges. Our Nation faces multiple crises all at once. This includes the ongoing COVID–19 pandemic—the first in 100 years of this nature—the worst economy since the Great Depression, as well as the reckoning of racial injustice. All three of these crises are interconnected with a fourth that is even greater and graver than any emergency the United States may have ever faced before, and that is the climate crisis—the climate crisis.

President Biden recognizes the importance and urgency of tackling this challenge. That is why he ran with a promise to make climate action a core of his administration's work and of our work. It is also part of the reason why a record-setting majority of the American people voted him into office last November.

There are few leadership roles in the Federal Government that have greater responsibility for setting environmental and climate policy than that of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. This role has a profound responsibility—a profound responsibility—to ensure that the Agency effectively carries out its mission to protect our health and our environment.

That mission is particularly challenging right now. We know that the next EPA Administrator has his work cut out for him. He knows it as well.

In addition to addressing the serious environmental issues that are affecting Americans, the next EPA Administrator will also need to rebuild an Agency suffering from organizational drift and low morale after being repeatedly damaged in recent years by flawed leadership.

Scientific integrity has also been under attack. We need a strong, principled leader to get the EPA back on track.

Michael Regan is the right person for the job at this critical moment. He is a man of deep faith who believes, as I believe we all do, that we have a moral obligation to be stewards of this planet on which we live together. Michael Regan is the kind of person who can help unite us in common purpose as we respond to the climate crisis we face, as well as to clean our air, clean our water, and strive to make sure that we don't leave some of our communities and some of our neighbors behind in our efforts to do so.

He knows how to put together inspired teams of men and women who are mission-focused and can together tackle complex problems and challenges.

As Secretary of North Carolina's Department of Environmental Quality, he has proved himself to be an effective policy executive and bipartisan problem solver, someone who forges practical solutions to clean our air and clean our water, while making and building a more nurturing environment for job creation and job preservation.

Anyone who has watched the EPA over the past few years knows that Mr. Regan will have his hands full as Administrator. From scandals to climate denial, to the unrelenting disregard for the opinions of career scientists throughout EPA, the past two Administrators leave in their wake a frustrated workforce, suffering from organizational drift and low morale at what may be an all-time low.

One of the keys to restoring that morale is returning scientific integrity to the Agency. Let me say again: One of the keys to restoring the morale in the EPA is returning to scientific integrity. That also means curbing the influence of special interests on EPA's scientific advisory boards, which play a large role in crafting the Agency's policies.

Mr. Regan will be tasked with combating climate change, the greatest environmental crisis we are facing as a world today. On this issue, we have no time to waste. I know my State, Delaware, does not have the luxury to wait a minute longer. We have the lowest lying State in the country. The State is sinking, and the seas around us are rising.

We are not the only State in which that has happened. This is felt by other States across the country too. One unlikely State you might find it in is Louisiana. Louisiana, according to JOHN NEELY KENNEDY, one of the Republican Senators here, told me last month, he said his State, Louisiana, is losing—get this—a football field of wetlands to rising sea levels every 100 minutes. Think about that, a football field of wetlands to rising sea levels every 100 minutes.

I see the signs of this crisis too clearly as I travel throughout my State. Madam President, eroding shorelines, waterlogged roads, and extreme weather threaten our economy and our way of life. Erratic weather patterns make farming some of our biggest crops—and we raise a lot of soybeans, and I know in your State you raise a couple of soybeans as well, but we raise a lot of soybeans. It makes farming, whether raising soybeans or corn or chickens, a lot more difficult.

Mr. Regan saw similar problems around another Wilmington—not Wilmington, DE, but Wilmington, NC—a problem similar to what we see every day in Wilmington, DE. He understands that we do not have to choose between economic growth and clean air and clean water. It is indeed a false choice.

He knows, like many of our world's leaders, that combating this crisis presents, instead, a chance for real economic growth—real economic growth that can create millions of good-paying American jobs and breathe life into communities large and small throughout this country.

