

The spacecraft looks like a capsule. If we recall the Apollo capsule that took us to the Moon, it carried three astronauts. It was 12 feet in diameter. *Orion* is 16.5 feet in diameter and is being designed to carry four astronauts. But it is the forerunner to the space systems that will eventually—in 20 years—carry us to the planet Mars.

It will be launched today on an existing workhorse. We have two major workhorses in our stable. The Delta—the Delta IV and this, configured with additional boosters, is called the Delta IV Heavy.

The other workhorse in the stable getting so many of our payloads into space, including our military satellites, is the Atlas V. Both of them are proven workhorses and have been almost flawless. This particular spacecraft, for its first flight test, is going up on a Delta IV Heavy.

As such, what it will do is first to put it into low Earth orbit, and from there it will be projected out 3,600 miles from the Earth and come back as if it were on a mission to the Moon or to an asteroid or coming back from Mars in a trajectory, coming through the Earth's atmosphere, creating quite a few g's and creating—at about 20,000 miles an hour as it is coming back into the Earth's atmosphere—about 4,000 degrees Fahrenheit on the heat shield.

So the flight test today is to test the structural integrity of the spacecraft as well as to test the viability of the heat shield. That has now been postponed until tomorrow. It was my expectation Senator THUNE would be able to go. As it turns out, he has to go back to South Dakota. I will be there at the Cape, and we will report on the launch later on to the Senate next week.

But it will all be done in 1 day, and it will splash down in the Pacific, somewhere in the region of the State of the Presiding Officer. They are actually going to have television coverage of the splashdown because we have a Predator that will be over the Atlantic. That is why we have to have the weather there, as well as the weather at the Cape, to be exactly right so we can record the splashdown, because this is a flight test.

We are developing a new spacecraft to take humans to missions far beyond low Earth orbit. A lot of people think the human space program was shut down after the space shuttle. No, we are just going into the new design of new spacecraft that can take us on a mission out of Earth's orbit as we explore the Earth's heavens. I will give a report to the Senate next week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

LAND CONSERVATION

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, this is a picture of Wike Brothers' Farm in Sharon, CT. Sharon is located in the very northwest portion in the great

State of Connecticut. It has been an active farm held by the same family, the Wike brothers, for about 150 years. It is about 144 acres. It is a pasture now for free-range chickens, pigs, and cattle.

The farm's roadside store, which is used by people from Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York—given that it sits right at the crux of those three States—sells beef, pork, sausages, eggs, apple-smoked bacon, and maple syrup, to name a few.

We are able to know, confidently, that this piece of iconic farm land that is producing for the neighboring farms and States is going to be able to continue as a farm because of something that Congress did.

Congress passed, enacted in 2006, a land conservation incentive in our Tax Code that gives a small tax incentive to farmers who decide to put a conservation easement on their land to make sure it doesn't fall into the hands of developers. Further, we provide a slightly smaller discount, a slightly smaller tax incentive to private non-farm, nonagricultural landowners who want either to donate their lands or who want also to put a conservation easement on their land to make sure that it doesn't get developed.

This has been of enormous benefit in the State of Connecticut. We have preserved 11,000 acres of land in Connecticut just since this tax incentive went on the books. That is a 45-percent increase over the previous period of time before we put that tax incentive on the books.

It is a wonderful bipartisan policy because we are able, by discounting people's taxes, to keep land as open space without it, frankly, going into the hands of public land owners, which is often met with resistance from a lot of Members from our Western States.

Land stays in the hands of the private landowner or, in this case, in the hands of the Wike brothers, who have been farming it for a century and a half. But we know, because of that conservation easement, it will be maintained as open space.

As bipartisan as that idea is, the entire genesis of land conservation is a bipartisan idea, and maybe even to an extent it is a partisan or Republican idea. It was Teddy Roosevelt who quadrupled the acreage in our national forests, invented the National Wildlife Refuge System, and proclaimed 18 national monuments. He said in 1910: "Conservation is a great moral issue, for it involves the patriotic duty of insuring the safety and continuance of the nation."

It was Richard Nixon who created the EPA and signed into law the Clean Water Act. In 1970 he said: "Clean air, clean water, open spaces—these should once again be the birthright of every American."

