quickly to provide assistance to the Maliki government before every gain made by the U.S. and allied troops is lost and before ISIL expands its sanctuary from which it can eventually threaten the United States.

Several weeks ago, the President spoke at West Point, and in that speech he vaguely described a new counterterrorism strategy that he said “matches this diffuse threat” by “expand[ing] our reach without sending forces that stretch our military too thin.” (We will talk about that later.) He added that “we need partners to fight terrorists alongside of us.”

The President must quickly provide us with a strategy and plan that addresses the threat posed by the insurgency and the terrorist capabilities of ISIL, and he must explain that new strategy.

COAL REGULATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, in the Obama administration’s latest defensive on the war on coal, it has proposed new regulations that threaten Kentucky’s 20 existing coal-fired powerplants while potentially putting thousands out of work. If enacted, the massive new regulations would prove the single worst blow to Kentucky’s economy in modern times and a dagger to the heart of the Commonwealth’s middle class.

Despite what they are called, the proposed restrictions on Kentucky’s coal-fired powerplants amount to little more than a massive energy tax, and they will have a devastating effect on Kentucky.

The administration announced it would hold four public hearings on the new proposed regulations, and given the dramatic effects they are sure to have on eastern Kentucky or, at the very least, somewhere in Kentucky. But then, of course, you would be mistaken.

Once again, just like last year when the Obama administration held public hearings before proposing this national energy tax, not one of the sessions is slated for a nonmetropolitan area dependent on coal. The session that is the nearest to eastern Kentucky or, at the very least, somewhere in Kentucky.

Well, that was more than a year ago, and despite the President’s assurances that he was as mad as everybody else, his administration has been anything but cooperative in the time that has elapsed.

The administration refused to hold any of its listening sessions in coal country, I held one of my own. We heard a lot of riveting testimony from those in the industry and their families, and I brought their stories back to the administration where I testified on their behalf. The Administrator would not directly hear from them.

I am committed to making sure Kentucky’s voice is heard on this issue even if the Obama administration doesn’t want to listen. That is why I immediately responded to the administration’s new regulations in my own legislation, the Coal Country Protection Act, to push back against the President’s extreme anti-coal scheme. Supported by the Kentucky Coal Association, my legislation would require the following simple but important benchmarks be met before the rules take effect.

Here is what it would do:

- No. 1, the Secretary of Labor would have to certify that the rules would not generate loss of employment.
- No. 2, the Director of the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office would have to certify the rules would not result in any loss in American gross domestic product.
- No. 3, the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration would have to certify the rules would not increase electricity rates.
- And No. 4, the Chair of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the president of the North American Electric Reliability Corporation would have to certify that electricity delivery would remain reliable. That is it.

My legislation is plain common sense, and I urge the majority leader to allow a vote on my legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.
I might preface this by saying I grew up in the Midwest. Tornadoes are a part of our lives. I cannot recall how many times I was roused out of my bed in the middle of the night as the sirens were going off outside and mom and I would take it to coverment. That is what we did as I grew up in the Midwest. Tornadoes were part of our lives.

This morning showed what happened in Nebraska yesterday to be a virtually unique event—twin tornadoes came ripping through the State of Nebraska killing people and destroying lives and businesses and homes and farms. There was a reflection on this about how the weather seems to be getting more extreme in this country. Are we getting more and more extreme weather events, many of which are very destructive? I think the clear answer is yes. Don’t trust a politician or even an environmentalist for that answer. Go to the people who do this for a living. That is what I did. I held a hearing and called the leaders from the property and casualty insurance companies. They do this for a living, and they said not only are we getting more extreme weather events, they are much more expensive than ever before. The destruction is much larger. So many insurance companies, because of these extreme weather events, are starting to charge higher premiums and backing off of coverage. They said they can’t view this as a reserve for the possibility of an extreme weather event that would be so destructive.

There are some people who hear what I just said and say: Well, God has his ways—or her ways—and God may decide the weather is going to be a lot tougher for you in this generation than in other generations. I heard that back home. But there are some people who believe—and I am one of them—that this is not just God’s work, this has something to do with our work on this planet.

I happen to believe carbon pollution is a challenge, not just for America but for the world, and we need to reduce carbon pollution, which is changing the planet we live on. Because of carbon pollution, this warming climate—this warming planet—is creating situations which are troubling.

