

of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment.

(Insert the part printed in *italic*.)

S. 404

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Green Mountain Lookout Heritage Protection Act”.

SEC. 2. CLARIFICATION OF LEGAL AUTHORITY OF GREEN MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT.

(a) LEGAL AUTHORITY OF LOOKOUT.—Section 4(b) of the Washington State Wilderness Act of 1984 (Public Law 98-339; 98 Stat. 300; 16 U.S.C. 1131 note) is amended by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: “, and except that with respect to the lands described in section 3(5), the designation of such lands as a wilderness area shall not preclude the operation and maintenance of Green Mountain Lookout.”

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the Washington State Wilderness Act of 1984.

SEC. 3. PRESERVATION OF GREEN MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT LOCATION.

The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, may not move Green Mountain Lookout from its current location on Green Mountain in the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest unless the Secretary determines that moving Green Mountain Lookout is necessary to preserve the Lookout or to ensure the safety of individuals on or around Green Mountain. If the Secretary makes such a determination, the Secretary shall move the Green Mountain Lookout to a location outside of the lands described in section 3(5) of the Washington State Wilderness Act of 1984 and designated as a wilderness area in section 4(b) of such Act.

SEC. 4. ALASKA NATIVE VETERAN ALLOTMENT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPLICATION.—The term “application” means the Alaska Native Veteran Allotment application numbered AA-084021-B.

(2) FEDERAL LAND.—The term “Federal land” means the 80 acres of Federal land that is—

(A) described in the application; and

(B) depicted as Lot 2 in U.S. Survey No. 13957, Alaska, that was officially filed on October 9, 2009.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) ISSUANCE OF PATENT.—Notwithstanding section 41 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1629g) and subject to subsection (c), the Secretary shall—

(1) approve the application; and

(2) issue a patent for the Federal land to the person that submitted the application.

(c) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The patent issued under subsection (b) shall—

(A) only be for the surface rights to the Federal land; and

(B) be subject to the terms and conditions of any certificate issued under section 41 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1629g), including terms and conditions providing that—

(i) the patent is subject to valid existing rights, including any right of the United States to income derived, directly or indirectly, from a lease, license, permit, right-of-way, or easement on the Federal land; and

(ii) the United States shall reserve an interest in deposits of oil, gas, and coal on the Federal

land, including the right to explore, mine, and remove the minerals on portions of the Federal land that the Secretary determines to be prospectively valuable for development.

(2) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Secretary may require any additional terms and conditions for the issuance of the patent under subsection (a) that the Secretary determines to be appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The committee-reported amendment was agreed to.

The bill (S. 404), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Mrs. MURRAY. Thank you, Madam President.

I know the town of Darrington will thank you as well.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—Continued

Mrs. MURRAY. 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.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RODRIGUEZ NOMINATION

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, the Judiciary Committee, of which I am a member, voted on the nomination of Leon Rodriguez to be Director of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, also known as USCIS. This agency has been at the center of the collapse of immigration enforcement in America, and Mr. Rodriguez, if confirmed, will—it seems certain—continue to accelerate that collapse. I think it is an important issue for all of us to talk about. It is not so much about him personally, but it is what he is going to be asked to do.

This is about what has been happening at Homeland Security—and USCIS is an important part of that—and how it is impacting the rule of law in America and immigration enforcement in America—or nonenforcement. It is a very serious matter. What I am going to say today is based on my best judgment of how and why it is happening and why this Congress needs to speak up about it.

I have an article from the Washington Post, which is dated December 18, a few months ago. The article in the Washington Post is headlined “Federal

Workers’ Job Satisfaction Falls, with Homeland Security Depart. Ranking Lowest Again.”

It goes on to say:

Federal employees who deal with homeland security matters remain some of the government’s least-satisfied, as overall workforce morale hit its lowest point in a decade, according to a report that began ranking agencies on such issues in 2003.

It goes on to say:

The Department of Homeland Security, a perennial bottom-dweller in the “Best Places to Work in the Federal Government” rankings, marked its third consecutive year of decline and its second straight year of being last among the 19 largest agencies. This is not acceptable, and I raised that issue with Secretary Napolitano repeatedly at the hearings.

I will remind my colleagues that the officers association of another one of the three core immigration agencies—the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Service—unanimously voted no confidence in their then-Director John Norton mainly because he refused to allow them to comply with their duty under the law to enforce immigration laws in America. We had the Director of ICE and—you will learn—the Director of USCIS, and I suggest the Homeland Security Director, investing their time and effort in seeing that the laws of the United States were not enforced rather than being enforced.