And we know that the economic cost of spending a little today more than outweighs the cost of inaction. I believe it was Ben Franklin who once said that ''an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.''

I know we all think that is a quote that comes from our grandmothers. It actually came originally from Ben Franklin.

As EPA Administrator, Mr. Regan will also need to work with States, with Tribes, and with municipalities to combat contamination in our Nation's water supply from something called PFAS, one of thousands of permanent chemicals. Some are benign. Some of them are very, very dangerous to our health. They are called forever chemicals. Unfortunately, this is a critical public health issue that the last administration did not approach with the urgency it deserved. They talked a good game but didn't come through. What do they say in Montana? ''All hat, no cattle.'' That is what we saw with respect to these permanent chemicals in the last administration.

This has hit home for me, and my guess is it hits home for the Presiding Officer, too, in Wisconsin. But coming from a State—we have got military installations, one of the biggest airbases in the world, Dover Air Force Base. I am hugely proud of Dover Air Force Base. It may be the best airlift base in the world. And, for years, we have, unfortunately, occasionally, had incidents, accidents, and we need to have firefighters come out, and they use firefighting foam to try to save lives. And in doing that, it endangered the lives of other people because of the PFAS contamination that is in the firefighting foam, and it gets into our groundwater.

And it is not just Delaware. It is not just Delaware. It is not just Wisconsin. It is like, last I heard, hundreds, maybe 300 bases around the country where there is a problem with PFAS contamination in the groundwater close to our military bases.

If his work in North Carolina on this issue is any indication, Mr. Regan will leave no stone unturned. We will also be looking to the EPA Administrator to ensure cleaner air by reestablishing the legal basis for the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, which were upended by an administration more interested in protecting special interests than they were keeping mercury out of our air and our water supply.

These standards have been shown over time to be cost-effective, and they are supported by major coal-fired utilities across this country. Let me say that again. These standards have been shown over time not only to be cost-effective, but they are supported by major coal-fired utilities across this country.

As Administrator, Michael Regan will also oversee the phasedown of something called HFCs, powerful greenhouse gasses used as a refrigerant—think refrigerators, freezers,

air-conditioners in our house and our cars. They do a good job of keeping it cool and our food cool. Unfortunately, they are about 1,000 times worse, more dangerous than carbon dioxide is to greenhouse gas—1,000 times worse.

Last Congress, I was proud to help lead a bipartisan effort with a couple of our Republican colleagues, JOHN NEELY KENNEDY and JOHN BARRASSO, to phase down the production of these harmful chemicals while giving American manufacturers a leg up in making the coolants of the future.

How many jobs will flow from this? Tens of thousands of American jobs. How much economic opportunity for American companies? Billions and billions of dollars. And, oh, by the way, I should hasten to add, you know, we hear from scientists that tell us that we are sort of at the turning point for us in terms of climate change by which we can't turn back. It is about 2 degrees Celsius for the balance of this century—2 degrees. Our phasedown of hydrofluorocarbons is worth a half-degree Celsius just by itself, just this one thing. So this is a huge thing, and we did it in a bipartisan way here in the Senate and the House. I am very grateful to everyone for their support.

Let me add a couple of more points, if I can. Mr. Regan will need to help craft emission standards for cars, trucks, and vans that will fight climate change and help keep America in the lead in the clean car revolution. We heard not long ago from our friends at GM. GM announced that beginning in 2035, they are not going to be building and selling vehicles powered by gasoline or diesel. Think about that. That is like 14 years from now. I think Ford may have announced in Europe that they are not going to be building vehicles that drive or are powered by gasoline or diesel. In Europe, by 2030, like I said, 9 years, this is coming.

So the question is, Will we be ready for it? Will we take advantage of it? Will we be able to find, in this adversity of climate change, an economic opportunity? Yes, we can and especially with respect to the kinds of vehicles that we are going to build and drive into the future.

