

And to Angela, Roman, Alex, and Diego, I love you. Thank you for your love and your support of my public service.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators LUJÁN, CARPER, and myself be allowed to complete our remarks before the rollcall vote.

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

BORDER SECURITY

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Thank you, Madam President.

The southern border. The situation at our southern border has devolved into chaos. That is what I am hearing from some of my former House colleagues who have been on that border today.

According to them, we are once again facing a crisis. Thirteen days ago, Customs and Border Protection announced that they were deploying more agents to help manage the spike and apprehensions of adults and unaccompanied alien children.

Then, last Monday, news broke that Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas had sent an email to DHS staff begging for volunteers to go to the border and help with logistics and humanitarian aid.

It is obvious they need help on the border. In January alone, the Customs and Border Patrol detained nearly 78,000 people—more than double the number of apprehensions in January of 2020.

In February, that number jumped to more than 100,000 arrests and detentions. CBP took more than 9,000 unaccompanied minors into custody that month, prompting the administration to open two overflow detention centers to house them.

Listen to these numbers: 100,000 arrests and detentions in February; 9,000 unaccompanied minors being taken into custody that month—having to open 2 overflow detention centers.

New data released last Wednesday shows that our agents are now detaining more than 4,000 people along the border every single day—4,000 every day.

Our facilities and resources are exhausted, and so are the agents responsible for controlling this out-of-control situation.

It did not have to be this way. Secretary Mayorkas has accused the Trump administration of “dismantling our Nation’s immigration system.” That is his quote. But if he wants to know who is really responsible, he should look to the current White House.

I have stated time and again how disastrous President Biden’s policy of governing by Executive fiat has been. Thirty-four Executive orders in his first 50 days—34.

Also, he has suspended construction of the border wall, jeopardizing our na-

tional security. He has embraced DACA. He halted most deportations. He cut domestic immigration arrests by 60 percent and dismantled the migrant protection protocols.

This administration threw our existing immigration law out the window and let the world know that when it comes to illegal entry, not only will we look the other way, this administration is encouraging them to come. Even their Cabinet nominees are playing by these new rules of encouraging individuals to break our laws, to come to the country illegally. They are encouraging this.

Last week, this Chamber voted to discharge Xavier Becerra’s nomination from committee. I voted no. He is one of the most flagrant offenders out there when it comes to sending these signals. He has openly admitted he would like to decriminalize illegal entry and offer Medicaid to anyone who manages to get across the border.

They have made a lot of promises that they know they are not going to be able to live up to, and now they are trying to walk it all back, walk back the hope that sparked in thousands of people because they have heard that the border was going to be open. They are even wearing the T-shirts with the slogan, “Biden, let us in.”

They are going to have to walk back the mess that is there on the border, and I am fearful and concerned that their walk-backs are not going to work because from what we are hearing about the border, they have lost control of that border.

I look forward to traveling to the border for a briefing on the situation. This administration does not want their critics to see what is happening down there. There are days you would think they have got a news blackout going at the border.

This isn’t just a problem in Texas or California or Arizona or New Mexico. Every town is a border town and every State is a border State because of the drugs, the human trafficking, sex trafficking, and gangs that are streaming across our border.

You know, it means that no matter how hard you try, you can’t hide the tragedy that inevitably unfolds when your immigration policy is to have zero immigration policy at all, just open the border and let them come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

NOMINATION OF DEBRA ANNE HAALAND

Mr. LUJÁN. Madam President, I rise today in anticipation of a historic vote that the Senate will take in a few moments to confirm DEBRA ANNE HAALAND as Secretary of the Interior. I am incredibly humbled to be able to preside over this body’s confirmation, in just a few minutes, of my good friend and fellow New Mexican.

This marks the first time that a Native American will take her seat in the President’s Cabinet, making her the second highest ranking Native Amer-

ican to ever serve in the Federal Government.

As a Pueblo woman and 35th-generation New Mexican, DEB HAALAND has a long overdue perspective to contribute to the Department of the Interior’s mission of protecting our natural resources and public lands, and honoring America’s trust responsibilities to Tribal nations.