This gentleman is not prepared to lead this job if he were to be supported in his activity, but, in fact, he was sent here because he will not rock the boat. He will be given this position to continue this policy of nonenforcement, even against the will of the officers who serve under him.

The last thing we should do is put someone in a critical law enforcement position, as these are, who doesn’t know anything about it, No. 1, and who is going to carry out President Obama’s policies, which is fundamentally not to enforce the law. I know there are people who think that is an exaggeration, but I am going to talk about it, and we are going to keep talking about it, and we are going to show what the facts are. This is a serious matter.

Mr. Rodriguez is not a trained administrator. He has never led a police department. He has never led and managed a real law enforcement agency. He has been a prosecutor of white-collar crime cases. He served for several years in the civil rights part of Homeland Security, but he has not managed the officers out there on the ground who are trying to deal with violent criminal aliens and get them deported and all the gimmicks that they use to get around that. He was a chief of staff to Mr. Perez, the head of the civil rights division in the Department of Justice. Mr. Perez is nearly a radical pro-amnesty nonenforcement leader himself. They were both members of CASA de Maryland, which is very much a pro-amnesty activist group that proposes ideas that are outside the mainstream.

I assume Majority Leader REID will bring this nomination up for a vote in

the Senate, and it will be an important moment. Will the Senators vote to defend the integrity of the immigration laws we passed or will they help install someone to one of the most important positions in government who will further erode and undermine those laws? This is the question we are dealing with. We need to be honest about it. I don't think there is any mystery here.

First, Mr. Rodriguez lacks the normal background and experience for a position such as this. He doesn't have it. I am not saying he is not a good civil rights lawyer or white-collar crime lawyer, but he doesn't have the leadership experience to lead an agency such as this. His only apparent encounter with immigration was his service on the board of CASA de Maryland, which encourages illegal immigrants to defy law enforcement. It has been a very active group.

Tellingly, Mr. Rodriguez refused to answer questions regarding whether he believes an illegal immigrant who is ordered deported or convicted of a felony criminal offense or convicted of multiple misdemeanors or convicted of a single sex-related offense or convicted of a single drunk driving offense or known to be a gang member should be eligible for legal status in America. That is a pretty fair question to ask a nominee to this important position because USCIS evaluates people as to whether they have the requisites to be given legal status and a pathway to citizenship in America.

Mr. Rodriguez would not even say whether someone who has been denied legal status should be deported. So they come in and ask for legal status, and it is turned down, and he was asked: Should that person get to stay in the country or should that person be deported? There is only one answer to that question. If you are not eligible to be in the country and you had your hearing and you have been denied legal status, there is only one answer, and that is you should be deported. These should not be difficult questions for someone who wants to head an agency that is charged with ensuring the integrity of our system.

The President has summarily suspended entire portions of immigration law, granting unilateral reprieve to people based on everything from family connection to age of illegal entry, and criminal record. He just issues an order.

The Los Angeles Times reported earlier this week on the collapse of interior enforcement. They reported that "immigrants living illegally in most of the continental U.S. are less likely to be deported today than before Obama came into office." Boy, that is an understatement. That is an absolute fact. It went on to state:

Expulsions of people who are settled and working in the United States have fallen steadily since his first year in office, and are down more than 40% since 2009.

It is really a lot more than 40 percent. They went on to quote the former

Acting Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, John Sandweg, who left a little over a month ago. He was a top official in the Obama administration. He said: "If you are a run-of-the-mill immigrant here illegally, your odds of getting deported are close to zero." This is a guy who held an important position in the Department of Homeland Security. His duty was to identify people who are here illegally.

In effect, the administration's policy is that unless you commit a felony or other serious crime, you are free to illegally work here, claim certain tax benefits, and obtain fraudulent documents so you can get a job. Apparently having a fraudulent document to get a job you are not lawfully entitled to get is not something that gets you deported in this administration. Not apparently, that is the policy if truth be known.

It is an open invitation to every would-be illegal immigrant to come to the United States unlawfully and to every visa holder who is here lawfully on a visa for a limited time to ignore the expiration date of their visa and remain unlawfully in the country. That is the law the President has set.

If the immigration laws are not enforceable by virtue of the plain fact that they are duly passed laws by the Congress of the United States, then there is no real immigration law. Anyone who wishes is free to come on visa, let the visa expire and never leave. If you can get past the border in some fashion unlawfully, they can stay and nobody is going to impact you.

Yet, on March 13, after meeting with representatives of various amnesty groups, the Homeland Security Secretary—the top man, Mr. Johnson—reaffirmed that he is working to fulfill the President's request to reduce enforcement even further. It is astonishing that the President would order a review of enforcement policies, not for the purpose of repairing enforcement flaws but to weaken it even more.