Michael Regan's tenure in North Carolina is, I think, a testament to his ability to bring people together and work across the political divide. He spearheaded what is considered to be the largest coal ash cleanup settlement in U.S. history. He successfully led the negotiations that resulted in the cleanup of the Cape Fear River, right where my wife used to work for the DuPont company, the Cape Fear DuPont plant. And he created North Carolina's first-ever Environmental Justice and Equity Advisory Board.

Mr. Regan has been able to do these things and much more by bringing people together to find bipartisan, lasting policy compromises, all while never compromising on his principles. He and I both believe in the adage that bipartisan solutions are lasting solutions, and we could use a few more of those around here.

That ability to unite people in common purpose, to approach his role as a public servant with humility, with empathy, and with grace, that central part of Mr. Regan's character has been demonstrated throughout his public service and his nomination process.

Interestingly, 23 of our country's national agricultural organizations wrote to my committee—to our committee, the Environment and Public Works Committee—to recommend him for the job. Most people might say: Well, big deal. Well, it was a big deal. How often do we have like dozens of major national agricultural organizations stepping up and saying, ''We want to embrace this candidate to be the head of the Environmental Protection Agency''? Not very often, but they did in this case.

They highlighted his ''established record of listening to all stakeholders, including farmers and ranchers.'' And they applauded his pragmatic approach, writing that ''during his tenure, he has worked to find practical, sound solutions to myriad environmental issues in the state.''

We heard this same sentiment in his nomination hearing before the Environment and Public Works Committee. Throughout his testimony and questioning, Mr. Regan made it clear that he will be an EPA Administrator for red States just like he will be an EPA Administrator for blue States. He listened to concerns from both sides of the dais and made commitments to work with anyone to solve a problem facing their constituents.

That is what helped earn him a 14-to-6 bipartisan vote of approval coming out of the EPW Committee. I remember us measuring the amount of time from someone's name being actually submitted by a President to, actually, before we even had a hearing, much less got somebody reported out—measured in months, in months. In this case, we are talking about weeks, and, God willing, hours this afternoon.

Believe it or not, his committee hearing before the committee a couple of weeks ago, he was introduced to the committee by two Senators from his State. You may think that is not a big deal, maybe not, but they are both Republicans. They are both Republicans. We heard from one of them, THOM TILLIS, that Mr. Regan ''has earned a reputation for being a thoughtful leader willing to engage.'' His colleague from North Carolina Senator BURR underscored Mr. Regan's ability to listen, saying that organizations across North Carolina and across the country support Mr. Regan for Administrator because ''they understand they will not always agree with every decision handed down by EPA, but they know and trust they will receive a fair hearing.'' This is a Democratic nominee recommended by two Republican Senators from the same State. Honestly, I don't see that every day, and I want to say a special shout-out thanks to RICHARD BURR and THOM TILLIS for doing that, supporting Mr. Regan's nomination.

Michael Regan understands that climate change shouldn't be a partisan issue. Its impacts hit red States and blue States alike. Wildfires rage across California, while floods in Florida damage homes and roads. Deadly ice storms endanger the power supply in Texas, while a drought in New Mexico harms farming and puts people at risk. Water contamination near an Air Force base in Delaware harms families just like contamination near a National Guard base in South Dakota. And dirty air from a powerplant in Ohio or West Virginia can make their way into neighboring States like ours and like Maryland, our neighboring State, like New Jersey.

The problems that are before our next EPA Administrator—and, hopefully, it will be Michael Regan—those problems are great. As Albert Einstein once said, ''In adversity lies opportunity.'' Think about that—in adversity lies opportunity. We have an opportunity here to fulfill our moral obligation to be good stewards of this planet, and we can seize on that opportunity if we have the right leader in place to make it happen.

