

Let me focus on Florida International University in Miami. FIU leads the Florida Coastal Everglades Long Term Ecological Research Program to study the effect of climate change and human activity on freshwater availability in the Everglades. FIU hosts the International Hurricane Research Center on its campus and recently established the Extreme Events Institute, devoted to making communities more resilient to extreme weather.

Institute director Richard Olsen, who is an international expert on disaster response and resiliency, has called sea level rise “a slow onset disaster” for South Florida.

Four professors of FIU’s School of Journalism and Mass Communication set up a media outreach initiative called Eyes on the Rise. Students in this program have produced documentaries to air on local television about the effect of sea level rise on local communities, on real estate prices, and on economic growth in southern Florida.

FIU is a member of the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment, a network of schools taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote climate research. FIU has adopted a plan to bring emissions 25 percent below 2007 levels before 2030.

On my Florida visit, Dr. Mike Heithaus, a marine scientist and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at FIU, said:

We’re really standing here at ground zero. There’s just about nowhere else on the planet where there is more at risk from sea level rise so fast.

He gets it. They get it. That is why Florida International University is at the fore of climate research and education, particularly as it affects the State of Florida.

But there is another member of that faculty who doesn’t seem to get it, one of our Senate colleagues, the junior Senator from Florida. He teaches political science part time at FIU. Last month, however, that junior Senator from Florida voted against amendments to the Keystone XL bill stating that climate change is real and that humans contribute to it. Apparently the message from experts across Florida and frankly from experts across campus that manmade climate change, especially sea level rise, is a big problem for southern Florida—well, apparently that message hasn’t gotten through.

What are Florida’s other elected officials doing? Fort Lauderdale mayor Jack Seiler is working with NOAA, State and Broward County officials, and the South Florida Regional Planning Council to protect his city from flooding and climate change. Miami Beach mayor Philip Levine showed me the huge pumps his city has installed to pump out the flooding that comes in on high tides and from storms. Republican mayor Sylvia Murphy of Monroe County, which covers all of the Florida

Keys and some of the Everglades, is a remarkable lady, and she has put climate and energy policy at the heart of her 20-year growth plan for the county. She is going to lose a lot of her county if we don’t get ahead of this. And the senior Senator from Florida, my friend BILL NELSON, is an outspoken advocate for preserving the Florida coast and the Florida economy in the face of climate change.

The Miami Herald recently wrote:

South Florida owes Senator NELSON its thanks for shining a bright light on this issue. Everyone from local residents to elected officials should follow his lead, turning awareness of this major environmental issue into action. It is critical to saving our region.

So said the Miami Herald.

Unfortunately, the junior Senator does not seem to have followed his senior colleague’s lead either in shining a bright light on this issue or in turning awareness into action.

It is a little bit surprising that, according to a recent New York Times poll, an overwhelming majority of Americans support us taking action on climate change, including half of Republicans. Again, this is not that partisan of an issue once you get away from the polluter money that surrounds this building. Two-thirds of respondents said they would be more likely to vote for a candidate for President or for the Senate who explicitly campaigned on a platform of climate action.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to continue for an additional 2 minutes.

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. That includes 48 percent of Republicans as opposed to only 24 percent of Republicans who said they would be less likely to vote for such a candidate. So even among Republican voters, the balance tips in favor of climate action. If you look at young Republican voters—as I have said over and over on this floor—under the age of 35, they think climate denial is ignorant, out of touch, or crazy. Those are the words they selected in the poll, not my words.

Let’s move west to Arizona. The folks at NASA—a pretty reputable organization—have a rover driving around on Mars right now that they control. These are people who know something about what they are doing, and the folks at NASA have made understanding our planet and its systems their life’s work. This month their researchers released a study showing an 80-percent chance of a decades-long what they call “megadrought” in the American Southwest, a multi-decade drought between 2050 and 2099 unless we act aggressively to mitigate the effects of climate change. Arizona could see half as much precipitation in the second half of the century as it did in the second half of the last century. It is a call to arms to protect the State of Arizona.

Finally, here is this morning’s newspaper headline: “As ice melts, the future fades. Climate change may force Alaska natives to abandon their village.” LISA MURKOWSKI, the Senator from Alaska, is quoted here. Senator MURKOWSKI acknowledges the impacts of climate change on Alaska’s coastal community.

So maybe we are beginning to make some progress, but all around the country these effects are ones we have to begin to take more seriously. It is indeed time to wake up.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 11 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:23 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 26, 2015, at 11 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

MONICA C. REGALBUTO, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY (ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT), VICE INES R. TRIAY, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

AMIAS MOORE GERETY, OF CONNECTICUT, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, VICE CYRUS AMIR-MOKRI, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

WILLIE E. MAY, OF MARYLAND, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY, VICE PATRICK GALLAGHER, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

ANNE ELIZABETH WALL, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE A DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, VICE ALASTAIR M. FITZPAYNE, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

KATHERINE SIMONDS DHANANI, OF FLORIDA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF SOMALIA.

SHELLA GWALTNEY, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

MICKEY D. BARNETT, OF NEW MEXICO, TO BE A GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 8, 2020. (REAPPOINTMENT)

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

CONO R. NAMORATO, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, VICE KATHRYN KENEALLY, RESIGNED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. ROBIN RAND

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. JEFFREY B. CLARK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY NURSE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. BARBARA R. HOLCOMB

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be brigadier general

COL. RONALD J. PLACE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be brigadier general

COL. RAYMOND S. DINGLE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

JACINTO ZAMBRANO, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

CHERYL D. ANDERSON
CHARLES G. KEMPER IV
JAMES D. MOORE
CARLTON G. SMITH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

EUGENE S. ALKIRE
DAVID A. GAGNON
SHAUGHNESSY D. HODGE
ANTHONY T. LIEGGI
CHRISTOPHER R. REESE
DENNIS J. SORENSEN
PATRICK R. STARESINA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

RONALD D. SCHOW

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUALS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

SEAN M. MILLER
JOSEPH B. POWELL

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

ANDREW J. COPELAND
DANIEL R. GABLE
YONG J. LEE
BRIAN A. LIONBARGER