According to a March 14, 2014, Los Angeles Times article quoting administrative officials:

The changes under review would effectively stop most deportations of [illegal immigrants] with no criminal convictions other than violations.

So any fraudulent documents that are used to come here and violate immigration laws or get a job or get into the country unlawfully don't count. You can do this all day. Come on down. This means that even fugitive aliens, and those who have committed immigration felonies would now be exempt from enforcement. It would represent a total evisceration of immigration law, including those laws designed to protect the wages and jobs of working Americans.

I will say parenthetically—we just had a vote on unemployment insurance because we continue to have a very high unemployment rate. We extended the normal limit on unemployment

benefits to people who don't have a job, and now we are doing nothing to protect American workers from people who are illegally here and taking jobs they need for their families.

In addition to that, the Senate passed a comprehensive immigration bill that would double the number of guest workers—the people who come here just to work—at a time of high unemployment.

We have a bill that will be coming up soon, I suppose, to raise the minimum wage. Why? Because wages have not risen sufficiently. We are not happy about that. In fact, wages have been declining for over a decade. This is a serious trend.

Dr. Borjas at Harvard attributes a good deal of that to the large flow of immigration, particularly in lower income Americans who are being hammered by this large flow of lower skilled foreign workers. It is supply and demand.

Why are wages not going up, colleagues? Do you believe in the free market? They are not going up because we have more workers than we have jobs.

Mr. Sperling, the President's former top economic adviser, admitted a few weeks ago that there are three applicants for every job in America. The last thing we need to be doing is doubling the number of foreign workers brought into the country and not enforcing the law with regard to people who have entered illegally, isn't that correct? I mean, can't we agree on issues such as that?

In 2012—go back to this, the problems—and people need to know this. The mainstream media does not want to talk about it. They don't tend to report it, but it has been out there for months—years. It is the reality. This is what a 2012 inspector general report of the Department of Homeland Security—this is their own inspector general, who serves at the pleasure of the Homeland Security Secretary. They issued a report which found that senior officials at USCIS—that is the Citizenship and Immigration Services, where this individual will be the head—they found that senior officials at USCIS have been pressuring employees to rubberstamp applications for immigration benefits despite obvious signs of fraud.

Kenneth Palinkas, president of the National Citizenship and Immigration Services Council—the union representing 12,000 adjudicators, officers, and staff—issued a statement in May of 2013 that echoed the findings of the report. This is what Mr. Palinkas's group said:

USCIS adjudications officers are pressured to rubberstamp applications instead of conducting diligent case review and investigations. The culture at USCIS encourages all applications to be approved, discouraging proper investigation into red flags and discouraging denial of applications. USCIS has been turned into an approval machine.

This is not acceptable. What are we paying 18,000 officers to do? Don't the

American people expect that they are supposed to be reviewing applications, not rubberstamping them; identifying people who may be terrorists or criminals or have no likelihood of producing anything worthwhile in America, who are not going to be successful in America, and who may be otherwise unlawfully eligible to enter, while we turn people down who have the lawful right to enter and put them on a backlog? It doesn't make any sense.

According to Mr. Palinkas:

USCIS has created an almost insurmountable bureaucracy which often prevents USCIS adjudications officers from contacting and coordinating with ICE agents and officers in cases that should have their involvement.

Look, the ICE officers are kind of like the criminal investigators. They deal with people who are apprehended inside the country. They deal with people who have been arrested or in jail on one cause or another—assaults, drugs, violence, criminality. So USCIS is evaluating paperwork to see if somebody is qualified, and they have some red flag, and they would like to call the ICE officers to see if this is the same guy who committed an assault or an armed robbery a few years ago, and they are being discouraged from doing that. What is this? It is exactly the opposite of what we are paying them to do.

Mr. Palinkas continues:

USCIS officers are pressured to approve visa applications for individuals that ICE agents have determined should be placed into deportation proceedings.

So they are pressuring them to approve these individuals who have not been approved.

I see Senator WARREN is here, and I will wrap up. I didn't realize she had been approved to speak at this time, and I will wrap up briefly.

We need to put an end to this lawlessness, and the next Director of USCIS must ensure the integrity of our immigration system—it is just that simple—as his mission statement calls for him to do. They must be independent and able to stand up for the rule of law under what undoubtedly will be tremendous political pressure from an administration and pro-amnesty activist groups who seem to be dominating the agenda and who have little interest in seeing the great classical American rule of law enforced.