While there aren't a lot of Democrats coming to the floor and quoting Ronald Reagan, he had some very impressive things to say about this country's commitment and his movement's commitment to conservation, as well.

Ronald Reagan said:

What is a conservative after all but one who conserves, one who is committed to protecting and holding close the things by which we live. . . . And we want to protect and conserve the land on which we live—our countryside, our rivers and mountains, our plains and meadows and forests. This is our patrimony. This is what we leave to our children. And our great moral responsibility is to leave it to them either as we found it or better than we found it.

I am on the floor to speak in favor of the continuance of the land conservation tax incentive program that we hope will be in whatever tax extension deal gets passed by the Congress, as many proponents of the provision in that tax extension package would like.

It would be better if this were permanent. It is very difficult to do long-term planning for owners and operators of big farms such as the Wike Brothers' Farm if they don't know the tax incentive is going to be there for them. It is very difficult to do this retroactively, but it is important, nonetheless, to get this extended because this isn't the only property in our State that has been affected.

The Towner Hill Farm in Sherman, CT, is an 80-acre property that would not have been protected if it weren't for the Federal tax deduction which was available to the owner in 2008. He offered it to the town of Sherman at less than the value that he might have gotten at a private land sale because he knew he was going to be able to get this tax incentive. Now it is home to one of the most popular hiking areas in all of that area in Sherman, CT.

The Vanishing Geese Farm in Durham, CT, the center of the State, has a 42-acre farm that has been in the Scott family since the 1970s. They desperately wanted to continue farming, but the ability to have a conservation easement purchased from them put money in their pockets that allowed them to continue to farm but also gave them piece of mind, knowing that this piece of land that they love is going to be able to stay as open space.

Mr. Scott said, in his own colloquial way: "Having worked the land, cut my firewood from it, raised sheep on it, and hayed it, I have developed a lot of affection for it."

In regard to the donation of the easement on his family's property, he said:

I told my kids that my chest was puffed out a little more and when I walked out in the snow, it was nice to know that this land will never be developed. I feel that I've kind of kept faith with the land and with the critters on it.

This is a very important tax incentive that, as I said, has resulted in tens of thousands of acres being preserved in the State of Connecticut. It is maybe the most important legacy that we leave—to recognize that part of the true greatness of this country is the land upon which we live, the open spaces that define what it is to be an American.

I mean, the Industrial Revolution powered us to global greatness but

we—maybe better than any other nation in the world—have found this miraculous way to marry together development and conservation, to decide that there are going to be places that we are going to develop for their natural resources or for their industrial capacity. But then there are going to be these magical places, like this beautiful farm in northwestern Connecticut, where agriculture is happening and which to many of us defines the character of the place in which we live—practical reasons why we should conserve a place such as the Wike Brothers' Farm to continue agriculture. But I would also argue there are spiritual reasons as well—reasons having to do with what it is to be a citizen and inhabitant of this great Nation.

Republicans and Democrats, over the course of our congressional history, have come together to protect open spaces. Since 2006 Republicans and Democrats have come together to protect this important tax incentive; 221 House Members have cosponsored the legislation and 27 Senators.

I will leave with this statement. It is a bipartisan legacy for me as well.

I ran a spirited race for the U.S. Congress in 2006, beating a 24-year incumbent, Republican Nancy Johnson. There were places where I departed from her legacy and there were places where I inherited it. Nancy Johnson was one of the authors, one of the creators, of this important conservation tax incentive. So in my corner of the world there is a legacy of standing up for it, which is why I come to the floor today.

I thank the body for the time, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

IMMIGRATION

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

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, it has already started. There is being readied today a building in Crystal City, VA, to house the announced 1,000 workers who will be hired to process the unlawful Executive amnesty the President has said he intends to execute.

The President is already moving forward. He is rushing to impose his immigration views before the Congress can contain it or restrain it; before the American people fully understand what is happening; and to make it so it can't be stopped.

The President's Executive orders violate the laws of Congress—the laws that Congress has passed—in order to implement laws he wishes Congress had passed but which Congress has refused

to pass. It refused in 2006, 2007, 2010, 2013, and 2014.