During my years in the Navy, then as Governor of Delaware, I learned firsthand that leadership is maybe the most important thing in the success of any organization I have ever been a part of. I don't care if it is a business; I don't care if it is a State; I don't care if it is the Senate or House, a hospital, a school, leadership is always the key—always the key. The leader sets the tone, helps write the rules of the road, and makes sure that those working under him or her are doing what is right.

I learned a lot from really good leaders, and, frankly, I have learned a few things from really awful leaders. I suspect, if truth be known, we would all say the same thing. The best leaders are humble, not haughty. They have the heart of a servant. They understand their job is to serve, not to be served. Leaders have the courage to stay out of step when everyone else is marching to the wrong tune. They understand their job is to unite, not divide. They build bridges, not walls.

Leaders surround themselves with the best people they can find. When the team does well, the leader gives the credit to his or her team. When the team falls short, the leader takes the blame. Leaders don't build themselves up by tearing other people down. They are aspirational. They appeal to people's better angels.

I remember a French philosopher, Albert Camus, once said that leaders are ''purveyors of hope.'' Think about that, purveyors of hope. Leaders always seek to do what is right, not what is easy or expedient. They focus on excellence in everything they do. If it is not perfect, they say: Let's just make it better. Leaders treat other people the way

they want to be treated. And, finally, when leaders know they are right, they are sure they are right, they don't give up. They just don't give up.

Michael Regan is that kind of leader. We need that kind of leader, and I am convinced that he is the leader we need for his critical role at this critical time in our Nation's history.

So, Madam Chair and colleagues, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, I urge all of my colleagues to support his nomination.

With that, 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.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

The junior Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I rise today to discuss my opposition to the nomination of Michael Regan for Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Now, before I begin, let me be very clear. I really liked meeting and getting to know Michael Regan. He is a dedicated public servant and an honest man. He had a beautiful family with him, and he answered the questions as straightforwardly as I think he thought he could. I have enjoyed getting to know him through my role as the ranking member on the Environment and Public Works Committee, and I appreciated the willingness he expressed to visit my home State of West Virginia. But this vote is not based on what Mr. Regan might do if he had his say; this vote is about confirming someone to execute President Biden's agenda, which Mr. Regan said he would faithfully do, and I cannot support that agenda. I cannot support that agenda that Secretary—if confirmed—Regan would be tasked with implementing.

Throughout his confirmation process, Secretary Regan did not commit to a different policy agenda than that of the Obama administration—an agenda that absolutely devastated my State and other energy-producing States.

In his nomination hearing, Secretary Regan, because he is secretary of North Carolina's Department of Environmental Quality, would not comment as to whether the so-called Clean Power Plan or something worse would be reinstituted. He did not rule out a return to the WOTUS rule. He could not say whether the EPA would again claim overarching authority to force States to shift their electricity generation sources. He could not commit to real changes, and that is because the agenda is already set. Climate czar Gina McCarthy and others have already set the table.

InsideEPA recently reported:

> Administration observers are questioning whether Michael Regan . . . could face a diminished role if he wins Senate confirmation due to the large number of Obama-era officials who have returned to the agency and the White House to work on implementing Biden's environmental agenda.

The article went on to say:

> [T]hese sources also say that because there are so many officials now working on climate change policies across the Biden administration, this could lead to ''turf wars'' between EPA and the White House on this issue.

Well, I share those concerns.

For almost 2 months now, unaccountable czar Gina McCarthy has been working both behind the scenes and in front of the press to lay the groundwork for the Biden administration's agenda. She is wielding her power publicly to make it clear who is calling the shots and directing the troops.

McCarthy herself said recently:

> I've got a small stronghold office, but I am an orchestra leader for a very large band.

She is operating this ''stronghold'' office with no transparency outside of the Senate confirmation process. It would be bad enough with just a turf war between an equally matched White House and EPA, but we know that McCarthy is poised to have influence within the EPA too.

In addition to the Obama EPA alums already in place, the nomination of Janet McCabe to serve as EPA Deputy Administrator has only increased my concern and made it worse.