Mr. Rodriguez, unfortunately, I am convinced is not that person. He would not be the right person if he really had the support of his leadership. He just doesn't have the background. He has never managed a major agency with 18,000 employees or anything like it. He does not have any experience on the frontlines of what they do every day and how they do it. But it is even worse because—look, why didn't they choose somebody who is experienced in DHS? Why didn't they choose a police chief or a military officer, someone who knows how to lead and manage a big agency such as this one, somebody

with independence and integrity? Why? Because they don't want somebody with independence and integrity committed to the enforcement of law. They have already decided they are not enforcing the law, and they want somebody such as this Casa de Maryland protegee to go into that agency who is not going to enforce the law.

It is a serious statement I make, and I think it is fundamentally accurate. I am just buffaloed that this is the fact.

Mr. Jonathan Turley, a constitutional lawyer who has written about government issues and constitutional issues for quite a number of years—Professor Turley has written recently and participated in a discussion where he said that what the President is doing with regard to immigration is beyond any justifiable utilization of prosecutorial discretion, that it amounts to a nullification of law by the President, who takes an oath and is constitutionally required to see that the laws of this country are faithfully carried out.

This is a very serious matter. We need to talk about it. This nomination sort of provides us an opportunity to recognize what is happening, and the American people are going to need to speak up. We need to be able to change what is happening to restore the great American heritage of law.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

MINIMUM WAGE

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, it has taken us 4 months, but we are finally on the verge of passing a long-overdue emergency extension of unemployment benefits. So I come to the floor this afternoon to urge my colleagues to continue supporting America's working families by raising the minimum wage.

Over the past 50 years the value of the minimum wage has sharply declined. In 1968 the minimum wage was high enough to keep a working parent with a family of three out of poverty. In 1980 the minimum wage was at least high enough to keep a working parent with a family of two out of poverty. Today the minimum wage isn't even high enough to keep a fully employed mother and a baby out of poverty. This is fundamentally wrong. Anyone who works full time should not live in poverty.

For nearly half a century, as we came out of the Great Depression, we lived by the basic principle that we all do better when we work together and build opportunities for everyone. For nearly half a century, as our country got richer our workers got richer, and as our workers got richer our country got richer. As the pie got bigger, we all got a little bit more. That is how it was, and that is how we built America's great middle class.

But that is not how it works now for low-income workers. Dr. Arin Dube of the University of Massachusetts has explained that if the minimum wage had kept up with increases in produc-

tivity, it would be \$22 an hour today. But it didn't keep up. So today, while corporate profits soar, millions of hard-working moms and dads are left behind, working full time and still living in poverty.

Democrats aren't proposing to increase the minimum wage to \$22 an hour. Our proposal is much more modest—a raise to \$10.10 an hour. That is modest by comparison, but for at least 14 million children who depend on a parent whose wages would go up as a result of this legislation, this increase will make their lives a whole lot more secure.

This bill is about the lives of minimum-wage workers, but it is also about every taxpayer in America and about the corporate welfare taxpayers are forced to dole out when these companies pay poverty-level wages.

More than half of low-wage working families participate in government assistance programs for food, for health care, and for other expenses. A study by researchers at UC Berkeley and the University of Illinois show that we spend about \$240 billion a year providing benefits to working families through food stamps, Medicaid, and other antipoverty programs.

When big companies pay poverty-level wages and then count on the government to cover basic expenses for their employees, they get a boost from every American taxpayer who helps pick up the ticket for food stamps and Medicaid. Taxpayer dollars are being used to boost the profits of private companies that don't want to pay their employees enough to keep them out of poverty. That is corporate welfare, plain and simple.

I understand why some businesses might like to keep it that way, but American taxpayers have had enough of this corporate welfare. American workers have had enough of this corporate welfare. America has had enough of this corporate welfare.

This is an uphill fight. Those big corporations that pay poverty-level wages want to keep wages the way they are. And why not? It is more money for corporate dividends and CEO bonuses. So those companies hire armies of lobbyists and lawyers who lean on Washington politicians to keep things exactly the way they are. Minimum-wage workers don't have an army of lobbyists and lawyers, and American taxpayers don't either. But Congress doesn't work for those big companies. We work for the workers and the taxpayers and the voters who sent us here.

It is time to call out this corporate welfare for what it is, and it is time to fight back. It has been 7 years since Congress last increased the minimum wage. Senator Ted Kennedy led that fight, and I am proud to carry that fight forward today. It is time to honor work again, time to honor people who get up every day and bust their tails to try to build a life for themselves and their children. It is time to increase the minimum wage.

Thank you, Mr. President. 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.