There was an article in the paper over the weekend. Norfolk, VA—not a liberal part of the world but not one where extreme weather events have anything to do with our activity on Earth. The Republican Party of the United States of America

is in denial. So when they deny the premise that something is happening on this Earth that we need to think about and worry about, it is easy to dismiss any and every effort to deal with it.

The Senator who spoke before me is from my neighboring State of Kentucky. His coal fields abut my coal fields in Southern Illinois, so we have a common energy resource. But I will say in all honesty, if we want to use the energy resource of coal in Illinois, we have to use it to reduce pollution. I think we can do that. It will be better technology in the electrical powerplants and uses something that is underway in our State: carbon capturing sequestration. Imagine if we could take the carbon pollution that is headed for the atmosphere that causes the problem and never let it reach the atmosphere.

That is what we are going to do. We are going to dig deep into the Earth over 1 mile down under three levels of shale rock and store compressed CO₂ so it doesn’t go into the atmosphere. Carbon capturing sequestration, that is not a war on coal; that is a war on our energy problems and a responsible approach for dealing with coal.

I think that is the honest answer to my friends in Southern Illinois and those who value the coal industry and what it means to our economy. We have to be thoughtful, reflective, and innovative in making certain we use the energy resource we have responsibly and leave this Earth in a situation where our children and grandchildren will say our generation did not ignore the obvious.

Twin tornadoes in Nebraska are an indicator to me that time is not on our side. We have to step up. Both parties have to step up and find solutions that are responsible.

YANDLE NOMINATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise in support of Staci Yandle, who has been nominated to serve as a Federal district court judge in the Southern District of Illinois. She is going to replace Judge Salvador Menendez, who is the son of a migrant farmworker and himself worked on farms in the Yakima Valley is called upon by the President of the United States to become the very first Latino Federal judge in the Eastern District of Washington. So I am incredibly proud to stand in support of Judge Salvador Mendoza, Jr., whose confirmation we will vote on shortly.

Through his life story, Judge Mendoza represents the very best of my home State’s honest, hard-working spirit. Through his work ethic, his commitment to his community, and

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE June 17, 2014

YANDLE NOMINATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise in support of Staci Yandle, who has been nominated to serve as a Federal district court judge in the Southern District of Illinois. She is going to replace a fine Federal judge, J. Philip Gilbert, who took senior status in March. It is a judicial emergency, so I am glad we are moving to it today.

Staci Yandle has the experience, integrity, and commitment to his community, and those who value the coal industry and what it means to our economy. We have to be thoughtful, reflective, and innovative in making certain we use the energy resource we have responsibly and leave this Earth in a situation where our children and grandchildren will say our generation did not ignore the obvious.

Twin tornadoes in Nebraska are an indicator to me that time is not on our side. We have to step up. Both parties have to step up and find solutions that are responsible.

YANDLE NOMINATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise in support of Staci Yandle, who has been nominated to serve as a Federal district court judge in the Southern District of Illinois. She is going to replace a fine Federal judge, J. Philip Gilbert, who took senior status in March. It is a judicial emergency, so I am glad we are moving to it today.

Staci Yandle has the experience, integrity, and commitment to his community, and those who value the coal industry and what it means to our economy. We have to be thoughtful, reflective, and innovative in making certain we use the energy resource we have responsibly and leave this Earth in a situation where our children and grandchildren will say our generation did not ignore the obvious.

Twin tornadoes in Nebraska are an indicator to me that time is not on our side. We have to step up. Both parties have to step up and find solutions that are responsible.

YANDLE NOMINATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise in support of Staci Yandle, who has been nominated to serve as a Federal district court judge in the Southern District of Illinois. She is going to replace a fine Federal judge, J. Philip Gilbert, who took senior status in March. It is a judicial emergency, so I am glad we are moving to it today.

Staci Yandle has the experience, integrity, and commitment to his community, and those who value the coal industry and what it means to our economy. We have to be thoughtful, reflective, and innovative in making certain we use the energy resource we have responsibly and leave this Earth in a situation where our children and grandchildren will say our generation did not ignore the obvious.

Twin tornadoes in Nebraska are an indicator to me that time is not on our side. We have to step up. Both parties have to step up and find solutions that are responsible.