In 2019, McCabe, McCarthy, and another alum of the Obama EPA wrote an op-ed fully backing the overreaching Clean Power Plan. They admitted that their Clean Power Plan was a War on Coal. They stated:

> The best way to cut emissions is to shift electricity generation from the dirtiest plants, which happen to use coal.

So they were willing to say it outright once they were out of public office. They are willing to admit to their War on Coal. It upsets me because they wouldn't say it to the people of my State when they were in the office. They didn't have the courage to look the people in West Virginia—they didn't even come to our State to talk about it—to look them in the eye and admit they wanted to wipe coal off the map. Had they come, they would have had to hear in person, eye to eye, the harm, the devastation that workers in our coal industry and many other associated industries in West Virginia were facing.

WVU economist John Deskins put that harm into perspective in testimony before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee at a hearing in 2015. He observed:

> In Central Appalachia, coal production has fallen by 51 percent since 2010, compared to a decline of 10 percent from the nation's other coal-producing regions. . . . [N]early all of the coal job losses that have occurred in West Virginia have come from our state's southern coalfields. The concentration of these job losses has created a Great Depression—

Great Depression—

in six southern counties—Boone, Clay, Logan, McDowell, Mingo, and Wyoming [Counties]. Job losses over the past four years range between—

Remember, this is in 2015—

25 and 33 percent in each of these counties.

That is how many jobs were lost.

John Kerry stood alongside Gina McCarthy in the Oval Office in January and talked about how workers in the fossil fuel industry can just become wind turbine technicians or solar panel technicians. John Kerry doesn't really know what it actually means to be any type of these workers.

Brad Markell, a representative from the AFL–CIO Industrial Union Council, explained some of the differences to the Washington Post. He said:

> You get guys that are coming off of fossil jobs in the Dakotas or the wind belt, and are making, you know, eighty, ninety, a hundred thousand a year. [To put wind turbines up], they're looking at thirty to thirty-five thousand, with either no or substandard benefits.

In President Biden's White House, we have unaccountable—and either misguided at best or uninformed at worst—czars trying to do what they think is best for this country.

So let's go back to Secretary Regan. In his hearing, he talked in depth about his work with Republicans in North Carolina and his commitment to transparency, and both of the Republican Senators from his home State came and introduced him to our committee and spoke very well of his ability to work across the aisle.

I appreciate that greatly, and I welcome that, but the fact remains that I can't support Secretary Regan when Gina McCarthy is the self-described orchestra leader for the Biden administration and Kerry is basing so-called ''transition'' policies on a fantasy world that does not exist.

I am very skeptical that the next 4 years will be any better than the 8 years of economic devastation brought on by President Obama's EPA. So, without commitments to different policies than what were pursued in the Obama EPA, I cannot support Secretary Regan today. But, you know what? I hope he proves me wrong. I hope he makes good on his promise to work with Republicans to help address climate issues.

As ranking member of the EPA Committee, I stand ready to just do that. We have so much common ground on climate issues. I hope Secretary Regan can cut Gina McCarthy out of power and let her know who is calling the shots for environmental policy in the Biden administration. I hope Secretary Regan embraces President Biden's mandate of unity and works with both red and blue States to take care of our planet. Until then, I will continue to look out for my State and practice aggressive oversight on what I think may be coming.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HASSAN). The Senator from Virginia.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, good afternoon. I rise today to talk about

the American Rescue Plan and its effect on my economy.

It has been a tough year. It was a year ago tomorrow that I sent my Senate staff home for a trial-run, 2-day telework in case we ever were to need it, and they never came back. Until now, as people are starting to get vaccinated, they are coming back personally to the office after having worked, in a pretty amazing way, virtually for the year.

It was just about a year ago that I got coronavirus. It was just about a year ago that I gave my wife coronavirus. It has been a long, long year: more than 500,000 Americans dead, more than 10 million still out of work. After sizable work by Congress in five bills in 2020 to inject resources into the economy, we are still down 10 million jobs.