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

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak and that Senators MURKOWSKI, BEGICH, and WICKER be allowed to join me in a colloquy as they come to the floor.

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, thank you very much.

PIRATE FISHING

Mr. President, we are coming to the floor today because the four of us serve as the cochairs of the Senate Oceans Caucus. I know the Presiding Officer from Delaware has a keen interest in oceans issues as well, and we appreciate his support for the caucus.

We have worked very hard in this caucus to find bipartisan common ground on issues that relate to the seas and to our oceans, and one of the areas we have worked on is the area that is described in the jargon as IUU fishing, which means illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. The better word for it, the clearer word for it, the more accurate word for it is pirate fishing.

These are fishermen around the world who go to sea and they fish above legal limits, they fish out of season, they fish for catches they are not allowed to catch, they fish in waters they are not allowed to fish in, and then they come to shore and market their illicit product. When they do that, they hurt legitimate fishermen and they hurt American fishermen in two ways. First of all, fish migrate around the globe. If they are knocked down, damaged, and caught illegally in other areas, then the American fishery for that same species is hurt. The second is that depresses the global price for fish. These people can flood the market with illegal fish. That drops the price through the law of supply and demand, and now our American fishermen—who are fishing lawfully, who are abiding by the catch limits, who are fishing in the right seasons and places—suffer a disadvantage in the pricing when their fish get to market.

So this is an important issue for our States, and it is not for nothing that we are all coastal State Senators who are here to express our support for action on these treaties.

In the United States, commercial fish landings are over \$5 billion in revenue a year. Recreational anglers spend more than \$25 billion a year. So this is big business, and pirate fishing is a big hit to our big business. Pirate fishing losses have been estimated at between \$10 billion and \$24 billion every year.

When you consider that our whole recreational fishing industry is only roughly \$26 billion—and this is a \$24 billion raid, basically, on the international fisheries—it is important that we can do this.

So there is a package of treaties that has come out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. There are four of them. Three of them are traditional fishing treaties covering the South Pacific, the North Pacific, and the Northwest Atlantic fisheries. You can only imagine what the North Pacific fishery means for Alaskan fishermen and what the Northwest Atlantic fishery means for our northeastern fishermen. It is very important that we get these treaties cleared through the Senate.

I am delighted that Chairman MENENDEZ and his ranking member Senator CORKER have passed these bills through the Foreign Relations Committee with very strong bipartisan support. I think we have a really good chance to get something done in a bipartisan fashion that is good for our industry and also the right thing to do.

It is simply unfair when international pirate fishers are able to knock down the fisheries market internationally and take away product that we would otherwise catch.

I see the senior Senator from Alaska has joined me on the floor. I just mentioned the North Pacific treaty, which I know has specific relevance to her State.

We are in a parliamentary position where we have unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy—Senator MURKOWSKI and I and Senator WICKER and Senator BEGICH as they arrive. So I now yield the floor to Senator MURKOWSKI. Let me say how much I appreciate her leadership. She has been the cochair of the Oceans Caucus. It was significantly her initiative that we should focus on pirate fishing, and I applaud all the work she has done, together with Senator WICKER, who has now joined us.

I yield to the Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I thank my friend and my colleague from Rhode Island, who also is my cochair on the Senate Oceans Caucus. As he has noted, this is an issue of IUU fishing—illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing—and, really, that is too polite a term for it. It is really piracy—piracy of our fisheries.

Senator WHITEHOUSE has been very engaged in working on so many of these key issues. I think this is quite important what we are discussing today—the positive step forward, not only for fishermen in my State but for fishermen around the Nation.

I would like to thank those who have been involved in this effort in addition to Senator WHITEHOUSE—Senator WICKER, as well as Senator BEGICH, for their efforts to help advance these treaties. I would also like to recognize Senator MENENDEZ and Senator CORKER for their support through the Foreign Relations Committee process.

It should come as no surprise to any of my colleagues here in terms of Alaska's role with our fisheries. Alaska leads all States in terms of both volume and value of commercial fisheries, with approximately 1.84 million metric tons, worth \$1.3 billion. The seafood coming out of Alaska accounts for over 52 percent of our Nation's commercial seafood harvest. Our commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries are really at the heart of coastal Alaska. They are the source of economic livelihood for more than 80,000 Alaskans who are directly or indirectly employed in the industry. I count my family as part of Alaska's fishing families who support very well managed, sustainable fisheries.