She is uniquely equipped to begin to repair the relationship between the Interior and the domestic nations it serves—to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, these indigenous nations, these sovereign nations, these important departments, the Indian Health Service, the Bureau of Indian Education.

Speaking to Pueblo and Tribal members in New Mexico, I know the significance of her confirmation, how it transcends policy. For young people in our State, she is the embodiment of the old adage that if you see it, you can be it.

Knowing my friend DEB, although she will be the first, she is committed to not being the last.

As former vice chair of the House Natural Resources Committee, DEB HAALAND also brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to her role as the Interior Secretary. She has been a longtime champion of climate action, creating good-paying jobs, clean energy, and outdoor recreation.

She played a key role in passing the Great American Outdoors Act out of the House of Representatives, successfully protecting New Mexico landscapes and setting ambitious goals for conservation with her Thirty by Thirty Resolution to Save Nature. But of all the qualifications and accomplishments that DEB HAALAND will bring to the Department of the Interior, there is one that stands out to those who know her best—her empathy.

DEB’s experience as a single mother struggling to keep a roof over her family’s head allows her to connect with compassion to her constituents and informs every aspect of her work. It is fitting that she will serve under a President who has made empathy the trademark of his administration.

I have no doubt that Secretary HAALAND will leave a mark on the Department of the Interior and on history as we know it. I look forward to continuing to work with my friend to make a difference for the people of New Mexico.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, one floor above this Senate Chamber, near a bank of elevators, sit the marble busts of two leaders of the Ojibwa, or Chippewa, people who came to Washington, DC, in 1855 to sign a treaty with the U.S. Government.

The terms of the treaty had been dictated by the U.S. Government: The Ojibwa people would surrender more than 2 million acres of their ancestral homeland in northern Minnesota. In exchange, the Tribes would receive less than \$20,000 in cash, goods, and services, and assistance to resettle on two reservations.

There was no real negotiation. The Ojibwa has two choices: Accept the terms, or face annihilation. So the two chiefs, whose English names were Buffalo and Flat Mouth, signed the treaty and hoped that they had salvaged some future for their people.

It was one of more than 500 treaties that Indian nations signed with the U.S. Government between 1778 and 1871.

Like every one of those 500-plus treaties, the 1855 treaty with the Ojibwa Nation was violated by the U.S. Government.

The part of our government most responsible for carrying out treaty obligations and maintaining government-to-government relations with Tribal nations was—and still is—the U.S. Department of the Interior. That is part of what makes the vote we will take today so historic and important.

It has taken too long—244 years—for a Native American to be included in a President's Cabinet.

DEB HALLAND is a leader of honor, integrity and vision, and I commend President Biden for nominating her to this important post. As Secretary of the Interior, she will oversee the department that manages America's national parks and vast public lands. She also will lead the Bureau primarily responsible for maintaining relations between the U.S. Government and the nearly 600 federally recognized, sovereign Tribes within our national borders.

Her nomination has the strong backing of more than 500 national and regional Tribal leaders, civil rights organizations, and environmental and conservation groups. She received bipartisan support in the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.

She is a thoughtful and inclusive leader who will search for balanced solutions on energy, climate, and natural resource policy. I also hope—and expect—that she will correct mistakes the previous administration made in removing protections for vast amounts of lands, including large portions of Bears Ears and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments in Utah. These natural and cultural treasures are part of our shared national inheritance and must be protected. Deb Haaland understands that.

In 2018, she became one of the first two indigenous women ever elected to Congress. She is a 35th-generation New Mexican and an enrolled member of the Laguna Pueblo, a Tribe of people who have lived on the land that is now New Mexico for 900 years.

Defending this Nation is in her blood. Her father was a marine who received the Silver Star for his service in Vietnam and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Her mother is a Navy veteran who worked for a quarter century at the Bureau of Indian Education, an Interior Department Agency.