The American people, through their congressional representatives, have considered these kinds of proposals, they evaluated them, the American people expressed their views on them, and Congress said no. The people have been clear on this issue. For decades they have pleaded, demanded, really, that this Congress create an immigration system that is lawful; that we end the lawlessness, that it be principled, that it serve the national interest, and that it serves their interest and not the special interests. But Congress and political leaders have refused to do so.

It is unfortunate to a degree I don't think I have seen on any other issue. Perhaps no other issue defines the gap between the elites in this country and middle Americans who go to work every day, who support our country, pay our taxes, and fight our wars. Our people want our laws that are on the books now enforced. If new laws are needed, they want us to pass new laws to end this lawlessness. But this President rejects the will of the people. His policies nullify the laws we have. His policies, shockingly, direct Federal agents to ignore their oaths and not enforce the laws, which creates the lawlessness that stains our legal system in our country today and is causing so much angst out there. People are not opposed to immigration. People are frustrated that their government refuses to create a lawful system that will work and serve them.

What I want to say to my colleagues is that the President has gone even farther than that. He has gone farther than just saying: I am not going to enforce the laws, which he, as a President, the Chief Executive Officer, is required to do. He is required to execute the laws of the United States faithfully, which he is absolutely failing to do. But he is moving forward with his immigration agenda, rejected by Congress and the American people, and he is moving forward in a lot of different ways.

This was an issue in the campaign. The people heard about it just a few weeks ago and they cast their ballots. There are nine new Senators elected to this Senate, and not one of them said they supported President Obama's scheme. Not one of them. They steadfastly opposed it. So in this lameduck Congress, the attempt is being made to move this new lawless agenda forward out of fear that it might not be so popularly received next year.

Is Congress hopeless, helpless, ineffectual? Is it not able to stop this? Absolutely not. Congress has the power to control what the President does. It has the power to control what he spends money on. The President, the executive branch, cannot spend one dime that has not been approved by the U.S. Congress. He can't spend more on roads, highways, schools, defense, education, or health care that Congress has not appropriated and not approved. So Con-

gress has a responsibility and a duty here. Congress should fund no program, should allow no Presidential expenditure to be spent on programs it deems are unworthy. It absolutely has a responsibility to ensure this President spends no money to execute policies that are plainly in violation of existing law.

This Congress has a constitutional duty, no matter what Members may feel about the substance of the issue. I have opinions on that. I oppose the President's substantive position. But as a matter of law, separation of powers, and constitutional duty, this Congress should stop the expenditure of Federal funds for projects that Congress has rejected and are not worthy of funding. Congress has deliberated these issues. This is not something it has not considered before. It has rejected this policy.

The special interests have spent, according to one independent group, \$1.5 billion to try to ram through Congress an immigration plan the American people reject and that Congress has refused to pass. The President hasn't given up, and these special interests haven't given up, despite the election and despite the wishes of the American people. They want their policies and they are going to ram them through this Congress, if they possibly can, no matter what the people think. That is a threat to representative democracy. It is a threat to the laws of this country. And the Congress needs to say no.

Let us be specific now. People may think: Well, you may not expend money if you don't prosecute somebody. So how are we going to complain about that, Senator SESSIONS? Well, let us look at this. This is from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service, which is charged with processing the applications of people who wish to enter the country lawfully. Broadcast on Monday, December 1—just this week—at 11:52. Subject: Today's email news.

USCIS is taking steps to open a new operational center in Crystal City, a neighborhood in Arlington, Virginia, to accommodate about 1,000 full-time, permanent Federal and contract employees in a variety of positions and grade levels. The initial workload will include cases filed as a result of the executive actions on immigration announced on November 20, 2014. Many job opportunities at the operational center will be announced in the coming days and please continue to monitor USAJOBS if you are interested.

This is just days from now.

Now let's put this little chart up. This briefly continues on what they published. This is right off their email.

Current vacancies include: Special Assistant GS-12.

Boy, a lot of people in the country would like to be a GS-12.

Arlington, Virginia, today. Special Assistant GS-15, Arlington, Virginia. Today. Chief of Staff GS-15, Arlington, Virginia. Today.

It goes on, today, today, today, today. They are rushing this through. They are determined to get this done before the American people can find