But what we have seen from these acts of piracy—this illegal fishing—let's take, for instance, the crab fisheries, is very serious. Illegally harvested Russian king crab has been a real problem for us in Alaska since the early 1990s. In 2011 NOAA law enforcement seized 112 metric tons of illegally harvested Russian king crab that was being shipped to U.S. markets through the Port of Seattle. So what happens here is you have the Russians, who are taking too many of the king crab, illegally harvesting them and then effectively dumping them on the U.S. markets. Well, what do you think that does, then, to the price of the crab we are catching here lawfully in the United States? It is depressing the price of crab. Now, I know this. I mentioned that my family is in the fishing business. My cousin is involved in the crab industry. They have seen the prices of crab go down between 20 and 25 percent because of this illegal harvesting by the Russians.

This is not just a small problem. This is not something that is just happening right now. This has been happening for decades now, and it needs to be stopped. I do want to take a moment to express my appreciation for the amazing work our U.S. Coast Guard does, as well as the other agencies, NOAA and the State Department, their combined efforts they are making to combat pirate fishing. It is greatly appreciated by me and my constituents.

We have four treaties in front of us that will help to level this playing field and ensure that our coastal fishing communities will face less unfair competition from pirate fishing vessels that simply have not been held to the high fisheries management standards we have here in the United States.

Two of the treaties we are looking at are particularly important for my State. One is the Port State Measures Agreement. This sets global standards to combat IUU fishing, and it helps to protect our U.S. fishermen by keeping the foreign, illegally caught fish from entering the global stream of commerce. It is hugely important for us.

The other one I would like to highlight is the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North

Pacific Ocean. This will ensure that the North Pacific Fisheries Commission is established and also helps to ensure that there is a fisheries management regime in place to deter this IUU fishing within the region adjacent to Alaska. So it is critically important when it comes to our fisheries and the sustainability of our fisheries and how we manage our fisheries.

We are trying to play by the rules. We expect others to be doing the same.

So, again, I appreciate the work so many have done to help advance these treaties that are before us.

I see my colleague from Mississippi on the floor, and I would like to hear again from him in terms of support for these treaties.

With that, I yield to my friend from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. I thank my colleague.

Mr. President, I do not know if I need to seek recognition to be in a colloquy, but I do appreciate the remarks of the Senator from Rhode Island and the Senator from Alaska.

I rise this afternoon to join them in wholehearted support of these four important measures. They are an important step in combating—the term we use, as the Senator from Alaska said—is illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, IUU fishing, but I will also join my colleagues in saying that it is nothing short of pirate fishing.

It has broad economic, social, and ecological consequences. I am glad to join in support of these four measures. They have been hotlined. For those within the sound of our voices today that do not understand that, it is an expedited way to move things on a unanimous basis. I have every reason to believe that it will only be a matter of time before we have these hotline requests cleared on both sides of the aisle.

Alaska and Rhode Island have their interests in this. I can assure you that Mississippi does too. Mississippi is home to many hard-working fishing communities. They depend on the oceans for their livelihoods. We are the sixth largest seafood-producing State in the country. Many people might not realize that. We are second in the Gulf of Mexico to the State of Louisiana.

Pirate fishing hurts our fishermen. Our fishermen abide by the law. Pirate fishing puts them at a competitive disadvantage, as the Senator said. These fishermen who are small business owners, for the most part, should not be penalized for playing by the rules. International cooperation and standards are needed to protect local commerce and the environment. That is what the Agreement on Port State Measures would do.

Under the agreement, vessels carrying illegally harvested fish would not be allowed to enter our ports and thereby dilute the market with fraudulent product. In this way, the agreement would protect U.S. fishermen, seafood buyers, and consumers, while also supporting marine habitat, coastal economies, and coastal communities.

Estimates show that pirate fishing costs as much as \$23 billion per year globally and poses a serious threat to the sustainability of marine habitat. In parts of the world it accounts for up to 40 percent of the wild marine fish caught.

Other treaties under consideration address high seas fisheries resources. As the Senator from Alaska said, one in the North Pacific, yet another in the South Pacific, as well as amendments to the 1978 Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization Convention. These amendments simply update the conventions with standards similar to those that we in the United States use for our domestic waters.

These treaties can serve as powerful tools for showing that the United States is committed to enforcing fisheries laws and encouraging other countries to follow suit. Like other fisheries treaties that the Senate has ratified, they would protect America's interests, and they would protect American workers.

Our commercial and recreational fishing industries are responsible for 1.7 million American jobs and countless more at docks and facilities for processing and distribution. In summary, these four measures are good for the economy, they are good for the seafood industry, they are good for consumers, they are good for small business people, and they are good for our commercial fishermen.