But today is a bright day. Just within the last few hours, the House of Representatives passed the Senate bill that we sent to them Saturday afternoon on the American Rescue Plan, building off the original House proposal, and that bill is filled with things that will make a tangible difference nearly immediately in the lives of so many Americans: payment to everyday families, individuals, children; acceleration of the vaccine deployment; resources so that we can open our schools and our colleges and our childcare centers, which are all preconditions to seeing the economy reopen.

In Virginia—just making this about my home Commonwealth—State and local governments in Virginia will receive about $6.8 billion to cover costs of COVID, revenues lost due to COVID, but also projects that can help the economy accelerate so that we can climb out of the economic catastrophe that has been COVID.

Eighty-four percent of Virginians—that is more than 7 million people, 2 million of whom are children—will receive stimulus checks because of the bill the Democrats got passed in the House and Senate.

Just think of that. Seven million Virginians will receive stimulus checks. The average per filer—and many file jointly, so this will be sort of a household average—would be nearly $3,000.

The child tax credit portion of the American Rescue Plan will provide additional resources on top of those checks to 1.6 million Virginia children, lifting 85,000 currently below the poverty level to above the poverty level. Just in my State, 85,000 children below the poverty level will no longer be there.

The expanded earned income tax credit in Virginia will affect nearly 420,000 adults, enabling them to work with more dignity, with less financial stress, as they try to manage the challenges of their life in this tough time.

Also, 250,000 adults whose unemployment benefits were in danger of expiring are now protected through early September because of the bill.

Small businesses, which have suffered so much, will get a significant uplift—just restaurants, with the $28 billion restaurant fund in the American Rescue Plan. There are 15,000 restaurants in Virginia, all of which have suffered because of COVID, because of social distancing requirements, supply chain challenges, workers who have been out sick. That $28 billion fund offers great hope for my restauranteurs.

For Virginia education, our local school systems—134 cities and counties operate K–12 systems—will receive more than $2 billion to deal with the costs of COVID, including expanded broadband so that their students can have better access to online course curriculum, including money that could be used for summer instruction, for example, so that we can tackle learning gaps that occurred during the last year; and $845 million for Virginia higher education institutions.

And something that I am particularly excited about—I have a child who is an early childhood worker. That is what he does. Forty percent of Virginia childcare centers were closed for much of the year because of the pandemic. Virginia will receive nearly $800 million in additional childcare support so our childcare centers can be open, which will not only be good for children but will enable their parents to return to work more easily.

In the healthcare space, accelerations of vaccines, lower healthcare premiums because of expanded subsidies for those who are purchasing insurance, mental health expansion to deal with the significant psychological and emotional traumas of the last year, housing, food, transit, broadband, pension reform.

There is so much in this bill for Virginians. There is so much in this bill for the residents of red States, blue States, in-between States. Every ZIP code in the United States, every family in the United States will see some impact that they can see, touch, and feel.

It is not often that you pass a bill where you can say this about it—that the tangible results for virtually every American will be seen so quickly.

I want to focus a little bit, having talked about the tangible benefits in Virginia, just on the analysis of the bill nationally, and I have a couple of charts I want to show.

Coincidentally, or maybe not coincidentally, the size of the American Rescue Plan was pretty close to the size of the Trump tax cuts that were done in December of 2017. The Trump tax cuts were about $1.9 trillion, and the American Rescue Plan ended up being at about $1.75 trillion. So they are pretty close.

And what these two plans demonstrate, if you look at the Trump tax plan and you look at the American Rescue Plan, is that you will see how very, very different the priorities of the two parties are. The recovery plan passed in this body with every Democratic vote and no Republican votes. The Trump tax plan passed in 2017 with every Republican vote and no Democratic vote. I believe these two plans are almost a perfect representation of the priorities of the two parties right now in this body—not just in this body but all around the country.

If you analyze the content of these two bills, which were nearly identical in size, you can definitely understand a lot about the priorities of the two parties. On the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, the Trump tax cuts, 54 percent of the $1.9 trillion benefit went to people making more than $75,000 a year, 16 percent went to people making less than $75,000 a year, 31 percent were tax cuts for businesses.

If you look at the American Rescue Plan, you see something very, very different: 44 percent of the aid was aid to individuals, 21 percent was pandemic and other policies that focus on getting us out of the healthcare crisis, 9 percent is to our schools and universities, 18 percent for our State and local governments to try to forestall massive layoffs of governmental employees, and then 8 percent are tax cuts to individuals.

These are very different priority sets between the GOP's key accomplishment with the 2017 tax cuts and now this accomplishment that the Democrats have worked so hard to achieve in the American Rescue Plan.

This tells you about priorities, but the next chart is probably my favorite because I think it makes it even clearer. This is a chart that shows the benefits of both the American Rescue Plan in blue and the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act in red, and I don't think those colors were coincidentally done by my staff.

It shows how the benefits of these two bills—they are identical in size—were arrayed across the income groupings, income quintiles of the American public. The top 20 percent of the American public in income got 65 percent of the benefit from the Trump tax cuts. They get 11 percent of the benefit from the American Rescue Plan.

In the 60-to-80-percent quintile, you will see that the two plans were pretty close to equal. Not exactly—the Democratic plan was a little bit better in terms of the benefits at that level. But as you move into the 40-to-60-percent quintile, that midrange of Americans, the Democratic proposal gave much more of the benefit to people in that income frame, that income quintile, than the Republican proposal.

In the 20-to-40-percent range, it is quadruple the Democratic allocation of benefits to that lower middle-class portion of the American public, quadruple what the Republican tax plan allocated.

But what you really see is, in the lowest quintile income of the American public, the people who struggle the most and during the pandemic were hurt the most, 23 percent of the benefits of the American Rescue Plan went to that lowest 20 percent of the American public while only 1 percent of the

benefit of the Trump tax cuts was allocated to that hard-hit, struggling group of people.

Again, if you want to look at the priorities of the two parties by analyzing these two sizable bills that each side claims is an accomplishment they are proud of, you just need to look at this particular chart and understand who each side, each party, is battling for and who is each side, each party, trying to help.

Finally, one last chart and then a concluding comment. The last chart shows the poverty rate in this country beginning in 2007. Now, we know we had an economic challenge in 2008, 2009, 2010 that was significant, and then the poverty rate started to come down late in the Obama first term and continued to come down into the Trump first term. But you will see what has happened since 2017 with the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. If that had not happened, the poverty rate would have started to tick back up again after having come down for a number of years.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act did have an effect on the poverty rate. It knocked it down a little bit. So there was a positive effect on the poverty rate from the Republican tax proposal, but it was not very significant.

But the projection about the American poverty rate following the passage of the American Rescue Plan is a dramatic reduction—a dramatic reduction of poverty from more than 12 percent down to poverty just above 8 percent—and we would expect to see that by the end of the year.

We are not talking about by the end of the decade or by the end of 5 years or by the end of this Congress. We are talking about by the end of the year.

I think these charts—and, again, particularly this chart that arrays the benefits of both the tax cuts bill of 2017 and the American Rescue Plan and shows to whom the benefits were allocated—speak volumes about two very different philosophies about the economy, two very different philosophies about equity, two very different philosophies about how to truly include everyone in legislation that is big, tough, challenging legislation.

Finally, I will say this as I conclude: The passage and the signing of the American Rescue Plan will also start a realtime economic experiment because the Republican tax plan was done in 2017, and we can measure what that has done and what it hasn't done from 2017 to the beginning of the pandemic. You would not want to include the pandemic necessarily; that wouldn't be a fair way to measure. But if you look at the passage of the tax cut plan in December of 2017, say, to March of 2020, you can get a pretty good view of what that tax bill did or didn't do to the American economy.