This historic nomination is an important step towards healing a deep wound

of our past, and it offers hope for a better future.

I am honored to support DEB HAALAND to serve as U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

Mr. LUJAN. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I rise today to support the historic nomination of DEB HAALAND to be Secretary of the Interior.

If confirmed, Congresswoman HAALAND will be the first Native American Cabinet Secretary. And how fitting it would be at the Department of the Interior. After all, American Indians and Alaska Natives were the first stewards of this land. I know Representative HAALAND will carry on that commitment as Interior Secretary.

This nomination is important for all States, especially the State of Delaware, which I am privileged to represent in the U.S. Senate. The First State, as we are known, may be small, but the Department of the Interior's presence there is not. We are proud of our two National Wildlife Refugees and one of America's newest national parks, the First State National Historical Park, which helps tell the story of the founding of our Nation leading up to the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.

As I've gotten to know DEB HAALAND this year convinced that she is the right person to lead the Department of the Interior. We are at a critical juncture in our quest to protect our public lands, wildlife, and environment for future generations. She has spent her career fighting for these things. As Interior Secretary, I know she will continue that fight with compassion and integrity. And, as Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Environment and Public Works, I look forward to working with her and the team she will lead on restoring protections for migratory birds and our nation's most imperiled wildlife.

If confirmed, DEB HAALAND will also take the bold steps needed to address greatest threat we face—the climate crisis. I believe that under her leadership, we will see offshore wind turbines in federal waters from Massachusetts to North Carolina, dramatically reducing carbon emissions.

With that thought in mind, I look forward to working with her on advancing the Biden administration's renewable energy agenda. DEB has pledged to listen and work with all of us in her efforts to do so.

Put simply, DEB HAALAND is what we want in our leaders. She is humble, not haughty, with the heart of a true public servant. She works to unite, not divide to build bridges, not walls.

So, I strongly support her nomination and encourage all my colleagues to do the same confirming. DEB HAALAND will do great things for the American people. Let's make it happen.

Madam President, let me just speak from my heart. My friend who just pre-

ceded me knows DEB HAALAND from years of experience. Tom Udall, who served here for years, a close friend to all of us, has known DEB HAALAND forever.

I remember asking Tom Udall: What does she bring to the U.S. Department of the Interior? I will never forget what Tom said. He said: She will bring a good heart. She will bring a good mind. She has the heart of a servant. She is someone who is humble, not haughty. She will provide the leadership that is needed at the Department of the Interior after the years that we have been through.

She will put together a good team, and when her team does well, she will give them the credit, and when her team falls short, she will take the blame.

Those of us in the State of Delaware are proud to be the "First State." We have two wonderful National Wildlife Refuges. We have a national park, one of the newest ones in the country, that really helps tell the story of the settlement of our country from the early days of colonial settlements, right up to the ratification of the Constitution.

The Constitution lays out what is expected of us serving here and in the administration and also what is expected of Cabinet Secretaries, and it is seen in the, really the forward, if you will, the beginning, of the Constitution, where it says: "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union. . . ."

We can do better than what we are doing. We can do better than what we are doing with respect to protecting our National heritage, our wildlife, our migratory birds. We can do better in all of this. She will bring that commitment to doing better.

I will just close with this. I don't believe we have ever had, in the history of our country, a Native American who has been nominated to serve as a Cabinet Secretary. I think she is the first, and we are from the "First State," Delaware. The idea that she will be the first Native American, how appropriate, how appropriate. When you think about it, who were the original stewards of this land, our air and our water, the birds and the animals and fish that all live here and populate this land of ours? Native Americans were the first stewards. Native Alaskans were the first stewards. And it is only appropriate that, finally, we picked one of them. We chose one of them.

She has been nominated by the President, gone through her confirmation hearing, and we have a chance, today, to complete the process by confirming the nomination of DEB HAALAND to be the Secretary of the Interior. I hope we will do that, and I thank you very much for allowing me to give these remarks.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON HAALAND NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Haaland nomination?