It is an opportunity for us to strike a blow for bipartisanship and internationalism. I am glad to see the widespread support. I look forward to the measures being cleared on both sides of the aisle. I see my other distinguished colleague from Alaska here.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, what you will find with these issues is that they are bipartisan. Fish know no boundaries of political persuasion. They look at what is important to them. We like to catch them and eat them. So it does not matter where they come from, whether from the seas of Alaska or from the gulf. So I thank the Senator for the opportunity to say a few words.

To Senator WHITEHOUSE, my thanks for organizing and allowing this opportunity. I will tell you, we do not mean to outnumber you, having two Alaskans here. We are so dedicated to this issue. I can tell you having this opportunity to have these four treaties ratified is incredibly important for us.

I know lots of times we talk about illegal, unreported, unregulated fishing. I like to simply call it pirate fishing. These are people who steal our fish out of our waters and then try to sell them back to us. Clearly it is what it is: stealing our stock and packing our fisheries and passing, as was just mentioned, the cost to our markets of \$23 billion a year nationwide—worldwide—because of these pirate fishermen and fishermen.

Alaskan crab fishermen, for example—for people who like to watch a re-

ality show, “The Deadliest Catch” is one of those. “The Deadliest Catch” guys tell me that there is over a half a billion dollars in lost crab because of illegal imports that are coming in. They may be stolen or labeled incorrectly.

The human impact is even more appalling, when you think about it. The working conditions on those boats are deplorable. They do not call them “rust buckets” for nothing. They are. They are dangerous. They are unsafe. There is forced labor, human trafficking, slavery. You name the list; it is everything you can imagine in these ships.

Again, you can call it what you want, but at the end of the day, what is happening is pirate fishing. They are stealing the fish. Again, illegal fishing is a stateless criminal enterprise. There are no flags. They steal fish with impunity. They victimize their workers. We need to fight back. These treaties help do it.

The Coast Guard—we love our coasties. It does not matter if they are in Alaska or around the country. They do an incredible job. They track down these criminals on the high seas and chase them down. You can see in this picture where they have caught one of the ships—our Coast Guard cutters in the North Pacific a few years back.

There is no question when they catch these ships what should happen to them, from my perspective. I am a little more radical on this. I know we will have these treaties, which are important. But you know, in my view, if they catch a ship like this, they should take the crew off, take the hazardous waste off, and sink it to the bottom of the ocean. Then we are done. The people will get a clear message.

I know some lawyers object to my idea. I recognize that. But let me tell you, we had some ships—this one, for example. As you can see, it is not only a rust bucket; you can see the rust bleeding off of it. This is one of these ships that was washed into our waters from the tsunami in Japan. You can see a well-placed artillery shell hit it in the middle because they decided to sink it.

So after the Coast Guard's lawyers thought it was not a good idea, we had a piece of equipment that they then went ahead and sunk. I will tell you, you do this kind of activity, and I guarantee you the pirates of this country who are trying to steal our fish will get a clear and simple message.

But it is important to go after these pirates. The Coast Guard—in this case it was an old rust bucket they sunk to the bottom. I have taken to the floor many times to say they need better tools, more cutters, more patrol aircraft to do their job and increase their capacity in going after these pirates—not only pirates on fishing, but also smuggling drugs and all the other work that these illegal ships are doing that they need to go after. We need to have tougher laws. That is what these treaties do. They strengthen the laws. They

are bipartisan. The Port State Measures Agreement tightens rules on seafood imports, provides for better inspection, and lists the pirate boats so we know who to keep out of our waters.

Others deal with protecting high seamounts and other needed provisions specific to the North Pacific, the South Pacific, and the Atlantic. They have been in years of negotiations. I applaud our teams at the State Department and NOAA and the many Senators who have engaged in this issue to solve this problem, to create more tools for us to enforce.

We need to do our part. We need to support these treaties. Again, it is a bipartisan effort. We need to support these treaties because it will support our fishermen, support our economies throughout the ocean States and the Gulf States and throughout the States that impact with fisheries. We also need to do it because of the rule of law and protecting and respecting the rule of law and human dignity that we insist on.

When we think of the impact of these individuals who are trapped on these boats—literally, the human trafficking, slavery, and forced work that these guys are taken to on these pirate ships is appalling. We should be appalled just by that fact alone, besides the billions they steal from the waters and try to resell from their harvest in our oceans illegally.

So let me just sum up by saying again that I know my idea of sinking a pirate ship may be a little radical. But the Coast Guard did it on one ship. My view is, why not more? But at least we will have some treaties, maybe with this work on the floor tonight. Again, to Senator WHITEHOUSE, I thank him for organizing all of us who care so deeply about the fishing industry and these treaties that will make a difference. When you put more tools in the toolbox, it will have an impact.