Now, in the passage of the American Rescue Plan and the allocation of the benefits of the plan, as demonstrated here, we are going to start the clock on a realtime experiment of a different economic philosophy. If you take government action and you try to direct the focus of it on middle and lower income people, my surmise is, those dollars will likely be spent; they will be spent in community institutions and stores and purchasing properties or maybe buying a car. They will be spent, and they will have a multiplier effect throughout the economy. They are not going to be used to buy back stock. They are not going to be used or socked away because there is nowhere to spend it.

I think you will see that the spending effect of allocating benefits in this way is going to have a significant, positive effect on the American economy at a time when it needs it and at a time when the people who are most helped are most in need.

We need to build an economy coming out of this crisis that is not only robust but that is also sustainable, meaning environmentally sustainable but sustainable and less subject to boom, busts in areas that leave people high and dry. We also need to build an economy that is more equitable, not measured just by GDP increase or stock market increases that can affect some but measure more in statistics like wages, reduction of poverty, startup of new businesses that demonstrate an economic vitality that is spread broadly among the population.

We are starting the realtime clock on that experiment today. We will be able to compare the value of the $1.9 trillion tax cut to the $1.75 trillion American Recovery Plan in years to come. And I am very, very excited to understand that because I think it may point the way forward to additional economic advances that will make us stronger.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL STANLEY REGAN

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I rise today to support the nomination of Michael Regan to be the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. One look at Michael's resume should make it clear to my colleagues that he is immensely qualified for this position, not only in qualifications but in his demeanor.

Michael is a proud North Carolinian who, over the last 4 years, has ably served as secretary of the North Carolina department of environment. You will consistently hear from those who have worked with him in this role that whether they agreed or disagreed on a given policy, he always listened and looked to find agreement.

This type of praise is not easy to come by on environmental matters, but it is exactly what we should ask of any nominee to ensure everyone gets a fair hearing at their Agency. That is exactly why North Carolina's agricultural community supports his nomination.

It is our job to ascertain whether a nominee has the knowledge and experience to do the job that the President has nominated them for, but, too often, we overlook whether a nominee has the right character to lead an organization. In this case, there is no question that Michael Regan has that character.

I have had the pleasure to get to know him over the last several years and to see firsthand his sincerity and love for his family. I know when a man of this caliber is confirmed, he will bring those same qualities to the Agency he leads, bolstering the EPA and ensuring that communities reliant on agriculture for their livelihood will be listened to.

In closing, Michael Regan is a good man. He is the right man to lead the Environmental Protection Agency. And I would urge you and urge my colleagues to confirm him to be the next Administrator of the EPA.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I am here this afternoon to speak in opposition to H.R. 1, the so-called For the People Act. Every American—no American should be fooled by the wholesome title of H.R. 1. H.R. 1 is an affront to the U.S. Constitution, and the drastic impact this legislation would have on federalizing elections, restricting free speech, and accelerating the divide in this country—that divide between left and right, rural and urban, red States and blue States—would be terribly damaging to our Nation.

We often hear that elections have consequences. In November, Americans voted for a Congress that is nearly a 50–50 split between the parties in the House and precisely a 50–50 split in the Senate. If elections have consequences, then the consequence American voters may have had in mind was to encourage Congress to put aside partisan differences and to work together to do its job on their behalf.

Americans did not vote to give one party free rein to implement an unprecedented power grab, to nationalize elections, and to strip power from States and localities from now into perpetuity, forever.

I am a conservative, and I believe in the primacy of individual liberties and in a Federal Government that exercises restraint. I believe that State and local units of government are inherently more responsive to the wishes of our citizens. Article I, section 4 of the Constitution states that ''Time, Places and Manner'' of congressional elections ''shall be prescribed [by the States].'' My adherence to the Constitution thus instructs deference to State governments to oversee their own elections, as they always have and always should.

There are so many problematic and, frankly, unconstitutional aspects of