You can rest assured I will do everything I can to gather the support necessary to make sure these treaties pass. I will stop at this point. I appreciate the effort. Thank you for allowing me to have visual aids. Sometimes words are great, but visual aids make impact. Hopefully, people can see. Hopefully, these pirates will see we are serious and this is not some movie that Johnny Depp is in either. We are going after those pirate ships.

Thank you for the opportunity to say a few words.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Mississippi and the two Senators from Alaska for participating in this bipartisan effort. Let me conclude by reading something that Chris Lischewski, who is the CEO and President of Bumble Bee Foods, wrote to me:

Everybody loves a tuna fish sandwich. And Bumble Bee has been in that industry for a long time. They are a proud American company. But tuna travel great distances. They are a fish, that if foreign pirates go after them and fish them illegally, and fish them

unsustainably and knock that population down, that comes home to roost for good old Bumble Bee Foods.

Here is what the CEO of that company said:

IUU fishing is a multi-billion dollar industry that undermines our global conservation and sustainability efforts.

By that he means his company.

Illegal fishing penalizes legitimate fishermen and processors and it must be stopped. While the United States has done a good job at developing laws to detect and deter IUU fishing, other nations have not. We strongly support the agreement on Port State Measures to prevent, deter and eliminate the illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, because it creates an obligation for other nations to take action against IUU fishing.

I yield the floor. If any of my colleague wish to speak, let me just say that they do so with my gratitude for this bipartisan moment in the Senate and in support of the jobs that the fishing industry provides for our constituents.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I think we are waiting here for a couple of minutes. I will use a couple of minutes to speak again to those who come to our assistance when it comes to the enforcement of our fisheries laws—the men and women of our Coast Guard, NOAA, and our other enforcement agencies.

Senator BEGICH has somewhat dramatically shown some of the scenes. This is not easy stuff out there. When you have somebody who we have reason to believe has been operating illegally in violation of our agreed fisheries laws, more likely than not they are not just going to stand by and let you board and take a peek. They are going to take chase.

As we are hearing, as we are trying to find some evidence of the missing Malaysian jetliner, the oceans out there are pretty darn big. Usually, the conditions are not ones in which you would want to go out on a pleasure cruise.

Our men and women who are engaged in those enforcement efforts are truly heroes to us in terms of the efforts that they make, the energy that they expend, and the risk that they place themselves at.

So day after day, as they cover our waters, as they work to ensure that there is an effective management of our fisheries, their efforts to enforce these laws, their efforts to provide for a level of protection and safety, their efforts to bring the pirates to justice are truly to be applauded.

I thank the Senator for the opportunity to make that brief statement. I see my friend and colleague is at the ready, hopefully to announce that we will be able to move to passage of these significant treaties.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. It appears that we will shortly be able to do that. This is a happy coincidence in which four Senators in bipartisan fashion have come to the floor to support action on four treaties that will help protect our fishing industry, and it turns out that

at this moment the treaties have been cleared for ratification on both sides of the aisle. In a moment I will be able to take us through those parliamentary steps, but on behalf of all four of us, I should express my appreciation to Chairman MENENDEZ and to his ranking member Senator CORKER for the leadership they have shown in getting these treaties through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I know it was in a strongly bipartisan fashion. I think it was in a unanimously bipartisan fashion.

The Presiding Officer is a member of that distinguished committee, and I want to express my appreciation to the Presiding Officer, Senator COONS of Delaware.

It is good to be able to do these kinds of things in a bipartisan fashion. It reminds me a little bit of our friend Senator ENZI's 80/20 rule: We get 80 percent done in the Senate without incident, but then, of course, nobody notices. The other 20 percent we fight over, and the fight gets 80 percent of the attention.

So it is a happy moment when we can do something good for our industry, good for our fisheries, do it in a bipartisan fashion, and do it smoothly.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

AGREEMENT ON PORT STATE MEASURES TO PREVENT, DETER, AND ELIMINATE ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED, AND UNREGULATED FISHING

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE HIGH SEAS FISHERIES RESOURCES IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF HIGH SEAS FISHERIES RESOURCES IN THE NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN

AMENDMENT TO THE CONVENTION ON FUTURE MULTILATERAL COOPERATION IN THE NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, treaty document Nos. 112-4, 113-1, 113-2, 113-3, en bloc; that the treaties be considered as having advanced through the various parliamentary stages up to and including the presentation of the resolutions of ratification; that any committee declarations be agreed to as applicable; that any statements be printed in the RECORD as if read; further, that when the votes on the resolutions of ratification are taken, they be in the order reported, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon